

HOW TO BUILD PRESENCE

ABSTRACT

Leaders with Presence have more influence and impact. Presence can be built. It is a set of behaviours that can be learnt. This eBook gives the reader the foundations of Presence.

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Being Fully Present

If we don't keep our perfectionism in check, we're unable to be fully present for the people who matter most to us. We miss the joy of the moment because we're constantly anticipating what's coming. It's a dangerous trap. (Michael Hyatt).

Perfectionism and constantly striving to anticipate what might happen, what could happen and relentlessly preparing to take advantage of tomorrow can be the enemy of participating fully in today. This trap is robbing each one of us from fully engaging in relationships and the joys of where we are right now. I personally find myself having to pull myself back into the present on a moment by moment basis.

Interestingly the one place that I find it easy to be fully present is in the classroom.... I think it is because as a facilitator it takes all of me to fully show up to guide the process from A through to Z. I actively listen to every contribution to summarise it and move the conversation along, or ensure I fully understand the question before jumping into the answer. Active listening involves physical posture and eye-contact. Another reason why being fully present is easier is my cell phone is off. Smart phones lead to constant distraction, and when they are not buzzing and flashing at me, it is so much easier to stay fully in the moment with the people right in front of me. Facilitation grounds me in the present because it is taking all my effort and energy to focus on the people in the room: how much time do they need? Is this conversation over, or is there more? Is this tangent productive? Is that person engaged and just quiet or not engaged at all? Have they "got it"? Although these questions may sound like they are from the "3rd voice", asking them keeps me fully focused on the people in the room and what they need.

The trick is to take this practiced art of being fully present into daily interactions with people and to keep it with me when I get into my home...

Fully showing up requires:

- **Active listening + eye contact**
- **Throwing out the distractions of instant messages and cell-phones**
- **Asking questions of yourself: have I made my point? do they feel listened to? Am I really here right now?**

Are you fully present right now? OR reading this with one eye whilst the other is looking for what's next?

In this eBook I will help readers understand what it takes to be both fully present and to bring more Presence with them when they show up.

Be present, not just there

When she took the stage, something sparkled. It wasn't her outfit or her jewelry. It was something she carried with her, but couldn't put down. Something that clung to her like a sexy dress, but wasn't even visible. She has "it". She has the special something that we all know when we see it, she has Presence. With a capital P.

Sylvia Hewlett defines Presence as how you speak, how you act and how you look. Communication, gravitas and appearance. So pretty much everything.... I would add that your Presence also includes what you don't say & when you fail to act, plus how you communicate digitally. This package of "everything" seems to be elusive for many; but I believe in the most part it can be learnt and developed. Will it be easy? No. Will it take effort and intention? Absolutely. But the payoff is rather significant. People are naturally drawn to those with Presence, listen more attentively and are more likely to be influenced by what they say. Sales people with Presence, speak at Industry conferences and create new markets. Leaders with Presence calm the storms around them when everyone is in a panic. Executives with Presence build a compelling vision of tomorrow, and deal with today calmly and pragmatically.

A great place to start when building presence is to assess how "present" you are in every interaction you have. Are you really showing up? Or are you distracted, constantly looking at your digital devices or over the shoulder of the person right in front of you. When you harness your own attention and are able to direct it fully towards one person at a time: you become fully present. And the feeling of being the recipient of someone else's full attention is intoxicating.

I recently witnessed a conversation between an executive and a member of their team. They were in deep conversation when the executive's phone rang. He turned away from his colleague and answered the phone. No verbal apology or explanation; just the non-verbal snub of "you (who are right in front of me, and who I am talking to right now) are less important to me than this phone call".

Presence can't be faked. It can be developed and enhanced, but underlying it all is a respect for & interest in others and genuine good manners.

Tip 1 - Presence building

Building Presence (capital P) starts with looking inside and connecting with who you are today and who you want to be tomorrow. Be proactive and leave your phone/computer/tablet on the other side of the house tonight and invest some time in really looking at the people around your dinner table; and take a walk alone to "look" at yourself.

Reflect on the day:

- What you did well?

- What did you do today that you found meaningful?
- Did you do anything selfless?
- Did you leave a positive impact with someone today?
- Did you lose your cool? Have an uncontrolled temper or emotional outburst?
- Were you who you want to be, today?

Tip 2 - Connect to Purpose.

Leaders who can connect the people they lead to a higher purpose tap into a very real need in all of us to do something that is meaningful. Although we may think we are working for money and sometimes it may feel like the only compensation we get. The deeper reality is that many of us want to make our lives count. We have a need to believe that what we are doing daily, matters.

