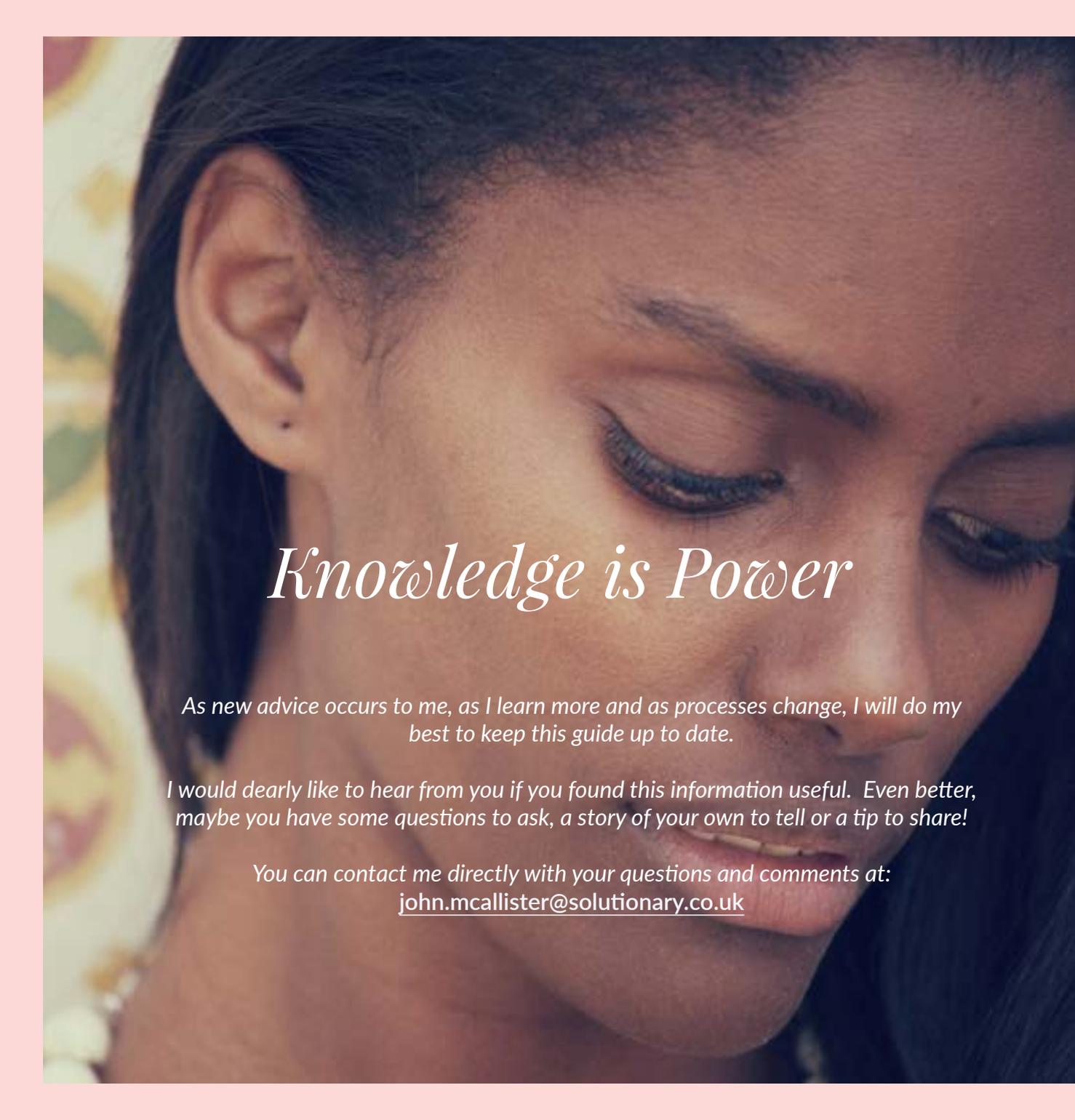




THE HEADSHOT EBOOK

An Essential Guide for Clients



Knowledge is Power

As new advice occurs to me, as I learn more and as processes change, I will do my best to keep this guide up to date.

I would dearly like to hear from you if you found this information useful. Even better, maybe you have some questions to ask, a story of your own to tell or a tip to share!

*You can contact me directly with your questions and comments at:
john.mcallister@solutionary.co.uk*



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John McAllister Photography

London Road, High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire HP11 1DQ
United Kingdom

subscribe@solutionary.co.uk
<http://solutionary.co.uk>
+44 1494 464287

HELPING YOU WORK WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS

John McAllister

Commercial Portrait Photographer

I created this eBook to help you get the most from your headshot session. While being useful for the person being photographed, this information will also help photographers new to the business of headshot photography.

