**Executive Presence**

***What Is Executive Presence?***

* Executive Presence is a ***set of behaviors*** –either innate or learned – that enable you to command attention.
* Beyond saying the right thing, Executive Presence ***how you communicate*** your message.

***Why Does Executive Presence Matter?***

* You are constantly being evaluated by others, both in formal meetings and presentations and in informal conversations. These interactions play a key role in ***developing your organizational reputation***.
* Executive Presence is what ***differentiates those with high potential*** for advancement from those who simply have a high amount of technical skill.

***Executive Presence and Perceived Effectiveness***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Higher** | **People Skills***Ability to Show Executive Presence*  | **Lower** |
| **Technical Skills***Content and Technical Expertise* |  |  |  |
| ***Highest Potential**** High degree of people skills allows this group to express technical ideas in a meaningful way
* Exhibits big-picture thinking
* Excels at emotional (relational) competencies
 | ***Limited Potential**** Stuck in career or seen as having limited leadership potential
* ***Can occur at any career stage!***
 |
| ***High Potential**** Potential for advancement as technical skills improve
* Job-specific competencies comprise only a small portion of leadership function
 |  |
| **Lower** |

Source: Paul Aldo, Ph.D., *Executive Presence: Making It Work for You*, 2013.

**Executive Presence Is Created through Nonverbal Behavior**

Nonverbal communication occurs between people outside of the words that they use. Because it translates into meaning instantly and intuitively, nonverbal behavior has a profound effect on how content is received. Paul Aldo’s Interpersonal Presence Model uses a theatrical metaphor to illustrate the impact of the nonverbal behaviors you use “on stage” on delivering your message.

***Interpersonal Presence Model***

**Feedback**

Source: Paul Aldo, Ph.D., *Executive Presence: Making It Work for You*, 2013.

* **Backstage** is who we think we are and the view of ourselves that we want to project to others.
* **On Stage** is how we use nonverbal attributes, such as our eyes and body language, to interact with other people. It is the information they use to determine who we are.
* **Filtering:** Your audience will filter both your message and nonverbal information you convey through their own attitudes, expectations, cultural conventions, or prejudices. The more you understand your audience, the more you can anticipate how this filter will affect your message.
* **The Audience** is how we are evaluated by others. It is about the impressions others have of us based on the way we act and the attributions they make about us based on how they make sense of our behavior.
* **Feedback** – whether given directly or gleaned from your reflections on the audience’s response – provides awareness of how you are perceived. Compare your audience’s impression of your message with the message you intend to project.

**Message Architecture**

***Message architecture*** is the way we structure and organize our communications. It’s what makes our ideas clear and convincing – or murky and confusing. Your up-front investment of time spent thinking about your audience and the message you hope to convey will result a message architecture that will help you present your ideas most effectively.

|  |
| --- |
| Tips for Creating an Effective Message Architecture |
| #1: Know What You WantWhat do you want your audience to think or do differently as a result of your presentation?* Write this down in one crystal clear statement.
* Do not start creating your message until you have done this.
 |
| #2: Know Your AudienceWhat do I need to address to get what I want?* What is your audience most interested in?
* What are their particular concerns, interests, fears, and questions?

  |
| #3: Directly Address Audience InterestsWhat is the most important supporting information I can provide?* Address every one of your audience’s concerns.
* Add only as much detail as you need to make your point.
* Have additional supporting detail (sub-point support) available for questions and/or as a handout.
 |
| #4: Keep to Your MessageFind its natural story.* It is the flow of information that makes your point.
* It provides context for your message.

Use an audience-friendly vocabulary.* Stay away from jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations.
* Substitute simple words for complex words whenever you can.
 |
| #5: Keep It SimpleTell your story in the most straightforward way possible.* Start with the point and then provide the supporting logic.
* Provide only the logic that leads to and supports the point.
* DO NOT make your audience work to figure out what you are trying to say.
 |

Source: Paul Aldo, Ph.D., *Executive Presence: Making It Work for You*, 2013.

**How Executive Presence Is Expressed**

Paul Aldo’s ***Nine Expressive Dimensions*** create a framework to help us understand executive presence analytically. By thinking and talking about each concept, you can begin to understand your strengths as well as your areas of growth.

***The Nine Expressive Dimensions***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **About *Us**** Passion
* Poise
* Self-Confidence
 | **About *Our Messages**** Clarity
* Candor
* Openness
 | **About *Our Relationships**** Sincerity
* Thoughtfulness
* Warmth
 |

Source: Paul Aldo, PhD. 2004-2012.

***About Us***

**Passion:** The expression of ***motivation, focus***, and **drive** that shows others you are engaged and committed

**Poise:** The appearance of ***sophistication*** and ***unflappability***

**Self-Confidence:** The air of ***optimism*** and ***assurance*** that convinces others you have the strength, resources, and resolve to lead

***About Our Messages***

**Clarity:** The ability to create and tell your story in an ***intuitively clear*** and ***compelling*** way

**Candor:** The expression of ***truth*** and ***honesty***, with a willingness to engage the world as it is, not as you would like it to be

**Openness:** The willingness to consider others’ points of view **without prejudging** them

***About Our Relationships***

**Sincerity:** The projection of ***believing in*** and ***meaning*** what you say

**Thoughtfulness:** Conveying an ***interest*** in others and a ***concern*** for them

**Warmth:** Being ***accessible*** to others, both physically and emotionally

Source: Paul Aldo, Ph.D., *Executive Presence: Making It Work for You*, 2013.