

SUPER STRESS SOLUTIONS NEWSLETTER

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Credibility; what it is and do you have it?

In today's society just having credentials, education and experience may not be enough when trying to persuade others to buy a product or a service.

Higher education places emphasis on credentials, maturity and experience but not a lot of emphasis is placed upon on credibility per say. When it comes to persuasion and influence, credibility is the corner stone and cannot be overlooked. Becoming believable is a necessary ingredient in persuasion. This is established by becoming

1. **an expert in your field,**
2. **knowing the parameters of human behavior and**
3. **your sphere of knowledge (higher competents) are all building blocks of credibility.**

Really credibility is a dominant construct (characteristics) of success in influencing others and becoming a powerful persuader.

According to Kevin Hogan author of Science of Influence, credibility is **Expertise + Trustworthiness**. The experience component of credibility is more specific i.e. degrees and work experience, however trustworthiness is more abstract and left up to the perceptions of others. Because perception is based upon intangibles it's important to be conscious of and improve any dynamics in your personal and professional life to ensure the perception of credibility.

Here are some factors that make up credibility.

- **Competence**
- **Trustworthiness**
- **Expertise**
- **Likeability**
- **Composure**
- **Sociability**

Many people think because they have the credentials and experience they would automatically acquire perceived credibility from others. Fortunately this is not the case. I say fortunately because other human characteristics such as **likeability, sociability, empathy, sensitivity, being positive and caring for others are crucial ingredients in developing and sustaining credible relationships with people.**

In a recent survey of consumers that required accounting services it was determined their primary reason for why they left their accountant for another provider was not due to perceived incompetence but **perceived indifference from the professional consultant.**

In today's society consumer loyalty is not implied even though you may have competence and experience. So to improve your credibility strive for excellence in knowledge, competence and experience in your field. However to improve your perception of credibility for potential customers its necessary to focus on the intangibles such as **goodwill, likeability, warmth, sensitivity and a genuine concern for people's wellbeing.** If you do not possess these traits it will be necessary to improve your likeability factor to promote perceived credibility.

For example becoming likeable is a common denominator for trustworthiness and trustworthiness is a corner stone of credibility. So to become more likeable be conscious of

- a. **smiling more**
- b. **listening more**
- c. **staying focused and showing a keen interest in the individual**
- d. **go beyond the essential etiquette** i.e. hand shake, and offer to take your clients coat, provide a coffee, find some common ground to talk about instead of diving into your business transactions and sale intentions. However likeability is a developmental process and usually takes time to establish within a relationship so practice being consistent and patient in your overtures toward your clients which is a necessary ingredient in the credibility formula.

13 Ways to De-stress your kids

Raising a family can be extremely challenging and stressful. The demands of work and family can be daunting and at times overwhelming. Unfortunately we do not always have the knowledge and support necessary to resolve stress in our family lives. As well the demands placed upon our children have increased as they are exposed to more information and the increased speed of assimilating that information. As well increased expectations as parents and the hyper paced established by multi tasking and techno media places additional demands upon the development of your children. In lieu of this ever increasing demand and stress put upon your child here are some practical and effective ways to de-stress your kids.

1. **Accept your child's "limitations."** A child with the capacity to get only Bs or to perform only "average" in athletics or music can become guilt-ridden if he thinks he's done his best, but has let you down or you are frustrated with their performance.
2. **Don't compare** your child's abilities, talents or looks with those of other children.
3. **Celebrate your child's accomplishments;** go to school plays and games, and be involved and recognize and affirm their efforts.
4. **Encourage your child to express their feelings;** tell him it's OK to feel sad and to cry. Take time to listen (really listen), without giving advice or passing judgment or always trying to fix something.
5. **Spend some one-on-one** time with your child every day if you can.
6. **Show your child that you respect people and you respect life.** Help them to become compassionate to the young, to the old, the handicapped and the weak. Give them the opportunity to love animals.
7. **Acknowledge childhood pressures.** Remember that losing a teddy bear, not being asked to the prom, or not passing a pop quiz can be as traumatic to a child as not having to pay the rent or getting dismissed from work or promotion for adults.
8. **Expect some rebellion** and remember that "this, too, shall pass." Don't make a big issue of small things that bother you.
9. **Be honest** when answering questions about delicate issues such as sex, divorce or death.
10. **Restrict and monitor TV and movie viewing.**
11. **Sympathize with your child** when he experiences a loss, a hurt or rejection.
12. **Set a good example;** show your child that when you're depressed, you work out your frustrations by talking to friends, exercising, praying, enjoying something funny, etc.
13. **Consult a health professional** if you think your child is having problems neither they nor you can handle than it is appropriate to seek additional help.

