



TRANSCRIPT FOR MODULE 3

# LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION WITH IMPACT

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## Introduction

How do you communicate with your team, with your stakeholders, with your clients? Do you sell the same message, the same way to them all or do you tailor your communication closely to their needs and wants?

Do you know how to deliver your message with presence and impact? Do you have the confidence in yourself and your communication skills to deliver any message to any audience?

This curriculum was designed by leading experts and will help you become a great communicator, learn the skills to connect with anyone and make a difference by giving useful and impactful feedback to your team, as well as how to influence different audiences to take on board your message.

At the end of this module you will be able to:

- Develop your Presence and Impact and know how to control it
- Connect well with others through excellent communication
- Be yourself!
- Give useful and impactful feedback
- Influence others successfully every time

Let's get started!

## Lesson 1: Presence and Impact

### Session A: Presence and Impact

Would you like to communicate well? With Impact? With More Impact? We all know people who have 'Charisma', 'Presence', 'Impact'. They appear to have credibility as a result. They can be inspirational leaders, and we want to listen to them, follow them. To communicate with impact, you need to either feel this feeling or adopt it. Obviously feeling it genuinely is much more authentic.

Is it something they just have or can you grow it, develop it? It is in fact a learned skill. Some people do have it more naturally but everyone, including you, can develop a signature presence and impact.

### Session B: Confidence and Passion

Presence comes largely from confidence. How you feel about yourself and what you stand for. There's a fine line between confidence and arrogance however.

Choose your attitude, decide to be effective, to make a difference, to have Impact.

If you're not passionate and excited about what you want to communicate, this will come across pretty quickly. Why would anybody else want to be passionate and energetic about your project if you're not. You have to choose your passion. You have to dare to be different, believe in yourself and your ideas.

### Session C: Body Language

Let's try something – stand up with your back straight, hands by your sides, shoulders back, and a smile on your face. That feels good, doesn't it?

Now, without moving a muscle, try to feel as miserable as possible. (Pause) That's hard, isn't it?

What's going on there is the connection between your mind and your body. Often we let our bodies follow where our minds are going. When we feel scared, our bodies adopt a scared position which makes us feel more scared. When we feel confident, our bodies behave confidently and that can simply make us feel even more confident.

You can basically choose your attitude. Decide how you are going to feel. Decide how you want

your audience to see you and behave accordingly. Assume a confident stance, decide to believe in yourself and your mind will follow.

### **Session D: Visualisation**

You can visualise success. See yourself communicating effectively. Picture the faces of your audience as you convince them that they should follow you. Visualisations are powerful.

Picture a time when you communicated very well - Your best speech, presentation, persuasive conversation. Where it really worked. Feel the confidence, the power that you had that time, now go there again.

There are even circumstances where visualising failure can also be useful.

### **Session E: Self Talk**

Self-talk is another way to control the way you feel. Basically we say a lot of bad stuff to ourselves. *"I'll never convince them of this", "this will be a disaster", "they won't agree with me."*

If you talk to yourself more positively, it can help change the outcome. How about *"I've prepared this well, I have a great idea here, they'll agree to it."* It's known as the Self Fulfilling Prophecy. What you say to yourself has a tendency to happen. So make it what you want to happen, not what you are afraid will happen.

We can all learn to control our emotions. Sometimes when we communicate we get nervous, we start to believe that we won't succeed. We can find a way to have confidence, believe that we will get through to the other person or people and really make a difference.

## **Lesson 2: Connecting with Others**

### **Session A: Communication and Visibility**

Good communication doesn't happen in a vacuum. It involves at least 2 people. It's important how you come across, of course, but how you actually connect with others is what really matters.

Different people will perceive what you say differently. People will care more, or less, about the message you're trying to convey. How you authentically connect will make the difference between whether people will really listen to you or not.

You need to communicate authentically and clearly. And do it consistently, and also regularly to

reinforce your message.

We don't have to communicate it all at once! We can select what's right for the here and now. Clear and concise is about choosing what to say and what not to say. Communicating well means being selective. Thinking about the other person. What do they need to hear? What is the best way to tell them?

An exercise that's often used in Leadership Development Programmes involves giving each person in a team a limited number of speech tokens. When they speak, they lose a token. When tokens are used up, they can't talk anymore. It really makes them think about how much they need to say. It's astonishing to hear their feedback afterwards. It's probably the first time they ever thought about saying less and making every word count.