Our problem however, is that few of us are in touch enough with ourselves to articulate what actually matters to us. What our personal guiding principles are, or what would make us feel connected to a purpose greater than showing up at 8am and leaving at 5/6/7pm.

In the business of work, life, exercise, kids, shopping, admin, traffic, constant connectivity and invasive technology our time to reflect and connect with our inner world is at risk of disappearing completely. In fact in modern life, our connection to self is more at risk of extinction than the rhino. But we can take measures to reconnect.

Ironically reconnecting requires disconnecting. We have a chronically short attention span, trained over years by constantly looking at our phones; being relentlessly vigilant in case of client emergencies, calls from impatient uplines etc. etc. But our inability to be fully in one place, one conversation, one event is making us lose out on real relationships, and real connection to others and to ourselves. It starts with a simple change... one person awakening:

One man awakes, awakens another

The second awakes his next door brother

The three awake can rouse a town by turning the whole place upside down

The many awake will cause such a fuss

If finally awakes the rest of us

One man awakes with dawn in his eyes

Surely then multiplies...

The Great Awakening - O Grande Despertar

People don't only work for a salary. Many people, at all levels in an organisation need to feel that what they do matters.

I heard a great story last night: When asked what his job was, the janitor at NASA said with conviction, "My job is to put a man on the moon". Clearly this man felt connected to the purpose of the company he worked for AND he felt personally connected to this shared mission.

As a leader you will possibly fall into one of two camps: The connected or the disconnected.

If you fall into the disconnected camp, then your job is clear: either investigate and find out more about the what and why of your organisation or consider a change. If you are unable to see why your role or department exists, then you are dead in the water. And I am not talking about "to make money" or to "follow up on outstanding debt"; that is too tactical, and largely more demotivating than motivating. Dig a little deeper. I worked with a group of managers struggling to identify their department's purpose, and eventually after a long debate, discussion and probing, the sales manager had a lightbulb moment. He realized his team's purpose was so much greater than "meeting a target". He saw them as a channel through which his company's incredible products and services could find a voice in the market; without his team these great innovations would never see the light of day. Struggling through this helped him connect to the team's purpose.

If you are in the connected camp, you likely feel very purpose driven in what you are doing, very connected to the organisations mission.... But.... are you able to communicate that clarity of purpose to the people you lead? If asked, what would your team say in response to the question: "what is your team's purpose?" (fun exercise, to do in a meeting). And therein lies the challenge and set up for Tip 4,5,6 and beyond... If you cannot communicate effectively and influence your team towards a shared purpose, your executive presence needs work.

Get clear on your organisations purpose. If it is at odds with what your personal values or sense of direction is, move! You are not a tree! Have a look at Simon Sinek's TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action and ask yourself questions like:

- **What does your team contribute to the organisation?**
- **What are you doing that no one else can?**
- **How do people (& society at large) benefit from what you do?**
- **What is the end-result that you offer?**

And then ask the very difficult "Why" question:

- **Why does our team exist? Followed by a few cynical "So what?" questions....**

I walked through OR Tambo international arrivals some time ago and popped into the ladies room after passport control. The cleaner was hard at work at 5.30am and the bathroom was spotless. I interrupted her and thanked her for the sterling job she was doing and reminded her of her purpose: You create one of the very first impressions visitors to our beautiful country get. Your job is key to making the experience pleasant and memorable. Thank you for working so hard to make a difference to South Africa. The more tourists we have, the better we do as a country.

She stood a lot taller.

Tip 3 – Stop talking

Isn't it funny how we invest so much time learning how to talk as kids. For most children learning to talk is like learning to drink water, it is natural and easy. But not for everyone does everything just happens automatically as one might expect.

I am blessed with a child who has made me so much more aware of the miracle of language, and the enormity of the journey to speaking fluently and easily. Each sound needs to be explicitly learnt, practiced and reinforced. Hearing the difference between closely related sounds is a gigantic effort. The effort it takes my child to put together a coherent sentence with the right words in the right order, all sounding correct is significant and exhausting.

This effort is for most of us about the same as learning the enormous, and daunting task, of **not talking**.

As I relate to leaders and people in business and private lives, it is incredible to see how most struggle with knowing when enough is enough. I call this "landing the plane". It blows me away on a continuous basis as I listen to people give an answer, then repeat what they said in another way and then say it all over again in case anyone didn't get it the first or second time round! Many of us get caught up in the sound of our own voice, even though something on the inside is saying "enough", we seem unable to put our lips together and stop emitting sounds. As a result the POINT is circling overhead endlessly, and never lands.

