

PERFECTING YOUR PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

Actions speak louder than words! The way individuals present and conduct themselves, in both body language, postures, attitudes and deeds, defines who they are to those with whom they work and live. Like the old proverb says: “Tell me what you do and I’ll tell you who you are.” Often these actions, subtle or obvious, are embedded in our subconscious – after all we can’t be aware of everything. However, we are human beings in a human beings world, and it means we will be evaluated, scrutinized, looked over and interpreted based on how we present and conduct ourselves in professional, public and social circles. Poor business etiquette is a silent epidemic in most environments. Seldom do we realize these are creative issues in the work place.

Several key studies conducted by Harvard University, The Carnegie Foundation, and The Stanford Research Institute found that technical skills and knowledge account for a mere 15% of the reason that individuals and companies are successful. 85% of job success is connected to soft skills. An investment in developing excellent soft skills is critical to the success of any business.

Image Management/Personal Marketing: Boundaries

- Boundaries level 1: how to spot them and use them to your advantage
- Confidence and Presence
- Clear communication
- Credibility. Our natural ability to take charge. Rely on it.
- Body language
- Gesturing
- Sense of space
- Energy
- Desire to be heard and seen. Belonging. Be the host.
- Controlling the scene. Containing. Role play. When do I play a role. Role plays me?
- Negative expressions: subdued or withheld. Energy backward & forward. Single.
- Ability to engage and connect. How do you want to be known?

Image Management

- Presenting a Professional Image
- Meeting and Greeting
- Fantastic First Impressions
- How to Make an Entrance and Work a Room
- The Art of the Handshake
- Small Talk Savvy. Be interested NOT interesting.
- Professional Speech and Communication
- Introducing Yourself and Other
- Successful Networking
- Professional Attire and Grooming, and
- Remembering Names
- First Impressions are lasting impressions
- Image components and impression/image management
- Poise and polish

Image Management (continued...)

- Impressions of dress
- Image evaluation
- Strengthening confidence and trust
- Charisma
- Performance Skills
- Public persona versus personal or casual individuality
- Being on purpose.

Corporate Ambassador Skills

- What Your Body Language Really Says About You
- Voice and tone
- Image management and selling yourself and your company
- Email and Cell Phone Etiquette during corporate functions
- Mirroring techniques
- Listening
- Key strategies of success

Mix and Mingle: Inclusion

- Introductions
- Meet, Greet and Mingle comfortably
- Manners matter
- Boundaries level 2: how to spot them and use them to your advantage
- Including versus excluding techniques
- Cocktail Parties and Other Off-Site Business Functions
- Instant Rapport, Small Talk and the art of conversation.
- Affinity. Finding something you like.
- Saying Thank You or rather acknowledging.
- The ABC's of communication

This seminar series presents key insights, tools and techniques for attendees to use to hone their soft skills and present an image of confidence and relaxed authority. Focused on improving and enhancing your professional business image, Eric Stone's engaging and interactive presentation combined with his experience as a caring professional coach, provides attendees with tools that can be used immediately to enhance the soft skills necessary to continue succeeding in this highly competitive, global market.

This interactive seminar emphasizes the value of “generated” professionalism in each leader's personal development as well as the value of establishing positive, professional relationships with clients, prospects, peers, and employees.

Value to Participants:

1. To provide a useful and valuable learning experience featuring current and correct business etiquette information.
2. To become more aware and sensitive to how we are being seen and how we see others through appearances, and arm ourselves to control the situations rather than be dominated by them.
3. To assist participants in projecting a professional image of confidence and relaxed authority by providing them with the knowledge and insights to thrive in important business and professional situations with co-workers, employees and peers.
4. To distinguish participants by equipping them with cutting-edge skills in the areas of active creative courtesy, business etiquette, and professional behavior to establish a culture of excellence, trust and reliability for their clients and colleagues.

In this highly interactive, fun and participatory workshop, Eric Stone will guide you to discover the effect you have on others in all professional situations, and take control of all the fundamental elements that command attention and demonstrate leadership and confidence in action. In matters of communication, the way we are perceived is often overlooked as a potent behavior organizer. We may possess a strong desire to come across powerfully, and even be an expert in the topic we are presenting or discussing, but we don't necessarily understand, and use to our advantage, how we are being perceived by others.

