

Frank's Personal Power Points

If I had to choose one thing that separates the most successful people from failures, it's personal power and influence. The very successful have tremendous power, and failures absolutely do not, so this article is very important.

UCLA did a well-publicized study that concluded as follows: Only 7% of our communication to others consists of the words we say. The other 93% is mostly sub-communication; in other words, our body language, our vocal tone and inflection, the way we say things rather than what we say, and more.

Following is my list of Personal Power Points you can begin using immediately to get and keep the power in all of your interactions, and have tremendous power and influence as a result.

Keep in mind that these Personal Power Points don't just apply to business - you can use them to increase your power, confidence, and influence in all areas of life!

Avoid phony rapport.

For some reason, most of us are constantly told to build phony rapport with others, usually by picking out some random thing in an office like an award or photo, and then attempting to use that to build a conversation. Others can see right through this because they know you it's not genuine. Be friendly and affable, but get down to business - don't waste someone's time with phony rapport. Getting right to the point in a friendly, approachable manner is a lot more professional and is appreciated by professionals.

Avoid phony or canned language.

Plowing through a canned presentation, complete with canned phrases such as, "...more profit is something you'd like to achieve, don't you agree, Mr. Prospect?" only makes you look like someone who is too afraid and too insecure to be a real person who conducts real conversations.

Show others that you're a real person, not an automaton going through the motions, forgetting that you are a human being. Nothing will make you appear more inhuman than silly, canned lines like, "Don't you agree?" and "Does that sound fair?"

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Slow down.

The mark of the powerless, nervous individual is talking too fast. Talking too fast sub-communicates that you are worried the other person will lose interest and stop listening. In other words, a weak individual is afraid that others will cut them off and end the interaction too soon, so they say everything they intend to say as quickly as possible, before that can happen!

If you observe powerful, confident people, you'll notice that they do not talk fast. They are relaxed in their speech, do not rush their words, and that conveys confidence and trust. The same is true for their mannerisms – they move more slowly than less-confident people and are never in a hurry. It's just as important that you don't have quick, fidgety movements – and don't seem to be in a hurry – as it is to avoid talking too quickly. By slowing down both your speech and your movements, you increase the level of confidence and power you sub-communicate, and that in turn causes others to see you as a powerful individual whom they can trust.

Don't say "right" or "you know" after statements.

One of the hallmarks of powerful people is that they never need to seek the validation of others. They know they're powerful and confident and don't need anyone to reassure them of that. When you say "right?" or "you know?" at the end of your sentences, what you're really doing is seeking people's validation. You're asking them to approve what you've just said. It's like asking, "Am I acceptable to you? Please, please validate me!" after each sentence! Now how is THAT going to give you any power?

When you end your sentences, do so powerfully and with full confidence that what you've just said is exactly what the other person wanted to hear.

Taking up too little space.

Powerful people take up space. Watch Donald Trump the next time you see him on television. He leans back, spreads out, and stakes his claim on wherever he happens to be sitting or standing.

Weak, needy people are afraid to take up space. They keep their feet close together and their arms close to their body. They rarely lean back and spread out.

When you take up too little space, you sub-communicate that you are afraid of infringing on the other person's space, which others subconsciously interpret as you being afraid of them, and therefore giving them all of your power. Relax, spread out, and be powerful!

Moving your hands around too much while talking.

This is a tough one to explain, because most people have been wrongfully taught that moving your hands around a lot while you talk is a form of expressiveness.

I'll tell you what it really means, in the world of body language sub-communication: Moving your hands around while talking indicates a release of nervous energy and tension. Are powerful people nervous? Of course not! Confident people are relaxed and do not need to release nervous energy. Think of the hero characters in a novel or movie. They're always portrayed as standing with their hands on their hips or resting at their sides. Can you imagine a powerful hero character moving their hands all about while talking?

Don't buy into the myth that moving your hands around in gestures while talking is expressive. It's really a sign of weakness.

(Exception to this rule: If you are a public speaker, expressiveness and animation are necessary to hold a group's attention.)

Leaning in = weakness.

I've already mentioned leaning back in my Donald Trump example. Powerful people lean back. Needy people lean in toward whomever it is they're speaking with.

Leaning back is a basic part of powerful body language, so begin doing it. If you're leaning in because people can't hear you, speak up! Which brings me to my next point.

If you can't hear another person and must lean in to hear, *never* lean directly forward; instead, turn your body sideways so your ear faces the person, then lean in slightly. Never lean in directly.

Have a powerful, commanding voice.

Voice quality takes up nearly half of that 93% of our non-verbal communication. Your voice tone matters – that means the volume of your voice (vocal projection), the tone of your voice, and its inflection.

Weak people speak quietly, for the same reason they take up little space – they're afraid of infringing on others. Powerful people speak powerfully and confidently and are heard clearly.

It's easy to go overboard here. Talking so loud to the point where you seem to be saying, "Look at me!" is almost as bad as speaking too softly. However, practice having a clear, powerful voice that carries and that will make you heard.

Not withdrawing at another person's disrespectful behavior.