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GETTING A GREAT HEADSHOT

7 TIPS FOR CLIENTS SEEKING THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

1. A professional headshot delivers value.

Whether you are an individual or part of a large organisation, you are the face of your business. A compelling portrait gives you a competitive edge while ensuring that you are immediately recognised during meetings. Remember, it is not only about your appearance, this is about you representing your brand.

2. Connect with your audience.

A great headshot is a key component in representing your trustworthiness. It is often quoted that body language accounts for 55% of our communication; in a photograph this is distilled into your pose and facial expression. Consider what you want your headshot to tell your audience.

3. Identify where you need to use a professional headshot.

There are many reasons you may want an image of yourself, here are a few suggestions:

- Social media profile images for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. (hyperlinks)
- Newspaper or magazine articles
- Your business website
- Professional forums and discussion boards
- Personal branding
- Marketing and promotions
- Resumes
- Comp cards and tear sheets for actors and models

4. Recognise what you really like.

Search the Internet, magazines and newspapers for the style(s) of portrait you prefer. Make sure to share these images with potential photographers to set expectations and to expedite the planning process (see the tools and resources section).

5. Set the scene.

Your session can take place indoors or outdoors; in the studio, at a specific location or even within your workplace. Think about whether you want to be pictured in your working environment or for you to stand out against a simple background; it all depends on the mood you want to convey.

6. Take time to find the right photographer for you.

Just like any important purchase, do your research first. Get online and review a selection of portfolios to discover which photographer's style meets your needs. It is important to note that some photographers are known for their particular style.

7. Get to know your photographer.

Always ask for a free consultation before you commit to buy. This will give you an opportunity to meet the photographer in person, work through your ideas, get your questions answered and to understand how they will work with you.



KEEP IT SIMPLE

CHOOSING YOUR WARDROBE

When choosing your wardrobe, it is recommended that you keep it fairly simple.

To help you decide which outfits best suit your needs, here are a few ideas to get you thinking.

> For business people, choose a wardrobe that would be suitable for meeting with a client, business partner or a vendor. For a resume and LinkedIn profile image, think about what you would wear to an interview.

> A session with several wardrobe changes will result in a selection of portraits that suit a variety of needs. Multiple looks will allow the photographer see what works best in front of the camera.

> It is perfectly acceptable to choose an outfit that reflects your individuality while maintaining a professional appearance.

> Keep in mind that your wardrobe choices do not have to be staid and overly formal.

> Stay objective, that shirt you adore may not photograph as well expected. Therefore, having a selection of clothing to choose from will keep the session flowing, which in turn will contribute to producing a great image.

> Think about the message you want your image to convey to your intended audience.

> You may find benefit from having multiple looks done in one session. For instance, you can use a different headshot for your website than for a newspaper article and yet another for social media. This is a proven marketing technique that can give potential clients, business partners or employers an insight into you as an individual as well as a professional.



Being prepared for your headshot session can result in the difference between a good image and the perfect image.

Here is a 12 point checklist that has helped me provide my clients with their perfect portrait.



PREPARING FOR YOUR HEADSHOT





A 12 point checklist to help you get the perfect portrait

1. Practice your facial expressions in the mirror (see tools and resources section) to find your best angle and most flattering look. Make sure that you practice both smiling with teeth showing and without teeth showing as you are going to do both during your session.
2. Make sure you bring plenty of tops to choose from in different colours and styles. Also, try a jacket, blazer and/or sweater to easily change up the look.
3. Iron or press every item that you will take along to your session. Wrinkles will show up on camera.
4. Have your wardrobe and accessories ready the day before your session. This reduces stress during the day of your session.
5. If you have declined professional hair and/or makeup, then bring a comb, brush, hair products and makeup bag to apply touch ups during the session.
6. Keep hydrated and get enough sleep during the week prior to your session. This is essential for good looking skin and a healthy glow.
7. Arrive 15 minutes early so that you can settle any nerves and prepare for your session. Take the time to hang up your wardrobe and ask any last minute questions.
8. When selecting your wardrobe, choose simple, classic clothing with solid colours. Patterns and logos distract from you and could reduce the impact of your image. The ideal outfit will bring out the colour of your eyes, will not distract from your face and will be well fitting.
9. Jewellery and accessories should be kept to a minimum.
10. In most cases headwear such as hats should be avoided. However, if you are known for your choice in headwear, then stay true to yourself.
11. In general, for business headshots, make-up should be natural and kept to a minimum.
12. Headshots should look exactly like you. You should be immediately recognisable by those known to you and anyone meeting you for the first time. For this reason, if no other, consider regularly updating your headshot.