There are three key dynamics at play in any public or professional interaction:

- (1) The dominating public or professional context or event we're in.
 - (2) How we register and come across to others, and of course to ourselves.
 - (3) What we are here to communicate and negotiate.
- Our sense of belonging to ourselves, to the environment, and the present situation is what is most visible by others on first approach. It literally sets the tone for what follows.
 - We also are being evaluated from the point of view of being liked or disliked, as well as registering threatening or safe to others. In better communication models, we learn to become responsible and accountable for how we are received by others.
 - We also all carry basic qualities, which are active and in the foreground of how we appear to others. If there's something "we're not letting others know", or not allowing ourselves to experience, it also moves to the foreground. It needs to be allowed and shared openly in our body language.
 - We communicate more with what we are not saying, called subtext, than what we are saying. Hence we are most "noisy" and communicative when we do not speak.
 - It is healthy to develop a certain amount of accountability for how we register to others. We can shift those perceptions, but only after we have recognized what they are.
 - Negative expressions are always connected to fear or anger, whether admitted or not. Anything which isn't straightforward, registers as a danger signal to others, which eats at the trust we so desperately need to survive in business and in life.
 - Our sense of belonging allows us to develop a solid technique for being in relationship and communicating.
 - Communication begins with convincing ourselves there's something we like about others. Then comes the "give and take," the actual exchange of behavior and words. Finding things we share in common follows naturally. They can also be things we agree about.

The practice “engaging” techniques. In our daily interactions, finding something we like about people, and findings things we have in common, are the must prerequisites to better relationships.

Fundamental: We communicate best through what we openly experience NOT what we wish or intend others to see. Intentions are second to experience. Ultimately they become one. Our sense of belonging is the primary trust builder in interactions. Meaning what we say comes from our sense of belonging. Therefore, try to pay more attention to your moods, reactions, and pay attention to the affect you have on others. An excellent question is how are people left after an exchange with us? The ultimate is that they left empowered, inspired and ready for action. How others respond to us is by far the best gage for understanding who we are perceived to be. Often we are terrified to actually realize the affect we have on others.

Other fundamental: The bare and empty nature of the interaction, event, stage, boardroom or television set does not allow for our “personality traits” to be visible as they are in other more common settings. Hence we have to pay attention to how we are going to create or generate our presence. We consequently begin to realize the “creative” nature of our interactions. Creative versus psychological, which almost always means we are thinking about what we’re going to say next, rather than be involved with forwarding the “action” of the conversation or negotiation.

Last fundamental: Everything around us is or has a design. Chairs, pens, ceilings, buildings, the clothes we wear, the phones we speak with, the cars we drive, our organs, molecules,...etc...All began with a design. We believe the universe is a creation, which means it has a design. Design implies shape and form but also implies purpose or intention. A car has a purpose so does a meeting. We rarely see the opportunity for design in human interactions. A more subtle look will reveal that every conversation IS and possesses a design. In a thoughtful design, we create or presence what we want, and do not bring or presence what we do not want. A car does not have a lawn in it, and a house has no engine. For the most part we take design for granted. If we are indeed moving into a new Conceptual Age, as Daniel Pink suggests in his book "A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers will Rule the Future," designers will be at the heart of everything. Relationships have a design too. When the design of a relationship is flawed, communication and understanding are suppressed. We can stage and design ourselves more powerfully by becoming aware of some of these key elements at play in human interactions. Think of confidence as a design as well, as it is the certainty of how we walk, how we talk and how we behave that determines our effectiveness. Design is the new heart of the matter in my view. We need to be ready for it.

Basic strong design and staging verbs: Belong, Stay, Be Heard and Seen, Anchor, Take Charge, Stay Present, Serve, Share, Listen, Address, Communicate, Observe, Suggest, Lay Out, Outline, Perform, Offer, Request, Promise, Empower, Describe, Project, Affect, Arrange, Compose, Plan, Encourage, Originate, Produce, Think Up, Initiate, Create, Assert, Explain, Lead, Intend,...