

Lunch Actually



FIRST DATES | What Your Date Will Never Tell You?



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WHY DID WE WRITE THIS BOOKLET?

Founding Asia's first lunch dating company in January 2004. We named it Lunch Actually to emphasize that each date is short, sweet and simple.

After arranging so many first dates for our members, we started to realize that a large part of the success rate (*i.e. whether they go for second dates*) is not all based on whether the dating consultant finds a good match or coordinates the date impeccably for the two to meet. The bulk of the success still lies with the member's ability to leave a good impression during the date. We witness so many members making dating blunders that were sabotaging their own success. The worst thing is that they are not even aware of the mistakes they are making!

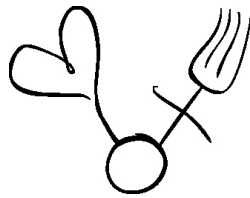
Thus, we decided to embark on this journey of education and self-realization. We analyzed the thousands of dates we coordinated, and we read every relevant theory, book and article we could lay our hands on. Our aim is to raise awareness of the theory of attraction, and at the same time come up with an effective model for singles to use during their first dates - in the hope that this would make their dating experience more enjoyable and fruitful.

This booklet is our first step towards fulfilling our goal. Apart from striving to be the most effective dating platform, we want to have even more successes by sharing the techniques and lessons that we have learnt through the course of our experience and research.

Happy dating!

RISA
Violet & Jamie

GREGORY AND MICHELLE



GREGORY MEETS UP WITH HIS BEST FRIEND DAVID

Gregory: *"Dave, I went out on this blind date set up by my friend - and it was a complete waste of time! Firstly, she was late and by the time she finally arrived, I already wanted to leave. There was absolutely nothing about her I was attracted to. So I left after 45 minutes."*

David: *"What was wrong with her?"*

Gregory: *"Well, I just didn't like her looks. She was also so nonchalant about being late, like it wasn't a big deal - and you know how I hate people being late."*

David: *"Was there anything you liked though?"*

Gregory: *Well... let's see... She's quite an intelligent person. She speaks quite well. But there was just no chemistry!"*

David: *"Oh well, better luck next time, mate. So did you watch the soccer match last night, I can't believe the referee..."*



MICHELLE'S CONFIDING IN HER DIARY

Lorraine set me up on a blind date with her university mate, Gregory. We met up last night at a downtown restaurant. I didn't have much expectation – it was a blind date after all!

I was running real late, thanks to my boss who gave me some last minute work. So he was already seated in the restaurant when I got there. He was dressed in this dark blue round-collar t-shirt and jeans. The T-shirt looked one size too big on him - hanging really loosely on his shoulders. Why would anybody wear this on a first date? I wasn't too impressed, I must say. But then again, I'd come straight from work and so didn't bother to dress up and I guess I wasn't exactly at my best either... so I guess I can't hold a grudge on that.

But one thing that really irritated me was his handshake! I just cannot stand guys with limp and clammy handshakes and he was a real wet fish!

I apologized for being late and he seemed fine about it. Obviously I didn't go into details about my boss asking me to stay back – no point in whining!

So we make our orders - I ordered a Spaghetti Bolognese, he ordered a Cheeseburger and we both had soft drinks.

I started the conversation rolling by asking him what he did. He's an accountant with one of the "Big 4" accounting firms. He seems to be in a very busy job and works long hours to meet tight datelines. He came across as quite a hardworking and responsible person – which is always good but...would he have much time to date, I wonder...?

As the date progressed, he warmed up to me. I noticed he had quite a nice smile when he joked about work, and he seemed quite interested in what I had to say when I shared with him what I do at work; he was attentive and asked me quite a number of questions.

Lorraine did warn me about his table manners, and I discovered his dining etiquette is certainly nothing to shout about. He used his hands to eat his burger and made a big mess! But at least he went to the gents to wash up afterwards.

I found out that he loves going to the movies. Was that a hint? ☺ I was quite impressed that he's into those deep and "thinking" type of movies like "Memento" and "The Usual Suspects". He likes movies with a good twist at the end.

Well, too bad we didn't get to talk more as he had to rush off to his friend's house to watch a soccer game (!). He did say that he would call though.

I felt the date went okay and I quite like him. I definitely wouldn't mind meeting up again to get to know him better. Maybe I'll give Lorraine a call tomorrow to find out if he said anything about me... ☺



LESSONS FROM GREGORY AND MICHELLE

THE STRANGE THING CALLED "CHEMISTRY"

It just happens. When a man and woman meet on any occasion, they will either feel magnetically drawn towards the other person or not. In the dating game, you have to acknowledge that:

CHEMISTRY HAPPENS WITHOUT A CHOICE!

It is not a fair world, as our in-born biology determines (with some superficiality involved) whether or not chemistry happens. Some people simply attract more people than others. While you cannot force attraction, you can learn the factors that influence chemistry - and then focus on 'upping' those factors.

By keeping an open mind and by being willing to make changes, you can appear more attractive and eligible to others.