### **Session B: Set Goal**

Before you think about the communication itself, make sure you have a clear vision of what you're trying to achieve. What is your goal? We often jump in before thinking this through. The more you can nail your goal, the more likely you are to actually achieve it. There are lots of ways to set goals but when you're communicating, this is one way that works well: Think about what you want your audience to think, feel and do as a result of your communication.

*"Think"* is the rational part. We all need facts and figures, a logical flow and reasons why our idea will work. Some personalities have a preference for rational thinking, so it's particularly

essential for them. It needs to be a self-evident argument as far as they are concerned. Good business reasons, smart outcomes.

*"Feel"* connects emotionally and is about the impact on people's feelings. It's about really connecting with the person or people you want to address. Taking them from where they are now to how you want them to feel. Understanding how they really feel about the topic and bringing them forward.

*"Do"* means action. Think about what you want them to do after you have spoken to them. Do you want them to do something straight away or in a week's time? If you are very clear what you want others to do, you are more likely to be able to make that happen.

So start with your vision or goal and decide to boost your impact with rational and emotional outcomes, and a call to action.

### **Session C: Audience**

Once you're very clear about what you want to achieve by communicating, you need to think about your audience. What's the best way to communicate your message to this particular audience? How are they educated? What is their training? What is their age group, their level of seniority and where are they now?

Some people are more rationally, some more emotionally driven. How you actually connect with that person is the most critical element in communicating effectively as a leader. Either way, empathy is the key differentiating factor. That means really understanding where someone is coming from, what matters to them, how best to connect with them. It's about connecting with their energy and inspiring them to do what you want them to do.

Before you're able to empathise with someone you first need to understand them, which means listening actively. This involves letting them talk without interruption, preconception or evaluation, putting your own thoughts on hold to allow yourself to absorb their situation and consider how they are feeling before you respond

### **Lesson 3: Be Yourself**

#### **Session A: Awareness**

Being yourself, being authentic as a leader is critical. But how do you do this? Here are the 3 'A's to being authentically you:

1. Awareness
2. Acceptance
3. Action

#### **Awareness of Self**

Understanding yourself, knowing your strengths, identifying your weaker areas. You can do this in many ways. You can start by doing some psychometric tests, conducted and de-briefed by a well-qualified and experienced coach. Someone who will help guide you through the process of understanding your underlying motivations.

We need to understand our 'story'. What made us who we are today, what factors influenced us, who inspired us to become who we have become.

As Bill George says *“it is your personal narrative, not the mere facts of your life. Your life narrative is like a permanent recording playing in your head. Over and over, you replay the events and personal interactions that are important in your life, attempting to make sense of them to find your place in the world.”*

All good leaders seek feedback from others. They find people they can ask for meaningful feedback. Who are the people you trust to tell you how it really is? They can be friends, family, colleagues or mentors. What matters is that you get unfiltered, honest feedback from others that you can act on. You need someone or a group of people who will tell you the truth about yourself and the way you are behaving. They must be people you can trust and you can believe.

We work with lots of different people in our careers. The higher we go, the less likely we are to find people who will tell us as it is. Sometimes we can find an individual or group where we can be truly ourselves. You can give them feedback and they can give you feedback. You can use

each other as a sounding board when you're not too sure of your direction. Seek out these people, nurture the connection with them and above all listen to what they have to say.

### **Session B: Acceptance**

We don't always like ourselves. We don't always rate what we do. We all have a story – what made us who we are. We need to accept that story. That doesn't mean that we can't change our behaviours. But we have to accept who we are and where we are starting from.

There's no point in lamenting that we're too short, we're not German, we're not a natural with numbers, we're too emotional. We need to appreciate what we have got, accept that we have strengths that can be useful and capitalise on those. We can certainly work on some of the others but some things like our height is fixed. Why not see it as the advantage it can be. Be grateful for who you are, not always wishing you were someone else.

We can all improve. There are times when we need to learn, get better at something, really work on it. Decide on your actions, make an action plan, then make it happen.

To help you to take action, identify your hierarchy of values. What values and principles do you live by? What are real values and what are aspirations. Sometimes when we try to take action, we find it hard to achieve. This is often because our actions don't fit well with our core values.

### **Session D: Honest Communication**

And often it is about just being authentically you, being brutally honest. We hear so many excuses, the blame game, looking for a scapegoat when things go wrong. Sometimes it's best to just say it as it is. It's hard to argue with that.

So live your values, understand who you are authentically and honestly and you will communicate authentically to your team and to your customers.