Quote "I try to take one day at a time, but sometimes several days attack me at once."

Common Personality Traits at Work

We spend more time at work than any other activity during our waking hours. Consequently the influence work has on our lives is huge. We make friends, form relationships, gain support systems and of course monetary rewards that help sustain our current life style. Beside the implicit demands of our job, the emotional dynamics at work play a critical and central role in our sense of well being of physical and emotional health and sense of worthiness at work.

Personality characteristics sets a stage for whether your work is one of empowerment and emotional well being and gives a sense of respect and dignity or a place of demeaning conflict and the ultimate erosion of your morale. In a bureaucratic environment employees will become distressed because they often feel helpless they cannot change negative dynamics at work and therefore they become embittered as they realize positive change is not possible.

Really there are 4 approaches to dealing with toxic dynamics at work.

1. **Suffer in silence.**
2. **Look for a new job** (not all situations are resolvable).
3. **Change your attitude about difficult persons.** Decide for example that you may not like the individual but you work well together and that is the most important aspect of your relationship.
4. **Change your behavior** which means a difficult person must learn new ways to deal and cope with you. How is that achieved? Often using simple techniques that involve reducing the differences between you and the toxic person, or just listening and changing your response can have a tremendous impact on how a person reacts to you. For example an effective technique could be what is called “blending” which involves repeating what your colleague just said to you. That often throws them off balance by forcing them to listen to what you say and as well as what they are saying to you. It is understood that a person who learns to deal with unpleasantness and conflict is usually more effective as a leader and can present those characteristics to their work environment.

Here is a more specific list of difficult individuals by personality traits and how you may cope more effectively with them.

1. THE TANK

These individuals are confrontational, angry and are usually pushy and aggressive in their behavior.

Solution: Command respect. Hold your ground, interrupt the attack, quickly backtrack from the individual’s issues, and state your point in a non-threatening way.

2. THE SNIPER

These covert operators identify your weakness and use it against you behind your back or in put-downs in front of others.

Solution: To bring these snipers out of hiding, stop what you are saying; repeat what they have just said. Ask how that is relevant and perhaps confront them alone later.

3. THE GRENADE

Explodes suddenly into unfocused ranting and raving about things that have nothing to do with the circumstances.

Solution: Take control. Get his or her attention. Reduce intensity.

4. THE KNOW-IT-ALL

Seldom in doubt, have low tolerance for correction and contradiction, but if something goes wrong, you will be to blame.

Solution: Open their minds to new ideas. Backtrack respectfully, blend their comments with yours, present your views indirectly, turn know-it-alls into mentors.

5. THE YES PERSON

Quick to agree, slow to deliver. Yes people leave a trail of unkept commitments and broken promises in an attempt to please.

Solution: Make it safe for them to talk honestly, help them plan, ensure commitment, strengthen the relationship with them.

6. THE MAYBE PERSON

Puts off crucial decisions until it's too late and the decisions make themselves and fate steps in.

Solution: Establish a comfort zone, clarify his or her options, then ensure a follow-through.

7. THE NOTHING PERSON

These people provide very little verbal or non-verbal feedback they often act as if your not there.

Solution: Plan enough time, ask open-ended questions expectantly, lighten the conversation, try to guess what they're thinking.

8. THE NO PERSON

These individuals are more a lot demoralizing toxic individuals and they are able to defeat big ideas with a single syllable which is often very discouraging.

Solution: Use them as a resource, leave the door open, acknowledge their good intent.

9. THE WHINER

They feel overwhelmed by an unfair world. Their standard is perfection and no one measures up.

Solution: Listen for the main points, interrupt, shift the focus to solutions, draw the line.

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In next month's issue:

- True Grit. Do You Have It?
- How to Worry Effectively.
- What to do when the pressure comes.

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