After the Session Choosing the Final Images



You want photographs that speak immediately to potential clients and employers or whomever these images are geared towards.

When it comes to choosing your final selection, your photographer will often suggest the images that stand out to them. Your photographer has experience when it comes to the overall mood of an image and can help explain how particular images will communicate to your audience.

Start thinking about how often you will need a fresh headshot. Depending on your vocation and how your images will be used, your headshot may need updating anywhere between 6 months and two years.

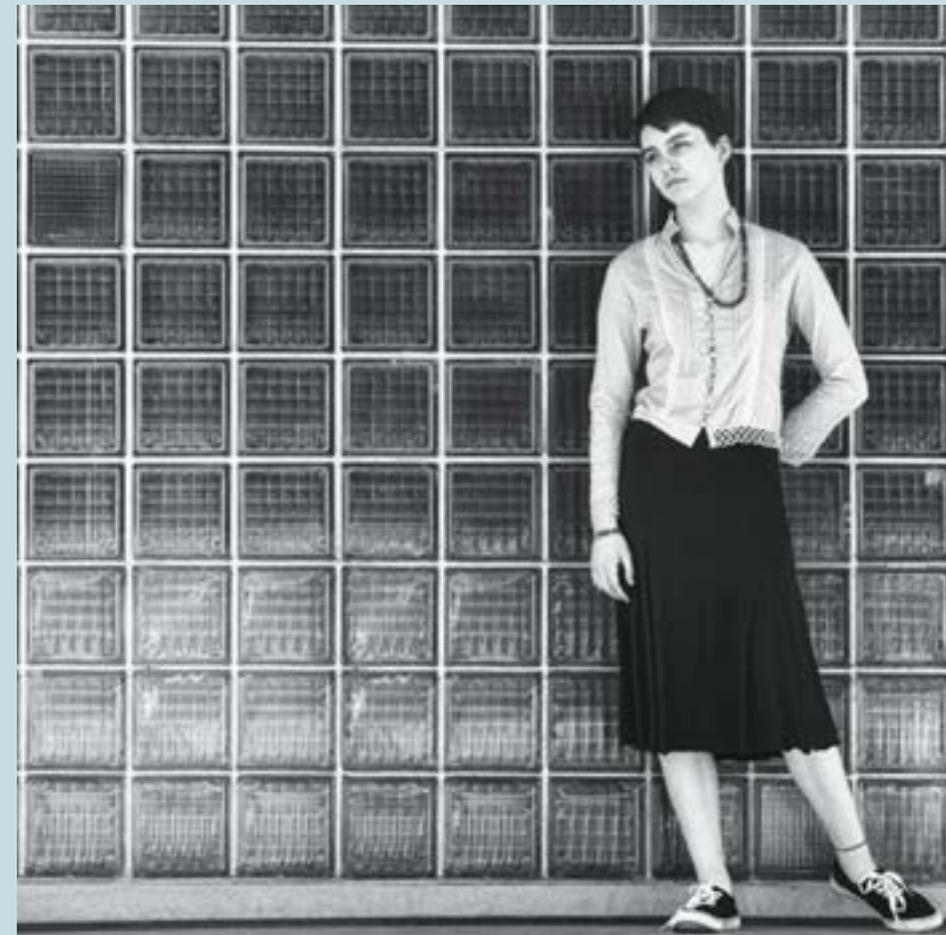


Getting into the Details

*Contracts, model releases, quotations; have your say in
this partnership*

It is said that the devil is in the detail. These images will be important to you. Therefore, you should know what are pertinent questions to ask.

The next section lists 10 important points to clarify with a prospective photographer. This will help you prepare for and to ultimately avoid any awkward situations before, during and after the session.





EVERYTHING IS GOOD

1. The length of your session could be between one to four hours. The exact timings depend on the type of images you have planned, the location and the number of wardrobe changes.

2. If your session overruns a little in order to capture just the right shot, then you will often find that most photographers will be more than obliging.

3. Often, a session will finish earlier than expected. Take the opportunity to ask your photographer to experiment with one of your themes. This could be a dramatic change in lighting or to use a different backdrop; challenge the photographer to let loose with their imagination and apply their unique problem solving skills. The resulting image could end up as one of your favourites.