THE 3 LEVELS OF ATTRACTION

On a first date, **a certain amount of attraction is needed** in the beginning, in order to sustain sufficient interest in a relationship for it to have a chance to develop. When we say we are attracted to a person, we are actually dealing with 3 levels of attraction.

1. PHYSICAL ATTRACTION

Does he stir up desire within you?

Do you think she's sexy?

Physical attraction is usually the first and most immediate level of attraction because we have been biologically programmed to instantly recognize physical attractiveness and beauty. We feel physical attraction based on:

- Attraction History – The type of people whom we have been attracted to in the past. There's often an attraction pattern
- Physical Appearance & Grooming
- Facial Expression and Body Posture

2. EMOTIONAL ATTRACTION

How does he/she make me feel?

Emotional attraction occurs after physical attraction. It usually takes us some time to digest the emotional makeup of a person and determine how we feel towards him/her. This is a very important level of attraction for women. Some factors that affect this are:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Behaviour & Habits
- Personal Values & Beliefs

3. MENTAL ATTRACTION

Do I find him/her interesting/intelligent?

Is this conversation stimulating?

Mental attraction is usually the final 'level' of attraction as it takes time for us to really get to know someone. Some factors that affect this are:

- Mental Intelligence
- Life Experiences
- Career, Skills, Interest & Hobbies

ATTRACTION FOR MEN AND WOMEN

FOR MEN, ATTRACTION HAPPENS SEQUENTIALLY

In general, men make almost **instantaneous judgments** about a woman! Within the first 15 minutes, most men have already decided whether they are attracted to their date. If you ask a man why he did not pursue a date, you might be surprised that the answer is simply - "I just don't like how she looks".

From the first glance, Gregory immediately knew that he was not attracted to Michelle due to her poor dressing, poor grooming and her tardiness.

To men, first impressions are very important. Everything that happens after that FIRST imprint on his mind is "filtered" through that first impression, and therefore that FIRST impression colours almost everything he sees and feels. That is why the average man takes as little as 15 minutes (or less) to decide if the lady is a suitable candidate

for them to pursue a second date with. A typical attraction sequence of a man is:

1st - Physical Appearance



2nd - Emotional Feeling



3rd - Mental Interaction

Men note:

We are bombarded and hypnotized by so many images of beauty through the media that men begin to think they are “short changing themselves” if they accept a lady who’s less physically attractive. There is no point denying that physical attractiveness is extremely important to a typical man, but it is important for us to **put things in perspective.**

After all, physical attraction is only one of the three attractions. And in the medium and long term, physical attraction is the one that will matter the **least.** When a man finally finds his true love, she is usually not the type that he finds most attractive on a physical level.

Ladies note:

It is important to realize that whether you like it or not, first impressions – and especially physical appearances – are very important to men.

Take pride in your appearance, as first impressions play a large part in determining if a second date occurs. Once you start to take control of your personal appearance and grooming, you will notice the positive

effect it has on your dating. You will come across as more confident and more attractive!

FOR WOMEN, ATTRACTION IS BASED ON THE OVERALL PACKAGE!

Of course, women also judge on first impressions. The difference is, even if a woman initially has a negative first impression of her date, chances are she would give the man a chance to make up for it over the course of the entire date. **Attraction for women can be built up throughout the whole date.** That is why most women take almost an hour to decide if they would go out on a subsequent date with someone.

Michelle was observing Gregory throughout the entire date. She was consciously and sub-consciously making an assessment of what his strong and weak points are. She concluded that his strong points exceeded his weak points, so she is open to going out on a second date with him. Unfortunately, she is not aware that he had already decided within minutes not to pursue it any further.

An example of a typical woman's attraction quotient is:

- Physical Attraction - appearance (30%)
- Emotional Attraction (40%)
- Mental Attraction (30%)

Most women place more emphasis on the character and inner workings of a man when making a decision.

Men note:

Women are better at reading facial and body language. Thus, they use this skill during first dates to understand their dates better. The way

you carry yourself (i.e. confident body language, sincere appreciation etc.) will greatly affect her decision on whether or not you are a worthy mate.

A large part of the judgment will be **based on how you make her feel**. Emotional attractiveness plays a big part in her final decision - whether the woman will meet up with the man again for a second date.

Ladies note:

Compared to men, women take a longer time to decide whether to go on a second date. However, even that **one hour is sometimes not enough**. In order for women to really get to know a person, it normally takes more than one date to find out and truly to know someone.

So, even if you do not feel any instant sparks or chemistry after the first date, as long as you are not 'repelled' by your date's company, try out second date! Take it as a chance to get to know another person better, and if nothing comes of it, you may have at least made a new friend! You will also develop a clearer idea of the type of person you are looking for.

