

Can you teach Charisma? Robin Kermode believes you can - or he's out of a job!

We talk to customers, suppliers or colleagues everyday either face to face or on the telephone so it's always worth improving the way we connect and speak to other people. Whether we're speaking to one person, to several people, round a table or to a larger audience in a bigger hall, making a real connection with our audience is the key. So how can we achieve that connection every time we speak?

Firstly, our message must be crystal clear - our audience must be left in no doubt as to what we are saying. Are we trying to motivate, inspire or sell? If we want them to think differently, TELL THEM. If we want them to buy our product, TELL THEM. We mustn't leave our key message to chance. It must be delivered with energy, clarity and humanity.

We must be physically aware, treading that fine line between confidence and arrogance - to be physically dynamic, yet still open and relaxed. Knowing why the body reacts as it does to nerves and pressure and having specific exercises to control the mind and body.

Real impact starts with work on the voice; it's the foundation of all communication. We need to know how to 'centre' our voice, making it sound real and authentic and to understand how nerves and certain situations pull us off centre. This is just as important when speaking with customers as it is when giving a talk or presentation.

So whether we're speaking to one person or to a larger group, we make the best connection with them that we possibly can - EVERY TIME.

The Zone 2 Concept

Zone 2 is the area where, ideally, all communication should take place. Think of zone 1 as a circle around your body - an area where you feel happy in your personal space, your personal world. We have to actively choose to reach out and metaphorically go into our zone 2 for communication to work. And, of course, it works even better if we can encourage the person we're talking to, or our audience, to join us in their zone 2. Communication works best in the metaphorical space when our zone 2 and their zone 2 overlap.

But if we go into our zone 3 and become too loud, controlling or arrogant, we effectively lock the person we're talking to into their zone 1. When this happens, communication is blocked and is unlikely to go well. Ideally all communication should take place in zone 2.

Robin Kermode is one of Europe's leading communication trainers, working 1-1 with leading public figures and CEOs. He works with companies on all forms of their communication, from Sales and After Sales teams to Customer Service and internal communication.

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