

Leadership Presence **Mastery Unfolding**

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L*eadership Presence. Can it be as varied - as people are unique? Assuming that is true, how can we clarify the term's definition to understand its leadership relevance and compelling value in today's economy?*

One response to this intriguing question lies in our collective speculation about what happened with BP in the early days of the Gulf oil spill. What if the company's former CEO had demonstrated his responsibility with an aura of certainty, complete accountability, and crystal clear understanding of the enormity of the disaster? What positive differences could have been realized, if we had witnessed him communicating his authentic command of language in the midst of crisis?

Regrettably, for most of us who were observing, he did not demonstrate a sense of *centeredness* and "*grace under fire*" while guiding emergency responders through the initial intensity of the crisis. In his position as CEO, he was reasonably expected to have anticipated the disaster's probability and to have accepted the threat. If he had, how could he have competently responded in the moment and in a state of *Presence*, to creatively communicate to the press? In retrospect, could he have realized that the apparent lessons posed an opportunity to communicate significant and positive changes in BP's image in the market place?

Looking back, can we envision what could have happened by now, if he had imaginatively designed and passionately communicated an inspiring vision? What if the vision had articulated an empowering plan to enlist the whole nation to support a *timely restoration and renewal program* for the affected people's livelihoods, their surrounding communities, and the directly-related ecosystems?

In contrast to the BP example, we've all met people who are deeply grounded in their influential power while exuding charisma, which magnetizes us to their *presence*. When we connect deeply with ourselves and others, we communicate more easily in clear and passionate ways to achieve full engagement and whole hearted contribution. These instances offer us different lenses to refocus our insight and to reframe our perception. By drawing on these visual metaphors for new viewpoints, we are reminded to refocus for increased depth and width, to reshape our dimensions telescopically or narrow our insight microscopically.

Perhaps it's as simple as when we're in those heightened awareness moments... we notice counter-intuitively that small things result in big differences. Remember the last time you noticed a person's exceptional ability to inspire confidence in others or share words of encouragement to those needing a lift? How did your energy shift when you were met with that enlivening and mood-lifting smile?

Joyfulness is a key ingredient of Presence. By developing the practice of joyfulness, we can make huge differences in our lives and those we influence. If you're thinking, are all of these soft skill attributes really leadership traits, a case study reveals that when employees were asked if they preferred working with someone highly competent or joyful and easier to work with - the majority preferred both. If required to choose, however, they selected the easier to work with as their preference. (There is an implication here that joyfulness is related to easy to work with...there are joyful people who may not be easy to work with).

Recall the last time your team's synergy surged and you stepped into peak performance? We might agree, those are extra special moments. They can be multiplied by developing practices that generate *synchronicity* with a higher-energy management system. They pave the way to work intensely while enjoying our life with more enthusiasm.

Perhaps you are familiar with how Chicago Bull's legendary Michael Jordan developed his unique edge in professional basketball. Coach Phil Jackson observed that MJ was "chasing the game". He coached Michael to "Let the game come to you." Michael's Coach advised him to be *centered* and create a *vortex* to allow the opposition to pivot around him. Once MJ began this practice, and with the rest of his team's energy shifting to support MJ, the game dynamics changed. The Bulls were the NBA "Team of the Decade" in the 1990's, and Michael Jordan's mastery earned him induction into the NBA Hall of Fame in 2009.

With adequate direction and support, we can all find our own centeredness and develop our own “*vortex*”. When we do, our confidence soars as we become aware that we’re making an extraordinary contribution. Our sense of self-expression and self-respect expands exponentially. We notice that others appreciate our developing talent and uniqueness. We enjoy deep and intrinsically-satisfying fulfillment.

Are you thinking that now may be my time to step forward with a whole hearted contribution to become fully engaged? Do you need to examine the possibilities for your significant career and vocational developments? Would you like to turn your special endeavor into a uniquely exciting adventure?

Similar to the lengthy process of making fine wine, developing *Leadership Presence* allows one to develop an integrated set of admirable traits that are refined, and polished over time with the requisite attention to disciplines, practices and guidance. One embarks on this journey by building a support group of professional and trusted advisors, with a sponsor, mentor and coach.

Regardless of the phase of leadership development you’re entering or completing, Michelangelo wisdom can be inspiring and encouraging. “*Regardless of our talent or special gifts - our work is to release the hand from the marble that holds it prisoner*”.

To learn more contact...

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