Reflection on My First Impressions: Opinion Essay

First impressions are relatively a daily form of human judgment. For starters. it's something we do unconsciously and its quite normal to be honest. Our first impression and our judgments of others usually allow us to think whether the person in front of us could be a potential 'bae' or 'crush', new best friend or maybe even an enemy. All by how you look them or the way they appear.

The topic of first impressions reminds me of when I first started working back in 2018. I started my first actual part-time job on January 2nd, 2018 and that's when I first met my co-worker and (now one of my closest friends), Hannah. Well my first impression of my co-worker Hannah was, I naturally thought she was stuck-up, a snob and a… bitch. She almost never smiled and remained expressionless and emotionless. I started off on first day of work with her not even saying 'hello' or introducing herself to me, she simply walked away with a straight face. I vividly remember asking her a question about a student and she gave me a one-worded answer in a monotone voice. My first thoughts were 'Okay wow… what a bitch.' Right then, is when I began to convince myself that she's a horrible coworker and I hated her with my guts. I decided that I did not want to ever speak to her in my life again.

Looking back, I would say that I did in fact, rely on internal attribution to get an initial understanding of my co- worker at the time. Internal attribution is attributing the cause of someone's behavior to factors such as personality, skill, talent or abilities. Another way to put it is, that attributions are your attempt at understanding your experiences, behaviors, and the behaviors of others. That is exactly what happened to me.

Because Hannah never smiled, and often spoke in a monotone voice, I began to convince myself that she was rude and unreliable. So an internal attribution for that behavior was that she was a bitch. Looking back, my first impressions of Hannah were completely inaccurate because to my surprise she is completely the exact opposite. Even if she speaks in a monotone voice, she was nothing close to a snob, but helpful, careful and loveable. In fact, I engaged in fundamental attribution error because I caught myself over-emphasizing dispositional/ personality-based explanations for Hannah's behaviors while under-emphasizing situational explanations. Turns out, Hannah claims herself to be an 'introvert' and has had social anxiety ever since her mom passed away. This is probably why she didn't approach me first and avoided me most of the time at work when I first joined.

Three reasons why first impressions matter is because of primacy effect, belief perseverance, and attributions. I would say that primacy effect influenced my impression on Hannah more because primacy effect is the phenomenon where the first information perceived influences how we view the information we learn later. In other words, once we form an opinion, we look for information that supports our opinion. So in my case, once I saw Hannah with a straight expressionless face, I constantly found myself taking anything she does at work and somehow twisting it and relating to exactly how she was a snob or a rude unreliable person, when in reality she was a quiet girl who loved and cared for everyone. Love ya Hannah!