Let's face it. There are jerks out there in the world, and now and then we encounter them. They have a self-important attitude, and nothing seems to bring out their shallow self-importance like bullying another person. I've spent enough time in business to have plenty of people try and walk all over me. Heck, it even still happens sometimes when I'm dealing with an especially insecure person who has an overwhelming need to feel important.

Don't ever put up with this sort of behavior. I'm telling you right now that powerful people never tolerate it, ever.

When I started to put my foot down with disrespectful people, my confidence shot through the roof! In addition, I got what I was after far more often. Keep in mind that people who act self-important are very weak deep down inside. Their self-important behavior is all a façade, intended to prevent you from seeing their weakness and to trick you into thinking they're strong. By calling them out on this behavior, they shrink down into the weaklings they are, obey you, and hand you all of their power.

Answering questions too quickly or too early.

When someone interrupts you with questions, and you stop right in the middle to answer them, you show that you are too eager to get the other person's approval. You appear needy.

Going back to a prior conversational thread that was cut off.

This is related to the previous point. If you get cut off – for instance, by a question, or if the person must interrupt you to take an important phone call – and then you immediately go back to what you were saying before, you again appear too eager for approval and too eager to impress.

After the interruption, resume the conversation by moving on to the next point on your list. Be willing to go back and re-visit the point you were making when you got cut off later on, after you are finished.

Taking too long to state something that can be said in fewer words.

If someone asks me if I can do something and the answer is yes, there are two ways I can respond:

I can answer with, "Yes, I can do that, and also this, and this, just like I've done for dozens of other clients like yourself."

Or, I can simply say, "Yes, I can do that."

The second sounds powerful and confident, while the first sounds like I'm begging for approval. When you use too many words to say something that can be stated simply, you appear

that you are trying too hard to impress. That's weak. The less you say, the more confident and *profound* you appear to be.

Being bold instead of confident.

Skydiving example: Skydiver number one is getting ready to jump, and yells, "Woohoo! Yeaaahhhhhh! This is going to be AWESOME! YEAAAHHHHHHH!"

That's boldness.

Skydiver number two says, "Okay, here we go, I'll see you guys on the ground."

That's confidence.

Be confident, not bold. Boldness implies that you are overcompensating for insecurities. Confidence conveys power, plain and simple.

Overcompensating for insecurities.

Here's an example of how I used to overcompensate for my insecurities before I learned all of this: Every now and then, I'd get lazy in the morning and dress casual instead of putting on a suit. When I went to appointments that day, I'd say something to the effect of, "I'm sorry I'm dressed down, I had to go out to a construction site today and didn't want to get one of my suits all dirty."

That's weak. The powerful thing to do is to not bring it up at all. When you bring attention to a shortcoming and try to explain it away, all you're doing is showing that you're insecure about it. Just don't bring it up. Whether your clothes are casual or your car is dirty - or whatever - just don't bring it up. Act like everything is perfectly fine and it will be.

Overcompensating for failures.

Again, an example of something I used to do that was dead wrong: If I were conducting an appointment that wasn't going well, I'd yawn and say, "Wow, I'm really tired today." Doing so

sub-communicates a fear of being judged. Don't apologize for your shortcomings or failures. As with the previous point, just don't bring it up in the first place! Even if you really are tired, don't say it!

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Going backwards at the other person's request.

If you're at a certain point in a meeting and the other side interrupts and asks to go back to a previous point, politely decline and say, "Let's continue moving forward, then we can re-visit that after I'm finished." To let others control the direction of the meeting and move it backwards not only gives your power away, but it also shows too much eagerness, as in, "I REALLY need this!" Stick to your game plan and come back to it later.

Talking without feedback into a downward spiral.

We all hate the long, awkward pauses in a conversation. It's easy to get nervous at them and worry that the other person has lost interest.

Filling in those gaps is the worst possible thing you can do. When you keep talking in order to fill in those gaps, you are sub-communicating insecurity and the fear that the prospect has lost interest. Wait for the other person to speak first and let them fill those gaps in.

Talking without sufficient vocal intonation and inflection.

Have a lively voice! I've already mentioned that it's important to have powerful vocal projection and a voice that can be heard clearly; however, it's equally as important to have vocal intonation and inflection. You don't want to bore others to sleep with a monotonous voice that sounds like it's coming from a robot, so add some intonation and make your voice interesting and pleasant to listen to!

There you have it - a list of points that, if followed, will send your power, confidence, and influence through the roof. Because there is so much information here, I recommend working on one point at a time, say for one week each. That way, you can per-

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fect and internalize each point, and let it become a part of you, rather than merely a rule that you follow.

Also, practice these points in all areas of your life. For example, when I developed my powerful voice, I practiced all the time, whether it was a business meeting, or a conversation with friends.

Follow these points at all times and with all people and they will become a part of you - then your personal power will skyrocket!

Frank J. Rumbauskas Jr. is a New York Times bestselling author who redefined selling, and who now uses his expertise in the Science of Social Dynamics to unleash unstoppable people and organizations!

To learn more, please visit FrankRumbauskas.com

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