So as you continue to build Presence, start to listen to what you are uttering.

Have you made your point? And ONCE is enough. Then stop talking.

In the space that you leave vacant, others have a chance to show up, and your Presence grows.

I am reminded of a video clip in which Bob Newhart plays a psychologist. The patient tells him about her issues and his advice to her is to "stop it". It probably feels about right in so many cases, but we know it is easier said than done. Become self-aware of the words you use and

mindful of the moment. You will start to hear yourself through new ears. Tune in to the facial expressions of the people to whom you are speaking. Look for small facial queues or micro-expressions that will help you learn when “enough is enough”. Then just stop.

Tip 4 – Start listening

When you stop talking... amazing things happen. You start to notice that other people make valid points too. Not necessarily the ones you were thinking of either. When you stop talking, your brain has the capacity to focus on the team dynamic (reading the room) and who is excluded, withdrawn, isolated, too competitive, dominating. When you notice these nuances, this information can help you shift the team and lead more effectively. A wise leader who knows that half her team has grave concerns over the sales plan, would ask more questions, slow down, bring the team along, be open to input. But to know how others are feeling, a leader needs to observe, listen, ask, wait, and think.

As I lead classes all over the world, inevitably the topic of listening comes up. Listening happens on so many different levels. Most of us are familiar with the concept of “active listening” and will spend hours nodding our heads, even giving the occasional “uh-ha” and “oh, really?” to make the other person feel like we are listening. Over the years, I have perfected the art of so-called active listening and can fake my way through the most boring one-sided update from my son as he gives me the details of his world of mine-craft/star-wars/Percy Jackson.... But I know I am not really paying attention. (Hopefully he thinks I am!). When I point this out in a class, guilty looks pass over the faces of participants as they suddenly become aware that whilst their face and body are paying attention, their brain has taken a vacation to a sunnier climate. They are physically present, giving eye-contact, even smiling and laughing. but when I ask someone to repeat what I have just said, they are completely blank!! Then they laugh. And we try it again.

Active listening requires a lot more from each of us. It requires real intentionality and focus. Why intentionality? If you expect that other people around the table are stupid, wasting your time, unlikely to be of any help; really engaging in listening will be extremely difficult. But if you have an inherent belief that others have value and can contribute, then listening with the intention to understand them is a different game altogether. Why focus? You need to be fully present and paying attention to what the other person is saying, have the ability to summarise what is said and clarify if things sound confusing. Total presence has a personal cost. It costs because you need to suspend your own internal monologue long enough to focus on what they are saying, and leaving unsaid.

Whilst you may think you know how to actively listen, most of us are really only good passive listeners (nod, smile, un-ha). We are not active in the process of listening to one another at all. The other really has no idea if they were heard and understood unless the listener can reflect

back the essence of the message. Asking someone if “they understand” and getting a “yes” as a response; is a sure-fire indication of being misunderstood. Asking someone to repeat what they heard makes room for clarification and alignment.

Tip 4: Get ACTIVE in the process of listening to your team and colleagues. Great ideas are sometimes camouflaged inside less articulate people, and with active listening, the ‘breakthrough’ insight can be found. And even if ‘breakthrough’ isn’t found, really listening to someone gives them a sense of being seen, noticed and valued

Tip 5 – Speak when you have eye’s

Ever noticed how some people can talk and talk and keep on going, despite the fact that no one is paying them the least bit of attention? This always alarms me. I find it incredibly difficult to express myself unless someone is looking at me, making eye-contact. I have an internal alarm system that rings when I am losing or have lost the interest of my listeners. Now eye’s alone is not a guarantee of attention (see Building Presence: Tip 4), but it is a physical signal of internal distraction. As a professional speaker, keeping a firm eye on my audience gives me loads of information that I can do something with.

An audience (listener) whether in a one-to-one, around a conference table, an impromptu stand-up or a big audience is giving you feedback. It is up to you to decide if you will act on that feedback or not. Feedback can take the form of people falling asleep, playing on their phones, looking away from you, looking at their watches, talking to each other, doodling etc. Knowing that you are losing some or all of your audience is the first step; doing something about it is step two. In Tip 6, we’ll explore how to be more interesting, but let’s start with the ground rule: only speak when people are looking at you. This ground rule works because most people will signal their attention through their eyes.