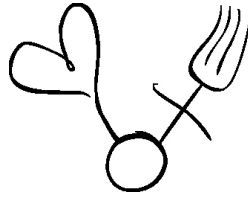
"You will never get a second chance to make a first impression"

- Oscar Wilde

***"People love others not for who they are,
but for how they make them feel"***

- Irwin Federman

ANDY AND CAROLINE



ANDY'S SENDING AN INSTANT MESSAGE TO HIS FRIEND OVER THE INTERNET

Jack (Andy's best friend): *So how did your date go?*

Andy: *Well, not so well.*

Jack: *I thought you were really looking forward to going out with this girl after you met her at Mark's party?*

Andy: *Well, we didn't really talk much at the party, but she looked really hot then! She just turned out to be a different person in our first date though.*

Jack: *She's not your type?*

Andy: *She's quite attractive! But I felt that the whole conversation all evening was totally one sided, and it just got very boring after a while.*

Jack: *Oh well, better luck next time.*

Andy: *She actually asked me out on a second date. I don't think I will go, though. I can't imagine sitting through another monologue.*



CAROLINE'S BLOG

I went on a dinner date with Andy who I met from Mark's birthday party. We met yesterday in that new Italian restaurant that Susie recommended. We both arrived around the same time and he was definitely dressed for the occasion. Wow, I was impressed! He graduated from a local university in computer science and he seemed like quite a nice guy.

As the drinks arrive, we started to talk about work and what we do in our free time. I then found out he too was a movie buff! I told him all about my favorite films. He found my taste in movies very different from most people, which is true. I mean how many people actually enjoy those 'arty-farty' movies? Most of my favorite films don't even make it to the main-stream cinemas.

As the date progressed, he told me about his love for traveling. I was delighted to know that he too has been bitten by the travel bug! I shared with him my adventures on my last two trips to Cambodia and Europe. It was simply great reliving all those wonderful experiences again with someone!

Later on, I suddenly realized that I was doing most of the talking and he was giving very short replies. So once I'd wised up, I tried to initiate other conversation topics which I thought he might be interested in...but he seemed reluctant to elaborate. This made me feel he was either not interested or simply tired.

After another bout of awkward silence, I thought I would keep quiet and let him start the conversation. He probably thought I was tired or bored too, or maybe he was feeling bored, because he suggested that we leave after spending only forty five minutes together.

I tentatively broached the idea of watching a movie together this weekend – which is the first time I've ever asked a guy for a second date.

He said, "Why not?" But I'll have to confirm it, to make sure he didn't just say that to be polite!



FROM ANDY AND CAROLINE

The moment we start a conversation with someone, we have the option to either make it interesting or dull. This can be especially challenging when we are meeting someone for the first time, as we won't know about his or her interests and values.

FIRST CONVERSATIONS - CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOPICS

At the first meeting, both parties start out not knowing anything about the other person. Hence, it is up to both parties to initiate the conversation by exploring various topics.

The first topic Andy and Caroline talked about was films. This is a topic that Andy has some knowledge on but was actually not very interested in. Caroline, however, was trying to engage him in one of her favourite topics. As she was so engrossed in it, she didn't notice that he wasn't really interested in the conversation. Andy felt it was impolite to change the subject abruptly, but he finally did so by talking about travelling. Unfortunately, by then he was already feeling quite bored with the way the conversation was going.

What Caroline could have done was to **observe what effect the topic was having on Andy**. What does his body language and eye contact say? Is he truly engaged in the conversation, or is he just giving simple polite comments in response to her statements? If she observed that the topic was boring her date, she could have got him to bring up another topic earlier - which could have salvaged the date.

Therefore, if you want to keep your date's interest, then you have to **BE INTERESTING**. And that means having something interesting or fun to talk about, or being able to draw out and engage your date partner in a conversation that both sides find stimulating. A suggestion would be to

prepare something insightful (could be a personality quiz, test) or fun/interesting topics to bring into your dates.

If you do not want to prepare, but are still not sure about what topic to move into, then current events is a good topic to stick to (e.g. an upcoming movie, or some interesting local news). Or try asking open ended questions about other the person's job or hobbies - people are usually more than happy to talk about themselves.

SYNCHRONIZING CONVERSATION

Are both parties contributing the same amount of airtime during the conversation? Is there a **good rhythm?** Andy and Caroline's conversation looks something like this:

Caroline:

YY
YY
YY
YYYYYY

Andy: XXXXX

Caroline:

YY
YY
YY

Andy: XXXXXXXXXX

Caroline:

YY
YY

As the conversation was obviously one sided, it is inevitable that Andy would start to feel bored.

Caroline could have easily avoided this by adopting simple turn taking. By taking turns, the airtime will be distributed evenly between the two. This would lower the chance of one party getting bored. For example, in a 6 minutes conversation, Caroline could have spoken for the first 3 minutes and then allowed Andy to speak for the next 3 minutes.

The rhythm of taking turns would look like this:

Andy:

XX
XX

Caroline:

YY
Y

Or Caroline could have kept it to mostly short sentences at the beginning of the conversation. This would have resulted in a more engaging interaction.

The rhythm of shorter sentences would be like this:

Caroline YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

Andy: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Caroline YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

Andy: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Caroline YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

Andy: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

When both parties are aware that they should allow the other party a chance to voice his/her views, to share his/her stories, then the conversation will become more balanced - and they will truly get to know each other better!

