

## Develop a presence

Having presence at work means showing up in a way that has a positive impact, particularly in high-pressure moments.

## Principles for developing presence

- 🔗 **No such thing as perfect presence.** Think of 3 people you would describe as having a presence. *What are the similarities and differences?*
- 🔗 **Presence is not about pretending.** It starts from your strengths and needs to feel like you. *What makes you uniquely you?*

## 3 signals and skills for improved presence

### 1. What you say and how you say it

Be aware of your natural linguistic style (your normal speaking pattern) and how you could adapt and develop it to improve your presence.

Pauses are powerful and give your words weight. *How could pausing increase your impact?*

Record a voicenote of you reading out a paragraph with pauses and without. *Listen back to the difference.*

Your pitch and pace can change the way people feel when they hear you talk. *What is your pitch and pace preference? (high & fast or low & slow).*

Try the opposite pitch in a low risk situation at work. *See how it feels.*

### 2. The way you present yourself

It's important to ensure the impact of your body language matches the intent of your words.

Your positioning and posture can help or hinder your presence or impact.

*What impression do you want to create when people see you?*

Record yourself presenting or during a meeting and critique 'what went well / what could be even better if' in terms of position and posture, influence and impact.

*Think about the impression you created and how well it aligned with how you would like to come across.*

### 3. How you use power

Power plays a big role in the context of your presence. Soft power (vs. 'hard' authoritative power) rests on the ability to attract other people to you.

Positive power can help convince and influence people to take action that aligns with your intent. *Who can you see with a positive power style at work?*

Which type of power could you use to increase your presence at work:

- Content power (where you're an expert in an area)
- Context power (where you've got good insight into what's going on)
- Connection power (when you have a strong & active network).

## Coach yourself questions

When in your week would improving your presence be most important for your impact?



What is one action you could take this month to experiment with your presence?



## Recommended resources

Emotional Intelligence  
**LEADERSHIP PRESENCE**



**Leadership Presence (HBR Emotional Intelligence Series)**  
by Harvard Business Review



**Improve Your Leadership Presence** video by Muriel Maignan Wilkins, coauthor of *Own the Room*



**How to own the room** with Viv Groskop  
Squiggly Careers podcast #105