

HED: **What Makes Him Click: A Makeover for Your Dating Profile**

DEK: Here's how to attract your perfect match online.

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Bio: **Maya Rock** is an online dating veteran and a freelance writer whose work has been seen in Marie Claire and YourTango.com.

TEXT:

Online dating is not for the meek. Even women who don't bat an eyelash at asking for a raise can transform into shrinking violets when it comes to online dating. Such is the case with Etsy entrepreneur Sasha Waller*. Sasha has a busy life and is also naturally shy. So even though she's done the legwork of putting up a profile, there's plenty of room for improvement. As an online dating veteran, I offered to give Sasha's profile a full makeover so she can get more clicks.

Profile Photos: Lure Him in With Your Smile



The profile picture is your first impression and should only be of you. Sasha's picture (cropped here to protect her identity) is flattering and friendly. She has a big smile and lovely eye shadow, but her friend's face is awkwardly squished next to hers. Time for take two. Avoid other visual bells and whistles too, including obvious Photoshop enhancements, costumes, and busy backgrounds.

Sasha's collection of nine photos is her profile's strength. She has a nice variety - pictures that are classy yet sexy, serious (at work with a clipboard), and one of her playing field hockey, her favorite hobby. While nine pictures might seem like a lot, your potential suitors will welcome the array. Not only can they assess whether they're attracted to your looks, but they'll also get a peek into your life.

Profile Summary: Don't Be Modest

Now let's take a look at Sasha's self-summary:

My self-summary

I am originally from the east coast, and I am looking for someone to go to movies with and explore the city. Most important to me is someone who is caring, upfront with a great sense of humor.

I am shy at first, genuine, honest (sometimes too honest which gets me into trouble at times) and easy-going and love good, engaging conversation.

I value doing things on my own but I think it would be fun to venture out and explore things with someone else.

Sasha has made a mistake in the first sentence, writing "form" instead of "from." This is the online equivalent of an in-person first-impression faux pas, such as having yellow teeth. Not an

immediate rejection, but definitely disconcerting. Be sure your spelling and grammar are on point for your profile.

Overall, Sasha's self-summary is elusive, emphasizing more what she's looking for in a person. I recommend that Sasha update her summary to include that she's loyal, responsible, a keen observer of life and always quick to laugh. Plus she's tenacious and brave -- when she knows she wants something, she gets it.

Your online profile is not the space for the modest self-assessment society has trained us to give. Like Sasha, you too might be better off crafting your self-summary based on how a close friend describes you rather than relying on your own take.

Your Jobs and Interests: Be Specific

I'm really good at 
remembering people that have been in obscure movies and organizing.

Sasha's middle section, where she fields questions about her job, interests, and tastes makes her seem cultured and sane, but there's room to inject a

little more personality. Right now she's stuck in the land of the general. The section could be improved if she sprinkled in some specifics.

On a typical Friday night I am 
at a movie/drinks/dinner with friends or something similar usually somewhere on the westside.

For example, rather than simply saying she loves organizing, why not add the (true fact) that she loves organizing Christmas presents? Instead of just

"movie/drinks/dinner" Sasha should try, "On Fridays, I'll be discussing the thriller my friends and I saw over a Dragon Roll before grabbing white wine at Bodega."

As you redo your profile, "keep it specific" should be one of your credos.

What You're Looking for: Be Honest

In her this section, Sasha leaves it too open by stressing good qualities that everyone assumes they have:

You should message me if 
You are an open and accepting person, interested in meeting new people, having engaging conversations, know what you are looking for, and most important kind and caring with a good heart. Most of all if you are an honest and straight-forward person who doesn't sweat the small stuff and isn't overly sensitive.

Don't be afraid to dig deep and request what you really want.

I asked Sasha some questions about her ideal mate. What's his sense of humor? How should he feel about his job? What hobbies do you want him to have? Her answers led to vital additions to this section. Now it specifies that he has a dry, deadpan sense of humor (with bonus points for love of *Seinfeld*), is passionate

about his work, has an eclectic group of friends and would love to, or at least be up for, trying to share some activities like yoga and hiking.

You might be worried that by being so targeted, you're limiting yourself. But in fact, by being confident in what you want and not being afraid to voice it, you'll attract the right person, someone who will be excited that you're not looking for a generic male to pull down the aisle but for someone special to share a life -- or just a meal -- with.

**Sasha Waller is a pseudonym used to protect the source's identity.*