CONVERSATION STYLE

There are two styles of conversation. They are:

- Engaging (talking with) and
- Demanding (talking at)

THE ENGAGING STYLE – “TALKING WITH”

This is an **equal exchange**. No one is playing the entertainer and no one is playing audience. A violation of “talking with” is “talking at” which is forcing the other party to react rather than interact.

DEMANDING AN AUDIENCE – “TALKING AT”

When you are in the “talking at” mode, you are forcing others to be in “react mode”. When people are forced into the react mode in their first

conversations, they might find the experience a burden. Although "talking at" might work well with friends and family, it should be avoided at all costs for first conversations with strangers.

To make favourable first impressions, "talking with" is definitely a better option. For Caroline, she was "talking at" Andy for most of the conversation - without knowing it till the end. When she finally allowed him to talk back, it was too late and Andy just wanted to go home.

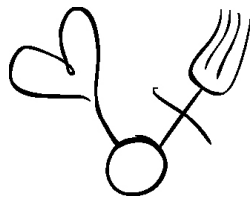
"So when you are listening to somebody, completely, attentively, then you are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling of what is being conveyed, to the whole of it, not part of it"

- J. Krishnamurti

"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel"

- Carl W. Buechner

ERIC AND ANNA



ERIC'S EMAIL FEEDBACK TO THE LUNCH ACTUALLY

1) Restaurant

How would you rate the restaurant overall? (rating of 1 to 10, 10 being the highest).

They messed up our orders. My Rating: 1

2a) First Impressions

Please comment on your date's:

i. Consideration (punctuality, sensitivity)

She was 17 minutes late. Please kindly let me know in advance if my dates will be late. At least she apologized for being late, however.

ii. Presentation (grooming, dressing, etiquette)

Looks ok. Please continue to arrange dates with girls that are good looking as I need to feel attracted with them first.

iii. Confidence (demeanour, mannerisms)

She was confident and outspoken. Clearly an intelligent woman.

2b) During the Date

Please comment on your date's:

i. Interest Level (eye contact, attentiveness)

Her friend called her during the date. I was ok that she picked up the call, but I started to get slightly annoyed when she spoke for more than

5 minutes, and I was just sitting there waiting for her to finish her conversation. Fortunately, that was the one and only phone call for that night as she turned off her phone after that and everything else went well irregardless.

ii. Conversation (choice of topics, initiation)

We had a good chat. It was very relaxed and she spoke about what she does in her free time, and her job. It made me feel comfortable and we had no problems in the expansion of topics. She used to work in the States and so we spent quite of time to talking about that. I like someone who's lived abroad before.

iii. Dining etiquette (if applicable)

Nothing too disturbing.

2c) Goodbyes

i. Did you exchange contact details?

Yes.

ii. How long did the date last for? Did the date end positively?

We talked for 1.5 hours. She was appreciative that I paid for the meal.

2d) Overall, what aspects did you like or dislike about your date?

I like that she was quite pro-active in initiating conversation. We seem to have the same wavelength.

2e) How would you rate your overall experience for this date?

(Below average: 1-5, Average: 6, Good: 7-8, Excellent: 9-10)

7

3) Afterthoughts

i. Did you feel any instant sparks/attraction/chemistry?

I felt some sparks in the beginning, and it got even better as the date went along.

ii. Would you consider a second date?

If no, what could he/she have done to change your mind?

Yes

4) Follow up on previous matches

Who have you been in touch with? Who have you been on a 2nd date with?

I tried to contact a few of the previous dates but they are always working in the weekends. Could you stop matching me with ladies who are always so busy?

5) Additional Feedback

i. Are there further refinements for your future dates?

I want to meet people who have a balanced lifestyle, do not travel so much or work at the weekends. Please also continue to match me up with all the other criteria of looks, height, age, profession, personality, hobbies and travel experience.

ii. Is there any feedback about our service or the restaurant that you want us to know?

The restaurant is incompetent. They seated us in a poor place and I had to change table. Next they ran out of so many things in the menu and then they took so long to give us our food. When the food finally came, they ended up serving me the wrong food. I certainly told them off.



ANNA'S PHONE CONVERSATION WITH LUNCH ACTUALLY

Dating Consultant: *Good Afternoon! This is Lunch Actually, Deidre speaking; how may I help you?*

Anna: *Hi Deidre, this is Anna. I had a date with Eric last Sat. I'd like to give you my feedback over the phone.*

Dating Consultant: *No problem; give me a second while I retrieve your file... OK Anna, let's start with the restaurant. How did you find the restaurant?*

Anna: *Well, I felt that the service was poor and they messed up our orders. I like the food and ambience of the restaurant though.*

Dating Consultant: *Oh, I'm sorry to hear that the service was poor. I'll note this for you so I can speak to the restaurant manager. Do let me know if you don't wish for us to send you there for your future dates.*

So tell me about your date - how did you find Eric? Was he on time?

Anna: *He arrived before me and he didn't look too pleased that I was late, but I really had a hectic and exhausting day. After a while, he seemed to relax a bit more and looked less tense.*

Dating Consultant: *Did he give you a good first impression?*

Anna: *He was well-dressed and looked very presentable. He seemed very confident as well - upon first glance.*

I think he wasn't too happy with the place we were seated at. We were seated in a corner, but the minute I sat down, he said, "let's move", so we moved to another table.

