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The Makeover

Author: Rachel Wells

Last time he was at the Labor Party helm, he was dubbed "dry", "wooden" and even "grumpy". Does John **Brumby** need a makeover? Rachel Wells asked the experts:

The image maker JON-MICHAIL - CEO of Image Group International

The first thing I'd tell him to do is loosen up a bit. He could get away with being a bit stiff as treasurer but he's got to loosen up a bit in his new role. I'd advise some comedy training just to eradicate some of that stiffness. But overall his image is pretty good.

He's been the best performer in the Bracks Government so he's got that going for him. He's a good looking man, he's fit and he's a powerful communicator. However, he can appear, at times, to be a bit hard and intimidating and although his grooming is very good, it is a little bit too polished, especially his hairstyle.

The other thing he has to think about now is the image of his wife and family. Overall we give him a pretty big tick.

The hairdresser CATERINA DIBIASE, -2007 Australian Hairdresser of the Year

I'd like to get rid of his part - it's very ageing - and give him a nice short style that begs to be tousled. Something a little more now, and a lot more fashionable.

A fleck of grey can be very sophisticated on men. It works for George Clooney. But with Mr **Brumby**, I'd like to even out his colour and give him some gloss . . . I'd like to see him with a short, textured cut . . . a man of vision needs a visionary look. Whether you are a politician or a musician, if you want others to follow you, you need to be a leader. Go forward and go short, Mr **Brumby**.

The spin doctor MICHAEL SMITH – Director of Inside Public Relations

There's no doubt that Bracks is a bit more cuddly and soft around the edges than **Brumby**, but I think **Brumby's** a lot softer and more confident and animated than he was last time he was leader. In fact, I think he'll be a much better premier than he was an opposition leader.

Back then, he was Judy to Mr Kennett's Punch. Kennett was way on top, hugely popular, the Labor Party was in disarray, and he was getting knocked from pillar to post.



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Image Group International

Asia Pacific Head Office

Tel: (+61 3) 9820 4449

Email: info@imagegroup.com.au

Website: www.imagegroup.com.au

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He was a lightweight in a heavyweight championship.

But I wouldn't advise him to change . . . he's got the runs on the board and he doesn't need to pretend about who or what he is.

I think the one thing I'd do with him is give him a gag writer. But not too often. I wouldn't overdo it. And I'd tell him to smile a bit more.

The pollster ROD CAMERON former Labor Party pollster

I don't think he has to do very much at all.

All he has to do is reinforce what he has been doing, which is being seen to be the policy engine room of the Government to this point. As long as you've got that credibility, the rest of the flim-flam, the image stuff, doesn't matter. And whether he'll be as likeable as Bracks is not really important because Bracks was a genuinely likeable fellow, the likes of which you don't get very often in state or federal politics, so it would be hard to match him on that.

I think we'll see a very different **Brumby** to the one that was criticised more than a decade ago, which was seen in the prism of an all-conquering, all-powerful Kennett government. He was an irrelevance on the electoral landscape back then and that perception that was dogging **Brumby** in those days just won't be there.

He will be seen to be a winner in the sense of policy success and that brings with it a whole new image aura.