## Lesson 4: Giving Feedback

### Session A: Growing and developing your team

What was the difference between the best manager you ever had and the worst one? One answer which comes up regularly is:

*“My best manager gave me really useful constructive feedback. They always told me what I did well but weren't afraid to tell me how I could improve.”*

Whereas the worst manager is often described as someone who;

*“Criticised regularly and found fault.”*

Giving feedback to your team is about helping them to grow. It should make them aware of their strengths as well as their weaknesses but given in such a way that it is helpful and they feel they want to act on it, rather than resent you for telling them about it.

One of the most important things, therefore, that any manager does is to give feedback to team members. The essence of the management relationship is that the manager delegates tasks to others. It is crucial that the individuals know how they are doing in their role.

### Session B: Giving Feedback

When managers give positive feedback in a meaningful way, it can reinforce the team member's good performance. Sometimes good performance gets taken for granted – 100% attendance, the employee who is always punctual, the report that is error-free, the individual who deals patiently and sensitively with a difficult client. Good performance can go unnoticed. Or the manager might say a quick “*well done*” or “*thanks*”, without really stopping to think about the importance of their contribution. This has a number of results:

- The team member may feel taken for granted or that their contribution is not valued.

- They may believe that they only hear from their manager when they have done something wrong.
- The manager has less credibility if they give feedback only when something goes wrong.

### ***Developmental Feedback***

Many managers avoid giving developmental feedback when confronted with poor performance or inappropriate behaviour in the hope that it will simply go away. This has a number of results:

- The manager adjusts their expectations of the team member in line with their performance instead of asking for what they want and need from them.
- The manager devises a way of working around the team member which may be time-consuming and result in extra work for the manager. This then gets established as standard working practice – the new “normal.”
- The poor performance is not tackled and the team member may either be unaware of it or believe it is acceptable.

There are some guiding principles about giving effective feedback. These are:

**Be prepared:** Think carefully about what you want to say. Reflect on how your team member should feel as they walk out the door – what should they be thinking about? Choose your words carefully – people often hang on to a sentence, phrase or image. Be more concerned about them than about you.

**Sincere and honest:** Analyse the reason why you are giving the feedback – what constructive purpose is it going to serve? If you can't think of a positive reason for giving feedback – don't give it.

Things to watch out for are:

**Concise and to the point:** Use phrases such as “*I need to talk to you about...*” Make your point simply. Use very direct words – “*I need you to*”, “*I want you to*”, “*it's important that.*” Don't start your feedback with phrases such as “*Now, this isn't a big issue but...*” or “*I don't want you to get upset about this, but...*”

Avoid words such as “*just,*” “*only,*” “*maybe,*” “*a bit,*” “*if you could.*”

Warm up the message with genuine connection, open body language, supportive eye contact.

**Deal with the issue:** Identify the issue. Prepare to deal with it and stick to the issue. Acknowledge other issues which are raised but park them. Many discussions about performance get side-tracked – even when managers are aware of this, they often allow it to happen as the “*sidetrack conversation*” is more comfortable than the “*issue conversation*.”

**Timely:** Research shows that the sooner the feedback is given, the more impact it has. The only time to wait before giving feedback is when either you or they are emotional. For instance, you may be angry or they may be upset. Wait until the emotion has passed before attempting to give feedback.

**Owned by you:** Separate the person from the behaviour. Focus on actions, not personalities. Use expressions such as “*Here’s what you did, here’s how you can improve it,*” “*The way I see it is ...*” “*I have a question as to whether ...*” *Don’t back off if somebody finds it difficult to accept your feedback.*

**Two-way:** Use the feedback as an opportunity to have a discussion with the team member. Give them time to ask questions and clarify. Listen well to them.

**Balanced:** The feedback should represent both positive and negative. This means acknowledging and giving space to both sides of the story. Don’t talk up one side and give the wrong impression. That being said, Positive Psychology has indicated that focusing on the positives can help us more than focusing on the negatives, by energising people to make best use of their strengths.

### **Session C: A Useful Model of Feedback**

This is a useful model of feedback:

**Situation** – when and where

**Behaviour** – what actually happened

**Impact** – the impact of the behaviour

**Future** – what you want the person to do or to stop doing

#### **Situation**

“*At the meeting this morning, when you were talking about x.*” Be clear so that the person knows exactly which conversation you’re referring to.

## **Behaviour**

Essentially, this is a focus on actions, on what was said and done. This should be based on observable behaviour – what the person did (or did not do), said (or did not say).