When we were ordering food, the waiter apologized to us about some of the items on the menu that were not available that day. That seemed to irritate him even more.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the waiter took a long time to serve the food - and when the food came, they gave him the wrong type of noodles. He rejected the food and really told the waiter off. I didn't expect him to behave like that - it just wasn't a very good first impression.

Dating Consultant: *Oh no! How did the rest of the date go though? Did you have a good time despite that?*

Anna: *Other than the moments when he was distracted by the service level in the restaurant, he was actually quite sincere about finding out more about me. He was well spoken and we had quite a decent conversation. I think we both enjoyed the chat.*

Dating Consultant: *That's great. Was there anything else that you liked?*

Anna: *The date lasted for one and a half hours. He paid for the meal and I was impressed by that gesture. We also exchanged cards after that.*

Dating Consultant: *So overall, would you say that the date was positive despite the episode with the waiter?*

Anna: *Well, I liked that he has clear direction in his career and his life. In terms of overall attraction, at first glance, I found him quite attractive, but I have to say... the feeling of attraction disappeared after those incidents with the service staff.*

I was just totally taken aback with the way he treated the waiters, and it made me feel uncomfortable. I put it aside initially, as I wanted to give him a fair chance, but when he berated the waiter for bringing the wrong order, that was the final straw for me.

Dating Consultant: *Ok, I've noted that down. Is there any refinement you wish to do for your dating criteria based on this?*

Anna: *I think I would prefer someone who is more easy-going and even-tempered.*

Dating Consultant: *Ok, well I've taken down your feedback. And I will be using the information to help me refine our future matches.. For your previous matches, have you gone out with any of them for a second date? How is it going? I believe you mentioned that your first date was very promising.*

Anna: *Yes, I have gone for a movie date with my first date, and as I said, I am in contact with my second date. However, with my second match, I think we can only be friends. I don't think I will be going for a second date with Eric.*

Dating Consultant: *Ok then Anna, do you have anything else you wish to tell us?*

Anna: *I liked the restaurant and everything - it was just unfortunate that we had bad service that day. The people you've introduced to me so far are very interesting despite this last date. Keep up the good work!*



LESSONS FROM ERIC AND ANNA

WHAT IS YOUR PARADIGM? - **IS THE CUP HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY?**

It is all a matter of perspectives! Some people might go into each date looking for flaws and pitfalls. Some people go into each date with an open mind, wanting to draw out the best in their date! Therefore, it is important that we approach each and every date with the right mindset or perspective, as your paradigm will affect your attitude - and as a result, your behaviour.

FLEXIBILITY

Your level of flexibility conveys your depth and how you see the world. Your date will observe how you respond to unexpected events and moments. They will see if you react to issues that arise, go with the flow or resist things.

Anna was actually quite attracted to Eric upon first glance. But she was taken aback by his sternness about her being late, his harsh responses to his environment (the restaurant) and subsequently she finds it harder and harder to connect with Eric after witnessing event after event where Eric showed his inflexibility.

What would have happened if Eric had dealt with the situation differently? When he heard that the restaurant has run out of certain

items on their menu, he might have simply reacted differently instead of berating them:

Eric: *"No more Hong Kong Beef Noodles? That's my favourite dish! Oh well, I guess it is my night to try something new. What can you recommend?"*

This approach shows flexibility (and not rigidity) and yet good conviction, which would make him instantly more attractive to other people.

In general, showing a flexible style suggests that you require **"low social maintenance"**, while being rigid and inflexible suggests that you see yourself as superior, and believe your needs are more important than others.

CONTROL ISSUES

People who meet you for the first time will tend to observe how much or little control you have over your life and others. It is important for us to understand the difference between **"taking control"** versus **"having control"** - as they are indeed two very different concepts.

TAKING CONTROL

Within the first 2 minutes of meeting, Eric made Anna move to another table without asking if she would like to move. Eric was probably simply trying to **"take control"** of things to ensure that they had a better table, but he did not realize that he might have made Anna feel restrained and uncomfortable. He didn't give her a say in the matter.

He then went on to **“take control”** of the situation again, by reprimanding the waiter. This is a case of being **“over-controlling”**. His attitude left Anna with a poor impression of him, as she had no choice but to witness his complaining to the waiter.

HAVING CONTROL

The other way of taking charge of situations is known as **“having control”**.

Anna liked that Eric is focused in his career and lead a purposeful life. Imagine if Eric had instead said this during the conversation:

Anna: *So do you like your job?*

Eric: *No. It’s awfully dull. I actually applied for a transfer to head another department, but my boss in London is dragging his feet. He promised me the transfer last year.*

Anna: *Well, I guess business is tough in your industry.*

Eric: *If that was the case, why are we so busy all the time? I think my boss keeps me from going to the other department as he feels I get things done. All the other managers are just not doing their fair share and the whole branch is obviously under-staffed.*

If Eric had replied in that manner, it would appear that he feels like a victim and is **“having little control”** over his career and life.

