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THE LEADER'S
GUIDE TO
SPEAKING
WITH PRESENCE

HOW TO PROJECT CONFIDENCE,
CONVICTION, AND AUTHORITY

When giving a speech...

Before you take the stage...

- ✓ Close your eyes. Think of a place where you like to relax, e.g. the beach, the mountains, your favorite easy chair.
- ✓ Breathe deeply for one full minute.
- ✓ Rotate your head from side to side gently stretching your neck muscles.
- ✓ Relax your facial muscles.
- ✓ Think about your message. Remind yourself that you know your stuff.

As you take the stage...

- ✓ Walk to the center of the room (or podium) with assurance.
- ✓ Smile as you walk.
- ✓ When you reach the podium, or the center of the stage, stand up straight.
- ✓ Look to front of the room, then the back and from side to side. Nod and acknowledge the applause.

As you begin your presentation...

- ✓ Smile all around as you take a deep breath.
- ✓ Find way to make the audience comfortable with you; this puts you in control.
- ✓ Comment on something topical, e.g. what previous speakers have said, the situation, or even the weather.
- ✓ Deliver the hook of your presentation, e.g. why you are speaking today.

During your presentation...

- ✓ Punctuate key points by raising your voice.
- ✓ Assume a neutral, but authoritative tone, as you deliver your presentation.
- ✓ Use appropriate gestures. You may punctuate key points with hand gestures. Reveal your hand in profile, not open palm.
- ✓ Shift your eye contact from side to side and front to back.
- ✓ Pause for emphasis. Hold the pause for dramatic effect.
- ✓ If you are dispensing with a podium, stroll the stage. Do not pace, walk slowly to one side and deliver a portion of your presentation. Walk to another side of the room, and deliver more of the presentation. Move to the center of the stage and deliver still more. Do not say something crucial as you walk.
- ✓ Look to the audience when you make a key point. Hold the moment, then explain your key point.

As you conclude your presentation...

- ✓ Summarize your key points.
- ✓ Include a call to action, if desired.
- ✓ Close with a story.
- ✓ Thank the audience for listening.
- ✓ Acknowledge the applause with a polite nod.

As you take questions...

- ✓ Smile at the audience. Relax your posture a bit. Open your stance. This shows that you are inviting people to ask you something.
- ✓ Acknowledge questioners. Re-state questions so the entire audience can hear.
- ✓ After you answer, check for understanding, e.g. have I answered your question?

Handling objections...

- ✓ Acknowledge the tough question, e.g. “That is a tough question, and it deserves a good answer.”
- ✓ Remain calm. Breathe deeply. Smile before answering.
- ✓ Do not be afraid to say you don’t know. Promise to deliver an answer at a later date.
- ✓ Always state the truth. Always.

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