If they are not looking at you, their attention is elsewhere. If you speak to an audience who is not listening to you, you lose credibility and it detract from your presence.

I recently spoke in a venue that was too small to hold all the attendees. Mid-way through my talk, people started bringing chairs in, right at the front of the room. The audience was immediately distracted and I had to make a choice: pause the talk and wait for the side-show to be over, or keep on going and try to wrestle the attention from the side-show. I chose to pause, and made a few off-the-cuff remarks to the chair-movers and allowed the audience to shift their focus to them, as I had lost the eyes of my audience and hence their attention.

Another example... the dreaded meeting. Often we are called upon to update the team or report back etc. Invariably the meeting is too long and people (rudely) bring their laptops and multi-task or get distracted into their cell phones quickly. Along with the need to brush up on

meeting etiquette these physical signals of low or no attention need to be addressed as they waste time and lead to meetings for the sake of meetings, which lead to more unproductive, time-sucking meetings. What to do? If it's your meeting, set & enforce the ground rules, role-model active listening, and only speak when you have the attention of the room. Pause for a few seconds as you (warmly) look from person to person before talking. If someone loses focus and moves onto their device, stop talking. That sudden pause will gather the wandering mind, if only to see what went wrong.... But they return to the meeting and re-engage. If you lose the attention of two or more people, question whether you shouldn't stop talking... that signal is a good point of reflection.

As a rule of thumb, stop talking before your audience stops listening.

Tip 6 – Sound interested

I recently attended a call with people from across EMEA. The 6-person call was led by a colleague from Europe. The topic was something we all had thoughts on and as participation was voluntary, we were choosing to be there. But I am unlikely to make that mistake again. Why? *The leader of the call sounded so terribly bored by the content and was just going through the motions.* Her monotonous voice droned on as she summarized the purpose of the call, outcomes and actions. Content wise, she was saying the right things, but it was so hard to hear her through the noise of her boredom.

Sounding interested in what you are saying is an absolute minimum requirement if you are to influence others to action or belief. The core here is not what you are saying, but how you are saying it.

I recently shared a stage with a number of other speakers, fortunately not at the same time. One speaker, in particular, stood out because of her lack of energy over her subject matter. The audience had to really work hard to both stay awake and find her point. Most gave up quickly and moved their attention to more interesting subjects, like the dandruff on the collar of the person in front of them. Again, whilst she could have been very impactful and if we had tried hard enough we probably could have listened, but she had no energy and no passion and without these two champions of influence, the audience remained unmoved. If your subject matter is as dry as dust, you have to work triply hard on your delivery to energise it to the point of being listen-worthy.

How do you sound interested in your own message?

1. Well, the first one is kind of obvious.... Why are you speaking about XYZ if you are completely disinterested in it? Find the message that is interesting to you and deliver that.
2. On a technical level, very few people can sound interesting when they are scrunched up over their laptops and speaking into a conference line, whilst trying not to disturb their

fellow open-planners. So think ahead, book a meeting room, work from home, and stand up. Standing up opens your posture and your diaphragm. As you stand, roll your shoulders back and plant your stance like you own the room.

3. Smile. The tone of your voice changes and you feel different. The dopamine and serotonin party in your brain lifts your spirits and decreases anxiety you might be feeling.
4. Visualise the people on the conference call, or in your distant audience. See their faces looking at you, smiling back, being fully engaged in your message, motivated and moved to action. Visualisation during a conference call or virtual meeting can help you keep up your energy. Visualisation before a presentation can help you visualize the desired outcome and see the possibility of achieving it.
5. Share a little bit of you. Although the facts and figures tell their own story, you are far more compelling and interesting than numbers ever will be (to most of us, anyway.) So tell us why you are speaking on this subject? Why you believe this call is useful? Give us a glimpse into your motivations and your personality. What makes this matter to you? Be human.

Tip 7 – Shepherd the sheep

You only get to be a leader if there are people who follow you. People who take direction from you or are influenced by you. So if you are a leader with an objective to achieve, and you are the only one who achieves it, you have lost.

In communication, particularly when presenting, it is worthwhile indulging in a little metaphor:

Your audience are like sheep. And you are like the shepherd. (I did say LIKE, this is a metaphor... work with me people!). It is your job to make sure your sheep stay together and make it from pasture A (the start of your presentation) to pasture B (the end, or the achievement of your objective). Sheep that fall asleep, wander off into the green grass out yonder, or fall off a rocky cliff are your responsibility. You need to make sure they stay together and you need to get them back if they wander off. Sheep can wander off very quickly. The average adult is said to have an attention span of just 8-10 seconds before our minds get distracted or we feel the magnetic pull of our smart-phone's flashing screen. With so much clamouring for our attention, what attracts it and keeps it has to be very compelling. Being an average or below average communicator is really not going to cut it.

