

BLOG POST



Executive Presence (Charisma)...The Secret Sauce

To Career Advancement

When you hear the words executive presence you might imagine an Armani suit or a Louboutin heels. And while a level of signature style is an important part of having executive presence, it's much more than that. It's having that charismatic quality that makes people like you...listen to you...and want to follow your lead.

Professional presence is maintaining poise and confidence in every situation. It's about your ability to connect with your colleagues and co-workers in a compelling way.

At its core, charisma is the character and credibility you bring to the table.

A-Level Companies Know It

Companies like Zappos, AT&T, Home Depot and Equifax are investing in executive presence coaching because they realize they need leaders who are prepared to lead and manage effectively.

Leaders with executive presence are more likeable, more credible and more trustworthy. They have a magnetism that draws people in, making them a strong and reliable presence within their organization.

As Business Week's Michelle Conlin wrote, *"Leaders with executive presence...inspire that I'll-follow-you-anywhere loyalty, conveying an aura of warmth and authenticity to everybody, from the receptionist to the CEO."*

It's Not Just For Top-Tier Executives

C-suite professionals are not the only ones who need a strong executive presence.

A recent report from the Center for Talent Innovation found that *"People are being evaluated for presence in numerous routine business situations, including hiring, promotions, performance reviews, and compensation bonuses."*

In short, having a strong executive presence separates you from the rest of the pack. You'll stand out by making not just a great first impression but also a valuable ongoing impact.

How Do You Develop Executive Presence?

If you're not one of the fortunate few who command a room the instant you walk in...don't worry.

While there are those blessed with an abundance of natural presence, it's not necessarily something you're born with.

It's a social skill you can learn...like having a firm handshake or good communication skills.

Pouring through a stack of self-help coaching books is one way to develop executive presence. But if you'd rather fast-track the process, here are 3 reasons to consider coaching:

1. **A coach helps you see what you don't see.**

It's hard to look at ourselves honestly and see where we're falling short. A coach helps you take an inventory of what's working well and what's missing in your leadership skill set.

Coaching can help you identify specific opportunities in your day-to-day interactions where you can strengthen and improve your executive presence.

2. **A coach improves your awareness.** To paraphrase a well-known saying, "perception is in the eye of the beholder." And to have charisma you must always be aware of how you're perceived by others.

If you've ever tried to give someone a compliment and they took it as an insult you know how frustrating it is to be misperceived. In some situations it could be worse than frustrating...it could threaten your job or career.

A coach can help you develop the self-awareness to recognize how you're being perceived and where you're unintentionally giving off negative signals.

3. **A coach gets results faster.** First learning and then consistently practicing specific skills is the proven best way to develop executive presence.

Coaching sessions give you the safe place to practice conversational changes and strategies to say what you want to say clearly and confidently.

And not just what to say, you'll also practice the best tone of voice, facial expressions, and open body language to assure the most effective communication.

It's Essential To Your Success

Today's professionals recognize that executive presence is a key differentiator for their careers, and they are hiring coaches in growing numbers to prove the point.

Developing and fine-tuning your personal brand will get you off the "mediocrity merry-go-round" and could be the difference in advancing your career.

Curious to see how you measure up? Contact us at (email address hidden) to get a free Executive Presence Self-Assessment checklist.