

**Do you speak with authority? Do you have charisma?
Are you persuasive? What is your silent message?**

Speaking with Authority

The ability to speak well to people makes a big difference in your life. Success depends on how much you enjoy and how good you are at speaking. Yet, the number one fear of most adults is speaking in public.

Speaking confidently is one of the most marketable skills you can have. Here are some good pointers:

- (1) Really care about your subject. Passion is the beginning of good speaking. Pick subjects you want to share with others because you know, intensely, that others would benefit from your knowledge. Your enthusiasm will show.
- (2) Be brief. The best way to impress is to be brief. “Be sincere ... be brief ... be seated.” The less time you give your listeners for their minds to wander, the more they will remember what you said.
- (3) Make use of good vocabulary that gives the listeners a visual in their minds. You keep their attention and they remember your message. Statistics and comparisons used sparingly and presented simply may add drama, be credible, believable and memorable.
- (4) Remember the pause that refreshes. The power of the pause Really not empty space. Gives the listeners an opportunity to reflect on your message and respond in their minds with their own thoughts and images. Don't talk too fast. Listeners do not comprehend – they tune out your message if delivered too fast. Enunciate your words completely.
- (5) End and don't ramble. The end is as important as the beginning. Sum-up your message and end your talk.

Charisma: What is it? What will it do for you?

Charisma is easy to see but hard to describe. We all tend to overuse the term charisma. Usually charisma is lavished on film stars, athletes, the rich and famous.

Definition: Charisma is the ability to influence others positively by connecting with them physically, emotionally and intellectually. Use your eyes, your handshake, a hug and acknowledge someone's presence.

Charisma is not in your genes and it is not beyond your grasp. You may already have charisma, but it is not the same charisma as the person next to you because we are all unique.

Seven components of Charisma:

- Your silent message. You make a statement about yourself before you talk. It is your posture.
- Your ability to speak well. You may have terrific ideas but who will know it is you can't speak.
- Your listening skills. Rarely taught and not practiced often. Listening makes other feel special.
- Your persuasive talent. Summed up as your skill to motivate others to your ideas and suggestions.
- Your use of space and time. How you honor or violate another person's time and space. This affects the amount of trust and tension between you and others.
- Your ability to adapt to others. Connecting with other people is impossible without treating them properly, as they expect to be treated.
- Your vision, your ideas. What do you feel passionately about? You'll never influence anyone if you don't feel strongly about it yourself and able to communicate it.

The wonderful thing about charisma is that it makes you powerful without making others less so. This type of power is personal power and not position power; the type of power that does not take power away from others, but give you and them the power to achieve together.

You have potential. Believe in yourself. You will have charisma.

Are You Persuasive?

Why are so many new ideas hard to believe? Because we are more savvy, skeptical, more suspicious of political claims, phony advertisements and not trusting of folks who give us new messages even if it is in our best interest. Example: Wal-Mart: Spend More. Enjoy Life. Is that persuasive?

Many people are not skilled in the art of persuading. No matter how brilliant your idea is ... no matter how technically or economically sound it is ... it will go nowhere unless you persuade others. Communicate clearly.

Learning to improve your persuasiveness is easier and harder than ever -- easier because we have email, voice mail, text messaging, CD-Roms, cell phones, etc. It is also more difficult because we are all overloaded with messages, too.

Tips on how to be more persuasive:

- Ask yourself: What do I really want? Sure – security, happiness, health, love, good grades, food, education, etc. We also want recognition, power, freedom and serve others.
- Focus on others. Practice attentiveness to others and you'll discover it works for everyone. Together you accomplish much more.
- Train yourself to remember people's names. It is a sweet sound to hear your own name. It builds a base and rapport to call people by their names.
- Empower others. Skillful persuaders sent out the message, spoken or unspoken, that they appreciate others' abilities. Listen to anybody with an idea. Give them room to bloom.
- Sharpen your own sense of humor. Do not take yourself too seriously. Laugh at yourself. Keep your spirits up and always project a positive attitude.

Your Best Silent Message

You make a statement about yourself before you talk. Your silent message includes everything about you from your posture to your positiveness. It *IS* the way you carry yourself, physically, emotionally and intellectually. Your signal affects people's first impression of you. Of course, image is not everything, but it is important. Success in life does not solely depend on education, merit and hardwork. Image is powerful. Creating the wrong image creates roadblocks that cut off relationships before the even get started.

When we first meet a person, we tend to put a positive spin on everything he or she says or does – it is like a special energy or an aura about them. People with presence, energy and aura are able to maintain an excitement about themselves from the beginning and lasts well beyond the first impression. Therefore, you are admired and don't realize it. It is a huge advantage to establish a bond with people.

Ideas on projecting a positive image:

1. A winning image begins with a good self-image. A good self-image precedes success. People with a poor self-image may fool some of the people some of the time, but he'll eventually fail unless he faces his own poor self-image. Look at photo or videotapes of yourself when you feel you were looking your best and study them. What do you see that you like and what don't you like about yourself? Ask your best friends for their candid opinion and promise you won't take offense and don't! Ask about how your posture, how you come across verbally, how you come across in terms of knowledge, enthusiasm, sincerity and integrity. Also what do your material goods – like your shoes, jewelry, pocketbook, etc. say about you?
2. Avoid annoying distracting habits and mannerisms. These habits detract from your image.
 - Tugging at clothing – always adjusting your clothes – fidgeting with jewelry
 - Drumming fingers on a table – tapping – making rhythmic noises
 - Clicking pens or tapping pencils on a table – again, making noise
 - Doodling
 - Jangling keys or money
 - Biting nails or picking at something on your body
 - Cleaning your teeth, primping in public
 - Constantly fiddling with your hair hanging in your face
 - Chewing gum – chewing anything

3. Seek winners and get rid of losers. Attitudes are contagious – good and bad. Nurture your own emotional well-being and select friends who genuinely want you to succeed and encourage you. Look at your own environment. Is it drab or is it energizing? Reduce your exposure to negative, violence, gossip, pessimism, etc.
4. Practice treating everyone like he or she is the most important person you will meet today. It is a real test of character and you will often learn a big lesson from a another person.
5. Make fitness a lifestyle, not a chore. Walk up and down stairs. Ride a bike. Hike. Move.
6. Most important silent message: Look pleasant. Maintain a pleasant facial expressions.

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