A person who does not take responsibility and always looking to blame others is extremely unattractive. It does not matter if the complaints

are legitimate or not. Fortunately, Eric said the following during his date (which impressed Anna):

Eric: *Well, I have learnt a lot from my present job so far but I sense it is time to go. I've applied for a move to head up another department to widen the breath of my product knowledge. Till then, I am making the most out of my present position as there is still so much to do.*

In reality, Eric may actually feel sidelined or victimized, but he left a better impression by focusing his reply on what he is doing for himself. He has shown Anna that he **"has control"** over his career and this made him appear more attractive.

If he has switched his paradigm and displayed the same level of flexibility in his dealings with the restaurant staff, Anna would have been glad to go on a second date with him!

ANGLES OF FEELING

During a first date, there are four different "feeling angles" at play:

1. How do you are feel during the date?
2. How do you feel towards your date?
3. What is your date feeling towards you?
4. How is your date feeling during your date?

All Daters are most aware of first two feelings ("how you are feeling" and "how you feel towards your date") as it involves their own personal feelings. They also believe that by saying or doing certain things (e.g. being polite and courteous, dressing up), they can influence how people

feel towards them (feeling 3). Therefore not surprisingly, most people tend to ignore feeling number 4 – “How is your date feeling?”

If a person starts the date feeling uncomfortable or irritated (the source of this discomfort might actually have nothing to do with you but something else), it is unfortunately likely to affect their opinion and feelings towards you and how you feel towards them.

We can subtly impact how the other person is feeling during the date by respecting their feelings.

Eric’s lack of concern or respect about how Anna is feeling during the date affected how she felt towards him. He was so pre-occupied with his own feelings of discomfort in the restaurant that he did not notice she seemed tired from a long day, or even that she was ill at ease with his treatment of the waiters. The last thing she wanted to do to move around the restaurant, or kick up a fuss about wrong orders with the waiter.

Showing respect for your date’s feelings also means **giving due priority** to your date while you are with them. Eric did not mind when Anna answered a phone call during the date. However, Anna did go overboard by talking on the phone for more than 5 minutes, which made him feel awkward. Fortunately, Anna realized her mistake and she switched off her phone after that. This signalled to Eric that she respected their time together – and it appeased him, even despite his initial discomfort, so he felt more comfortable with her as the date continued.

Respecting your date’s feelings does not mean excessively pandering or responding to your date’s every whim just to make them feel better, especially if it comes at the expense of your own feelings and comfort. This will only make you seem like you are “trying too hard to impress” which is off-putting for most people. Your date will wonder why you are

trying so hard to please them when you are just starting to get to know them.

Instead, make him/her feel more comfortable and at ease by **evoking positive emotions** (e.g. laughter, warmth, fascination) by your attitude, consideration and flowing conversation.

Thus by understanding the four different types of feelings at play, and sincerely understanding and respecting your date's feelings, you have a higher likelihood of securing a second date!

"Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out"

- Art Linkletter

"When you choose to be pleasant and positive in the way you treat others, you have also chosen, in most cases, how you are going to be treated by others"

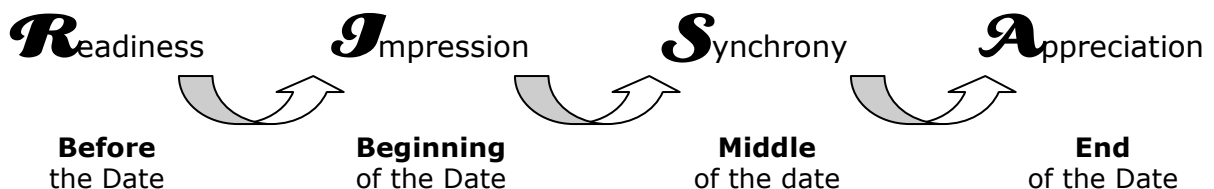
- Zig Ziglar

"RISA" – DIFFERENT SEGMENTS, DIFFERENT FOCUS

DIVIDING THE FIRST DATE INTO 4 PARTS

From the three stories we have gone through, it is obvious there are many things that can go wrong during a first date, and many of these things seem to be out of our control. Therefore, we have come up with a simple strategy for "first daters" to positively focus on during the first date: RISA.

Date Segment	Focus	Outcome
1. Before the date	R eadiness	Right Physical, Emotional and Mental State
2. Beginning (First 10 Minutes)	I mpression	Attraction
3. Middle of the date	S ynchrony	Comfort and Connection
4. End of the date	A ppreciation	Positive End to Date



1. BEFORE THE DATE

*Focus on **R**eadiness*

Your Desired Outcome: Right Physical, Emotional and Mental State

ATTITUDE TOWARDS PREPARATION

Preparing for a first date can be quite nerve-wracking, even for the most experienced of daters. Do not over-stress yourself with the preparation stage so much that you end up going to your date nervous and full of discomfort. **Relax yourself** before the date but acknowledge that to have a positive date, it pays to be prepared!