4. Ask how long, on average, it takes before your final images are available and how they will be delivered. A common practice is that, soon after the session, your photographer will provide you with

a pick list of potential images that have had minimal retouching. Once you have selected your preferred images from the pick list, your photographer will retouch and fully process your final images.

5. Confirm with your photographer how long they will keep your images on file and accessible to you. Follow-up by asking them about requesting copy of your images if the need arises in the future, and if any additional costs will be incurred.

6. Make sure to agree how many 'final images' are included in the cost. Depending on how many wardrobe changes and the location you have selected, this is can be anywhere from 3 to 10 images.

/CONT

M A D E T O M E A S U R E



As well as headshots, consider 3/4 or full length images. These can be used alongside interviews and other types of news-worthy articles.

ENVIRONMENT CAN BE POWERFUL

7. Make sure you are quoted for the cost of any additional images above and beyond the aforementioned final images.

8. Prices for headshots vary enormously, from a few hundred pounds right up into the thousands.

Carefully review potential photographers, see the 7 tips at the beginning of this eBook, and then decide on the overall value of your headshot.

As always, cost is only one element of the equation.

9. Contemplate whether you would also like full length images of yourself. You may like to be captured in your working environment.

You could consider including a prop to act as an integral element of your image. Maybe you want to include a business colleague or even a member of your family.

You will find these types of image of particular use for publishing alongside magazine, newspaper and blog articles.

/CONT





Reaching an Agreement

with your photographer

10. Fully review the photographer's terms and conditions in any contract you will be expected to sign. Here are a few key points for your consideration:

- Discover how the images will be used by the photographer in the future. For example, your photographer may want to publish an article using your images. In this case, you may want to have the right to proof-read and approve the article before it is released into the public domain. State your preference and then ensure that it is specified clearly in the contract.
- Agree where you can use your images and for how long. It is certainly reasonable to expect to

use your own portrait in all electronic and printed publications, in perpetuity, without any reasonable restriction. It is normal for the photographer to be notified when an image is published. When used in magazine and newspaper article or Internet-based equivalents, it is expected that the photographer is credited along with your image.

- Understandably, the photographer would prefer that any future modification of your image is performed by them. At the very least, the photographer should have the opportunity to approve such changes. This is purely to ensure any published works stay true to the photographer's style and conforms to their standard of quality.

A Different Perspective

We all have different expectations. Your photographer will help you tell your story in an image.



I felt the need to share some additional advice that you can view at your own leisure. Please note that I am in no way affiliated to any of these companies or individuals, I simply believe that there is value in the content.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES



Pinterest

A popular service that allows you to 'pin' and save images you find on websites. [Pinterest](#) makes it easy to visually share your thoughts with a photographer.

Posing Guides

A few video guides to help you practice facial expressions and poise. I certainly hope to add more to this list in the future.

[The Jaw Line](#)
[The Eyes](#)

Social Media Marketing

Here are some marketing podcasts that will help you get the most out of the numerous social media platforms.

[Online Marketing Made Easy](#)
[The Business of Story](#)
[Social Media Marketing Podcast](#)

The Client's Perspective

Read about a real life headshot client and their experience.

[The importance of a professional headshot for your small business](#)

Enjoy the Experience



BREATHE

Take a some deliberate, deep and slow breaths. It is amazing how this simple act of breathing can help settle any nervousness.

POSITIVITY

Sometimes, we experience a burst of adrenaline. During this time, practice positive affirmation to occupy your thoughts. Start by thinking how great your headshot is going to be.

PERSPECTIVE

Mostly we are concerned about things that will never happen, and those that do are rarely as bad as we anticipate. Others rarely notice or ever remember.



The advice offered in this book aims to help you relax and enjoy your headshot session.

Although this is not an exhaustive article, covering every aspect of headshot photography, I hope that I have answered many of your questions and then some.

I am quite aware that this book may have sparked off more questions than it set out to answer. However, that is good.

I would like to think that you are now carefully considering the process and

are on the way to getting a great headshot.

As new advice occurs to me, as I learn more and as processes change, I will do my best to keep this guide up to date.

I would dearly like to hear from you if you found this information useful. Even better, maybe you have some questions to ask, a story of your own to tell or a tip to share!

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You Deserve More



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London Road, High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire HP11 1DQ
United Kingdom

subscribe@solutionary.co.uk
<http://solutionary.co.uk>
+44 1494 464287