*“When you were speaking to that client on the phone this morning, the tone of your voice was very curt and you were using one-word replies.”*

Stay away from assumptions and judgements: *“You were rude and unprofessional with that customer this morning.”* We naturally evaluate the behaviour that we observe (rude, helpful, unprofessional) and it is very easy to let these words slip out when we are talking to somebody. This is why it is so important to prepare your feedback – ask yourself:

*“What did I observe?” “What makes me say that this behaviour was unprofessional?”*

Behaviours or actions may also include previous conversations about similar incidents:

*“We spoke about this two weeks ago, I have observed that you are still speaking to clients in the same way.”*

## **Impact**

You may need to let your team member know what has happened as a result of their behaviour. What IMPACT it has had. At this stage, you are still dealing with actions and behaviour.

## **Future**

You should let your team members know what you would like them to start doing, stop doing, do more of or do less of in the future. Often people will have been given the same piece of feedback before but just don't know how to fix it. You can be helpful here by asking them how they think they should do it differently in the future. If they don't have any ideas themselves, you can guide them to the solution.

## **Lesson 5: Influencing Others**

### **Session A: Setting yourself up for success**

Now that you're feeling and showing confidence, connecting authentically with others, there are a few more things you can do to Inspire your team.

Influencing and Persuasion has 3 main elements: *Strategies, Techniques and Personal Impact.*

**Strategies** are what you do in advance of any attempt to influence. They help you to identify what you are trying to achieve and how you can plan to persuade people.

One strategy is Power Charting, often called Stakeholder Mapping which involves doing the following:

- Identify your objective
- List in Power rank order those who can help/hinder in progressing your objective
- Draw a Power Chart
- Identify current positions for each
- Identify desired positions
- Decide how you will move them

This can help you to identify the current position of the key people you need to influence, and help you to begin doing so.

### **Session B: Techniques**

Use the Primacy and Recency Effect to help your message stick. Give special attention to your opening and closing words.

#### **Primacy Effect: Start with a bang**

What this means is simply thinking about your audience and making sure that you start with something they will be interested in. Try telling them something they don't already know. Give them an interesting statistic, talk to them about something that is uppermost in their mind. Remember this is the point where they are deciding whether they will stay awake and listen to you or not! Make it worth their while to stay with you. Make your pitch sound as though they can't possibly miss it. Make it exciting for them.

#### **Recency Effect: Add a memorable ending**

You need to remind your target audience about what you've been talking about within the last few minutes or so. Then give them something definite to think about or do as a result of what you've been saying. Your last sentence should reflect your objectives. This is what is going to be in their minds as they leave.

#### **Make it relevant**

Your audience will be most interested in the parts of your message that are directly relevant to them. You may have noticed what encourages you to listen. Usually anything which has an

impact on your life, your job, your family, your earnings, your future, in fact any issue of importance to you. So know what is important to them.

### **Talk directly to them**

Don't put them in the third party, which would make them think you're talking to someone else and it will lose its relevance. For instance, if you are trying to motivate a salesperson, don't say: *"The salespeople are going to have to really push the boat out this next quarter if the company targets are going to be met."* This is far too impersonal.

Try instead: *"We are relying on you to make the difference, you're the one out there talking to the customers, you know the business. If you can push the boat out for the next quarter, we can reach our targets and we'll all do well at the end of the year."*

This is much more personal. Note the use of the word "You." This is one of the most powerful words in the English language. It makes what you are saying relevant to the audience. It makes them sit up and take notice.

### **A structured approach to Influencing:**

**This is a 4-part model -**

- 1. Create dissatisfaction with the status quo:** What, in their terms, is an issue right now? Why does it need to change? This, in essence, helps them to understand the 'need' for the change or the idea.
- 2. Paint a vision of a bright future:** After the change has happened, what are the benefits either for the company or for the audience? The more relevant to them the better. This helps them to feel the 'want'.
- 3. Set out easy, practical steps:** What needs to happen first? Then what are the next steps?
- 4. Reduce the risk:** What are they likely to be most afraid of happening? What is likely to be their first reaction? If you can allay these first fears, it is helpful.

### **Session C: Personal Impact**

We talked about personal impact in the first section. As a leader, you need to deliver your message confidently and authentically. But when you're influencing or persuading others, it is useful to use some extra tools and techniques.

Mirroring, pacing and leading have been talked about as NLP techniques for some time.

### **Session D: The Power of Words**

Research has shown that we respond / resonate to some words more than others. The most obvious one here is of course, your own name. So, if you're communicating with one person, or a small number of people, make sure to capture their attention by using their name.

When influencing a wider group, the words that have the most impact are you or your. The more you can insert '*personal*' words into your message, the more effective you will be. Use terms that show you are familiar with, and sensitive to, their interests and concerns. And conclude by emphasising the benefits to your audience, to them that support your proposal.