When we say being prepared, we mean getting ready for the date. And yes, just being prepared will make all the difference to the outcome of the date.

RIGHT PRESENTATION

Wear clothing that makes you feel **comfortable and confident**. Take note of the venue that you are going to, and dress appropriately.

If you're not sure, between being overdressed and underdressed, it's better to choose to be overdressed. Looking sloppy or underdressed rarely makes a good impression!

PLAN YOUR TRAVEL

If you are late, your date might feel that you do not respect his/her time. You will also be seen as a poor planner. Arriving on time leaves a good first impression. So, **plan your time and route properly before the date.**

If you are unsure of the location, check it out on the map or get directions from someone who knows the place prior to the date, not when you are already making your way there.

CHOICE OF VENUE/ACTIVITY

If you are the one planning for the first date, choose a venue that is easily accessible, and has a **light and comfortable ambience** - you are aiming for somewhere that suggests a light and friendly encounter, rather than a romantic date.

Any activity chosen for the first date should have time reserved for conversation. For example, if you are meeting for a movie or visiting an exhibition, make sure you have some time before and/or afterwards to talk to your date after the activity and not rush off immediately.

INNER-SELF PREPARATION

Is your inner self ready to meet this person? Are you in a **positive frame of mind** before the date? When you are enthusiastic and open minded, your positive attitude will naturally reflect in your conversation, body posture and facial expression. This will make you immensely more attractive to others!

SELF-EXPLORATION QUESTIONS:

1. How do you normally prepare for a first date?
2. What else can you do to get ready for your date?

2. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DATE

*Focus on **I**mpressions*

Your Desired Outcome: Attraction

FIRST REACTIONS

Once a first impression is made, it difficult to be changed. First impressions are vital in determining whether the date turns out to be positive or negative. It increases the chances attraction happening at the beginning of the date.

Every time you meet a new person, 3 things might happen:

- Wow!
- Oh no!
- Nothing

THE PERSON THINKS "WOW!"

This might happen if you are above average in physical appearance or have a fantastic personality that is charismatic and charming – or it also could occur if just happen to be the type of person that he/she has been looking for. This makes everything easier, and all you have to do is not to mess it up and destroy your image in their eyes in the later stages of the date/encounter.

THE PERSON THINKS "OH NO!"

This might happen if you present yourself poorly/sloppily, or look extremely unconfident, immature or unfriendly. Or if you happen to be JUST the type of person they detest. They would probably be polite (may even force a smile) and not say this out loud to you.

THE PERSON MIGHT NOT BE THINKING OF ANYTHING

If you are an average-looking person with a decent personality, this is what is PROBABLY going to happen over 95% percent of the time. Don't worry, you are starting from neutral ground, and can still build up the attraction in the other stages.

GREETING AND BODY LANGUAGE

If you are meeting this person for the first time, walk towards him/her confidently. Maintain eye contact and introduce yourself in a clear voice, while giving your date a firm handshake. Remember to **SMILE** warmly throughout the introduction, as it automatically increases your physical and emotional attractiveness.

57% of communication is conveyed through body language. Remember this and even if you are nervous, be conscious of what you are communicating through your posture, facial reaction and body gestures. For example, if you slouch or appear fidgety, it conveys discomfort and lack of confidence.

OPENING CONVERSATIONS

Start off with **open-ended questions**. Just by starting off with a simple “How are you today?” immediately puts your date at ease. Always have several opening questions ready to get the conversation going.

BE OBSERVANT

After the initial introductions, if you initiated the topic, **be extra observant** to the reaction of your date (especially negative facial expressions, body language, verbal responses). If your date initiated the topic and it is something you are totally disinterested in, do not be hesitant to use the earliest opportunity to **gently** change it to a topic which you could respond to with more enthusiasm.

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE MATTERS

Put your best foot forward! **Reveal your best self from the beginning**, and decide from the start that you are going to react positively to any problems that could occur during the date.

Discover and unveil your date with **an open mind and heart**, and avoid comparing your date with your previous dates or partners.

SELF-EXPLORATION QUESTIONS 2

1. How do people usually describe you after meeting you for the first time? Do you agree with what they say?
2. What do you hope people would notice about you? What can you do to achieve the first impressions that you would like to make?

MIDDLE OF THE DATE

*Focus on **Synchrony***

Your Desired Outcome: Comfort and Connection

CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

For a first date to be successful there must be both comfort and connection.

If your date partner feels comfort without connection, he/she would probably feel you are "good friend" material.

If they do not feel comfortable with you but you two are still able to connect on many areas, things may fail to develop to the next level as they may just feel as if there is "something wrong".

To help achieve a good result, it is important to create a positive atmosphere. Plenty of smiles and laughs from both parties, and being positive when discussing other people or circumstances build this atmosphere up.

Relating bad things about other people or organizations ALWAYS create a negative atmosphere, and that's the LAST thing you want on a date. Hence, avoid negative talk and try to stay calm if the topic does veer towards this, while changing the topic to something lighter and more positive.