A presenter needs to be irresistible. So much so that the audience chooses to give their attention voluntarily. Choosing moment by moment to NOT look at their phone, choosing to not let their mind wander. To be that kind of communicator, you need to deploy a myriad of tactics.

Remember, your audience are like sheep. It is your job to get their attention, keep their attention and get them all through to the end of your presentation together. For what good is it to be a shepherd without sheep? Imagine starting off with a flock and by the time you get to the end of the journey, they have all got lost along the way. You may feel like you just hiked a mountain... but you got to the end alone... When presenting to influence an audience, it really is not about you; it is about taking the audience from not knowing & not caring to knowing, caring and doing something about it. If you are the speaker, you should already be there. But if you are the only one who cares about your subject at the end of your presentation, you just hiked a mountain for no reason at all.

Let me introduce you to audience member Alex. Alex is listening to you because he is a potential client. Unfortunately Alex never worked for your company, nor does he follow you on twitter or read any publications that make it out into the public domain because Alex is immersed in his own life, his own company & role, their unique “language” and their priorities. Strangely Alex doesn’t speak fluent “{insert your company name}eese”. Rather than seeing this presentation as an opportunity to teach Alex {insert your company name}eese, you wisely decide to meet him halfway and talk English. So you eliminate the buzz words, and marketing garble from your presentation. Well done you! That is step one.

Now step 2 requires you to tap into the shared knowledge bank that is ubiquitous across the human experience: sports, weather, family, children, travel, food, traffic, games, movies & tv, health, the human body etc etc. We all participate in a large common body of knowledge and experience. We may on the surface seem to be very different, but a large portion of our lives is reasonably common....And for a successful communicator, tapping into this shared experience helps to bridge the gap between new or complicated concepts and understanding, relating, accepting and buying.

Metaphors or similes (comparisons) close the gap between the known and the unknown.

For example, when cloud computing was first introduced I really didn’t “get it”. I am reasonably bright and have good command of English, but I am a user of technology... I don’t really care how it happens, I am just glad when it does. A wise communicator explained it thus: “Do you have a PowerStation in your back yard? No... Power is generated centrally and via the electrical grid is distributed into your home. You only pay for what you use and whatever you don’t use, goes back to the grid. That is Cloud. Organisations don’t need to have massive storage farms of their own anymore, they can share storage space with others on a pay as you use approach. The shared storage area is called a cloud.” He used what I knew to help me understand what I didn’t.

When you are thinking about the work you do, and the terminology that you take for granted, spare a thought for the people like Alex. For sure dump the jargon, but take your communication a step further and help people understand what you are talking about through making comparisons to our shared experience.

Tip 8 – Handle questions like a pro

The brain of an audience member introduced to new or not well understood content must work very hard to figure out what you are talking about. If you manage to keep your audience engaged and interested enough to stay awake and actually have a question, consider it a success. However, you can lose all that credibility quickly if you mishandle questions from the audience.

Fully listening to the questioner and paraphrasing, summarizing or clarifying the question is a Sheep Management tactic and it has a truck-load of benefits:

At the start you demonstrate respect by giving the questioner your undivided attention, suspending your own inner voice and trying to hear what they are really asking.

Very often the real question is buried under opinion, statement, or verbose language patterns. Really listening for the question pays off.

Listen out for question words to tip you off that a question is likely to follow! If you don't actually have a question to answer that is an opportunity to rephrase what the "asker" said to the whole audience, add or clarify if required and move on. Don't get trapped though! Some attention seekers like to keep the limelight; don't stand passively by as the attention seeker rambles on and on. Courage dear-heart! You need to give them their due, then jump on in summarise their contribution respectfully & courteously and move your eyes away from the questioner to another hand that is being waved! If you wimp out, your other sheep scatter whilst you are busy with just one high maintenance sheep.

If there is actually a question though, you really need to follow these basic steps:

Repeat or rephrase the question asked for the whole audience (assuming the question is clear and you understand it unequivocally). Restating or rephrasing has great benefits:

1 – the whole audience gets to hear the question that you will likely spend the next few minutes answering. This has the advantage of proactively managing their attention (sheep stay together). If they don't know what you are answering you are allowing them to wander off into their cell phones, imaginations etc.

