

Aussies are paying big bucks in their quest for a perfect partner

Javier Solorzano (left), with Andrew Gung from Core Confidence Coaching; and (below) before meeting his mentor. Main picture: JOSIE HAYDEN



MAXIMISE YOUR MATCHES

1 For your profile photos, choose a great head shot that shows you looking your best with natural lighting, a longer shot for variety and something showing off your personality. Higher quality photos often get the best results.

2 Avoid too much information. This goes for your photos and your biography. A lengthy description will often go to waste or deter people from swiping. Keep an element of mystery; show who you are but not everything, and limit other social media links. Don't give strangers access to absolutely every detail regarding your friends or place of work immediately.

3 Within your bio, aim to strike a balance between lighthearted and authentic. If you lean too heavily on humour it comes across as not taking much seriously. Equally, don't get too sentimental in the profile — leave something for when you meet in person.

4 Give your match an opening line they can build off. Avoid "hey" or "hi" or a waving emoji. Yes it's quick, but it's also not original and it leaves the match to do more of the legwork. Pick something from their profile you'd like to know more about and ask. This goes for women and men — learning how to engage with genuine interest is always a useful skill.

Source: Matchsmith



LOVE COMES AT A PRICE

AUSTRALIANS are splashing thousands of dollars in their quest for love.

Some are paying more than \$5000 for a dating coach, others are spending \$1500 a month to outsource their dating lives — recruiting modern-day cupids to manage potential matches.

Dating apps such as Tinder, Bumble, Grindr, eHarmony and RSVP allow free use of their platforms, but also offer paid versions that cost as much as \$65 a month, promising perks and more matches.

Holly Bartter, who runs dating concierge service Matchsmith, said she always encouraged her clients to start with the free versions and then her job was to redesign her clients profiles on two of their favourite apps.

Their dating bio, picture selection and matching approach were all reviewed, and conversation starters were offered for five people that had caught their eye.

About 15 people — mostly female — requested these services a week, which cost \$79 or \$190 depending on what they were after, Ms Bartter said. However, others pay \$1500 a month to hand over their login details and let her match on their behalf. Ms Bartter said she operated under the guise of her client.

"I keep conversation light, which my main aim to establish whether someone is right for my client," she said.

"I then present their matches to them, explain who is interested in meeting, and they take it from there."

Four people were now using this service and her

DAVID AIDONE

preference was to keep numbers small.

Coaches are also available to help people brush up on their dating skills — and they are being paid big bucks for their expertise.

Damien Diecke runs the School of Attraction for men in Sydney and hosts a 12-week course known as the Sincere Seductive Intensive. It comes with a price tag of \$5495.

He said he primarily worked with white-collar men in their 30s who were well educated, but often introverted and clueless about how to woo someone.

Mr Diecke said about 18 people took his part in-person, part online course each cycle.

"We tend to have Skype conversations on weeknights and talk through more of the psychology like what's happening internally, like internal battles.

And then on the weekend we'll actually go out to bars, talk to girls and get some practical experience."

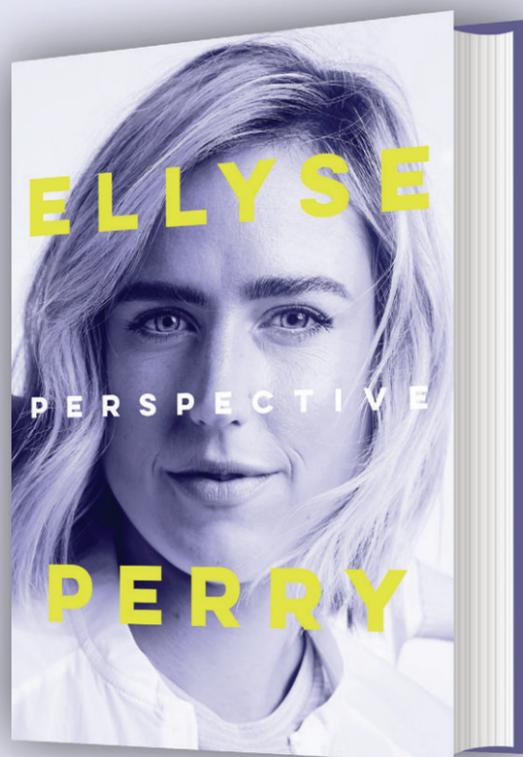
Mr Diecke said about 100 people a month purchased his other courses, which were conducted online. Among the most popular was his \$399 online dating unit.

He said consumers should never pay for dating apps unless you were already getting results for free and that he did not believe they were healthy.

"They are great if you want to meet people. But the downside is, that doesn't help you connect with the person at the other end in person," Mr Diecke said.

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