

## DR. LOIS FRANKEL

*Get and keep the job you want.*

Whether I'm coaching, keynote speaking, or writing books, you'll always notice references to "the look and sound" of success. Getting and keeping the job you want isn't only about what you do and what you know, it's also about how you look and sound. This month's coaching tips come from one of our communications specialists, Tom Henschel. Although he uses the term "executive presence" don't think these tips don't apply to you if you're not at the upper echelons of your organization. They're equally valid at all levels of the workforce.

" 'Executive Presence' has different definitions in every company I visit," says Henschel, "but certain behaviors cut across company lines. The behaviors below apply to creating a powerful executive presence in meetings."

1. First, commit yourself mentally. Play the game of work with mental energy. Being casual or inattentive is the opposite of being executive.
2. Being silent in a meeting adds no value to the meeting, to how you're perceived or to the company at large. Remember, if the meeting were transcribed on paper, your name and your words should appear at least once on every page. You don't need to make a speech. "I agree," or "Me, too," are enough to put you on the record. A secondary benefit is gaining the cooperation and goodwill of colleagues when you chime in with genuine support for their ideas.
3. The above adage is true unless you are running the meeting. In that case, don't lead and don't dominate. Smart leaders solicit input from many voices. You will need to listen effectively for long periods of time. This means you have to stop the inner dialogue in your head while others are talking. Just listen. Don't prepare your reply. Maybe you'll have to take notes. Remember, silence conveys confidence and authority. Do not be in a rush to contribute. By virtue of your position, you will always get your turn!
4. Similarly, when you want to encourage discussion, use open ended questions. For example, what do people do when you ask, "Do you have any questions?" They automatically say "no." You will always, if you wait patiently in silence, get more responses with the close-ended "What questions do you have?"
5. When you do speak, be simple. If your style is to speak in complex sentences with digressions and parenthetical phrases, which are great when reading but are tough on your listeners' ears, stop. Speak simply. Your sentences, if diagramed, should be straight lines.
6. Employ analogies and metaphors. Numbers and facts are never truly persuasive. They are "arguments" but they don't win people over. Stories and vivid language win people over. People will experience you as passionate. Plus, when you use analogies, it pushes your thinking to a higher, more executive, level.

7. Finally, when answering questions, answer what's asked. Don't assume you know why questions are being asked. You don't. Ever. Just answer what they've asked for. After they've gotten their question answered, you can talk about what's important to you.

As a reminder, many of our coaches are seasoned and entertaining keynote speakers, so if you're looking for someone to not only make a hit, but make a difference, contact Dr. Kim Finger, at 877.GR8.COACHES. Until next month, stay well.

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Lois P. Frankel, Ph.D.