

## EPISODE 125: HOW TO PREPARE FOR SUCCESSFUL CONVERSATIONS

### 1. DECIDE THE BEHAVIORS YOU WANT TO EXHIBIT

- Preparing for an important conversation or meeting is like giving a speech, a little bit of forethought and planning before the event increases your chance of success during the event.
- In the science of Emotional Intelligence, this is where self-awareness merges with situational awareness.
- Behavioral suggestions
  - What do you want to do when you enter the room? Meet others? Learn their names? Engage in some small talk? Take an interest in them? Get organized in your seating area?
  - What role do you want to play in the meeting or conversation? Lead it? Be a strong team player? Be involved without taking over the leadership? Be more laid back? Be quiet? Be observational?
  - When you do speak up, what do you want to sound like?
  - Do you need to remember to smile and make eye contact with others? Do you need to be intentional about acknowledging others and their smart comments or insightful suggestions?
  - Do you need to be intentional about your non-verbal communication? Posture, facial expression, tone of voice, etc.  
*\*\*\*Remember, you can't or do all of these. But you can select three of these or any other behavior you want to practice and keep them in mind.*

### 2. PRESELECT QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK

- A few well thought out questions are less likely to go flying out of your head. And they can powerfully determine the tone and direction of a meeting or conversation.
- Identify several and write them down: pleasant questions, fun questions, interesting questions, serious questions, creative questions.
- Pre-planned questions are like starter fuel for lighting up a conversation and then keeping it going when it starts to lose some heat.

### 3. KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESS

- Are you too quiet, too talkative, too loud, too enthusiastic, too timid, too dogmatic, too serious, too confident, too funny, too ready to argue?
- Do you listen carefully to others? Do you know what to listen for? Do you know when to shut up?
- What are your tendencies when you are nervous? Frustrated? Tired? Excited?  
*\*\*\*select only a couple to monitor*

### 4. BRING A CHEAT SHEET

- Enter the meeting with some written down reminders.
- 4 x 6 card and pen.
  - Write in code/symbols.
  - Questions/tendencies/attitude/posture/facial expressions.
  - Learn names.
  - Seating chart.
  - Write down key thoughts, observations, craft your comments.

#### 5. BE YOURSELF

- Trying too hard makes you tense, impedes memory, and kills authenticity.
- The planning, preparation, and cheat sheet just help you remember to be your best self.

#### Sources mentioned in this episode:

[Communication Guys, Episode 119: “Do You Know What You Sound Like to Others?”](#)

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