2 - Also, if you rephrase to the whole audience, you will break eye-contact with the questioner, and start to answer the question to the rest of the audience inclusively. Big bonus for the rest of the audience.

3 – The Q&A session becomes a further opportunity for you to interact, engage and inspire the WHOLE group instead of being trapped in a 1:1 conversation between you and the questioner.

(I have seen far too many good speakers lose their mojo at Q&A and mostly it is because they get trapped in a 1:1 & the sheep wander off.)

4 – Rephrasing the question can help to neutralize any hostile opinions which could become a more heated debate. Underneath most hostile questions is often a well disguised valid concern. It is your role as the speaker to find the valid concern, share it and address it. Please don't change the concern into a question you would prefer to answer. That is a big NO NO, unless you are in politics, in which case you are highly unlikely to be reading this.... For example: Questions that start with WHY, are really asking WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR....

Clarify the question if it is vague or confusing to you (this ensures you answer the right question, not the question you think is being asked. If you take a guess at what you think the question is, and answer that question, you lose credibility. Clarification also helps the questioner to be clearer about what they want to know. There are cases where people ask questions with the main intent being to “be heard asking a question”... If you are one of these attention seeking, limelight stealers, please stop it; you are wasting everyone's time! A speaker who puts in the effort to really understand questions from these folks often ends up respectfully putting them back in their place. But for those who struggle to articulate their question, clarifying it is a benefit for you and for them: “Are you asking if the xyz and the abc are complimentary to EFG?” and if that is not what they are asking, they will take another go at their question. Clarify twice, and if confusion still reigns, think of the other sheep and respectfully ask the questioner to come to you at the end and discuss this in a one to one environment.

Communication is a 2-way street.

If you are impactful and influential in how you send messages, your audience are likely to respond with questions, comments and requests.

It is at this point in your pitch or presentation that you have absolutely no idea what will come your way... and the tendency for many is to either move through this as fast as possible or jump to whatever answer springs to mind. You can easily lose credibility here.

I moderated an executive panel some time back. A question was directed at one of the panel members, who responded vaguely and with just enough rhetoric to disguise the fact that she didn't actually answer the question. I wasn't sure if she really didn't understand the question, or if she purposefully avoided answering. I rephrased, checked with the questioner and asked her again. This time round she had to answer the question that was asked. By fully understanding the question, she was able to recover her presence and build authenticity into her answer.

Conclusion

Presence is very much about being where you find your feet. Don't try to be somewhere else. Don't look through people and check your phone whilst the person in front of you is talking. Be where you are and give the people around you the gift of your undivided attention. This is the foundation of effective leadership and communication. Then start to connect into WHY you are where you are and discover how your purpose can inspire those around you. Remember that people only experience you through what and how you communicate: everything you say and don't say; what you look like when you are speaking or silent and how magnetic you are as a communicator. Effectively inspiring others to action requires you to express your own enthusiasm and to connect with your audience on a human level. And when you manage that and your audience is with you, hold them to the very end through effectively managing their questions.

About the author

Angela de Longchamps



Angela is passionate.

And that is it. Her energy and enthusiasm when she takes the stage is infectious. She loves what she does. Her passion is to enable leaders to power business. She has invested years of experience in human resources, social and behavioral psychology into creating highly entertaining, sought after and valued courses in her field of expertise “executive presence”. In addition, her broader leadership development courses are highly valued and respected.

She is an event speaker & trainer both in South Africa where she lives and abroad. She has travelled and worked across the world developing authentic leadership and communication skills.

Key note topics:

- **Executive Presence** – Challenging leaders to examine their purpose; to own the stage and to proactively engage the hearts and minds of their audience.
- **Communicating for impact** – Physical and virtual skills that can be learnt to radically transform what you say and how you say it.
- **Keys to personal leadership** – lead yourself before you lead others. You are your own first follower! Learn to follow, learn self-discipline, seek accountability.
- **Future fit leaders** – don’t wait for the wave, make it!

When Angela is not growing leaders in corporates, she is growing future leaders from the ground up in her home in Johannesburg. Her 3 middle school children keep her very busy and challenged and for respite she runs and cycles with her husband of 20 years.

Reach out and connect

Angela can be booked for key note speaking by contacting Tracy on +27 82 868 8334; or tracy@tandemlearning.co.za

To connect with Angela, reach out over:

Email: angela@tandemlearning.co.za

Web: <http://www.tandemlearning.co.za/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/angela-de-longchamps/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Tandemlearningandleadership/>