MAKE THEM COMFORTABLE

Remember to make your date feel comfortable through your conversation, actions and body language. Use eye contact to convey sincerity and confidence when you speak. Smile and laugh, and they too will smile back.

If you can pull it off, humour is the ultimate tool in putting people at ease. Getting your date to laugh or smile instantly relaxes them, and makes people feel better. Once they feel comfortable and things are less awkward and more natural, they are more likely to open up to you.

BALANCED EXPLORATION

Try to ensure that an **equal amount of information** is exchanged between both sides. No one likes a conversation hog. If you know yourself to be too quiet, do reveal a little more about yourself so that you do not come across as too secretive. Do ask questions about your date, and listen attentively to what they have to say.

BE INTERESTING AND ENGAGING

Have at least **3 topics or stories** on the top of your mind that are interesting. An example would be instead of answering "what you do?" with just a short answer about your profession, why not describe a little about how you got there and the experiences you had along the way.

Effective topics will allow you to **"talk with"** your date partner. If you're still stumped for topics, then current events and mutual interests are good exploratory subjects.

AVOID HEAVY/CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS

Personal vulnerabilities and insecurities, controversial beliefs, and history about ex-partners are topics best avoided on a first date. **Build up some goodwill on the first few dates** prior to jumping into more controversial areas!

SELF-EXPLORATION QUESTIONS 3

1. Do you easily “connect” with your date partner in a first date?
What are the things that normally stop you from doing so?
2. Think of 3 topics or stories are interesting and fun to talk about.

4. END OF THE DATE

*Focus on **A**ppreciation*

Your Desired Outcome: Positive Ending

BE SINCERE

Things have been going well so far, but you sense that it is time to say goodbye (for now). **Genuine appreciation** is the one of the strongest ways to leave a powerful and lasting impression and of course, it will make your date feel good about him/herself. Lack of it could send the wrong signal or dampen the entire experience. Avoid false flattery, as it could come across as fake and trying too hard to impress.

BE SPECIFIED

What did you enjoy most about the date? Was it the sharing of insights, a story that the date told, or the fact that your date made the effort to look fabulous? **Be genuine with your compliments.** By being specific with your compliments, you would come across as sincere.

FOLLOW UP IF YOU ARE INTERESTED

If your date picks up the tab, appreciate him/her sincerely for it and **offer to reciprocate the kind gesture** if you are interested in meeting up with him/her again. This is a good set up for a follow-up date! If you have not exchanged contact details yet, this would be a good time to do so.

DO NOT GIVE FALSE HOPE

If you feel that you do not wish to pursue matters further, then **do not give false hope to your date**. In other words, do not lead them on. Do thank your date for a good time. If they ask for another date, you could be direct by saying that you are not ready to pursue things further. If you are not comfortable being so direct, decline by saying that you would be too busy or have too many other engagements. Most people will get the message.

SELF-EXPLORATION 4

1. Do your dates usually end on a positive note? If not, why?
2. Think of the last date you went on. How could you have effectively appreciated him/her?

SUMMARY

We hope you have had as much fun reading this booklet as we had writing it!

We wanted this booklet to provide you with some interesting insights about first dates, not to be another typical document on dating do's and don'ts. We hope we have achieved our objective of dissecting what makes a first date go well - and what does not.

If you were to take away only **one point**, we hope that it would be **"Shifting your Dating Paradigm"** – is your cup half empty or half full? Your paradigm is paramount in dating as:

1. Your paradigm determines your attitude,
2. Your attitude in turn determines your actions, and
3. Your actions will determine your success.

Some people meet their soul mate on their first attempt. Some people date many times but never meet their special someone. Is it pure luck? Or is there more to it?

Dating is a self-exploratory journey. As you embark on this personal journey, take time not only to discover your potential partners, but also just as importantly, take time to get to **know yourself**. We have other dating booklets in **www.isoulseek.com** which could address other areas of dating and relationships.

Remember RISA – Readiness, Impression, Synchrony and Appreciation and enjoy applying the RISA technique at your next date!

"In a world that is constantly changing, there is no one subject or set of subjects that will serve you for the foreseeable future, let alone for the rest of your life. The most important skill to acquire now is learning how to learn."

- John Naisbitt

'Ideas are cheap and abundant; what is of value is the effective placement of those ideas into situations that develop into action.'

- Peter F. Drucker

NOTES

Notes

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Violet Lim & Jamie Lee

Jamie Lee and Violet Lim are the founders of Lunch Actually, Asia's first lunch dating company that aims to help busy professionals find love by arranging one-to-one lunch dates with compatible matches.

Upon observation of her family, friends and colleagues having little time for love due to their busy schedules, Violet thought the idea of lunch dating would be a perfect solution for busy professionals.

Having gained little personal satisfaction in her former work, 26-year-old Violet left her previous job at a financial institution and a stable monthly income. She then travelled to New York to study matchmaking from veteran matchmaker Lisa Clampitt who ran the Matchmaking Institute. She is the first Asian matchmaker to be certified.

She then came back to start-up her own dating company with her husband Jamie, who previously worked as an IT analyst at an international bank. They named their agency "**Lunch Actually**".

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