



**Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, Episode 39,
A Series About Executive Presence -- Produced By Suzie Price**

Executive Presence 360 Degree Feedback Article and Podcast: Style and Execution – Transcript
www.pricelessprofessional.com/execution

Suzie Price: When you're looking in the mirror, you're looking at the problem. But remember, you are also looking at the solution. I don't know who said that quote, but it is an empowering truth and it applies to our topic today, which is part two of a series on executive presence where we're going to talk about how well you execute as an executive, so it's about style and execution, and it's one of the three key areas that make up executive presence.

We're going to cover five focus areas within how well you execute that you can look at for improving, so what are the five focus areas that make up why people say you have executive presence or you don't have executive presence or they don't perceive you as having it or they do. We're going to talk about one area that you can focus on that most impacts your ability to effectively execute. We're going to talk about seven behaviors of that area, and what leaders who are really good in this area, it's called interactivity, what they do well so you can define the area.

And then I'm going to give you some actions you can take to improve in that area. I'm excited to bring this topic to you because building your level of executive presence is going to help you help others engage. It's going to help you help others become inspired and aligned and move people to act. The higher you go up in an organization, or the higher you want to go up, the more important your level of executive presence is because your job becomes a job of influence.

I'm excited to bring this series to you and these resources. Let's get started. Michael, hit it!

Speaker 2: Welcome to the Wake Up Eager Workforce podcast, a show designed for leaders, trainers, and consultants who are responsible for employee selection and professional development. Each episode is packed full with insider tips, best practices, expert interviews, and inspiration. Please welcome the host who is helping leaders, trainers, and consultants everywhere; Suzie Price!

Suzie Price: Hi, there. Welcome to Priceless Professional Development, episode number 39, the Wake Up Eager Workforce podcast. I'm Suzie Price. I am a professional facilitator, consultant, and author, and the producer of this podcast and owner of Priceless Professional Development. We're in our fourteenth year. At Priceless Professional Development, what we do is we help senior leaders hire and promote the right people, and we also help you develop an energized, committed, and drama-free workforce.

That's what we all want. That's what this podcast is about, is to help have the tools and resources and inspiration around hiring and promoting the right people and developing that workforce where people work together harmoniously. It doesn't happen by accident, and we have to actively manage the process, so everything that I share here is about helping you get there and stay there. That's why we talk



about hiring and promoting, because it starts with having the right people in the right spots, and we have the most powerful assessment tools in the world to help you figure that out and to help you see who would be a good fit, and who isn't going to be a good fit, and give you some guidelines of what to think about in regard to the people you're talking to. We take the mystery out of that equation, so you know exactly who you're getting.

After that, once people are on board, what we know is that nobody's perfect all the time, so we have the coaching and the training and the team-building to help round out skillsets. Our goal is for you and everyone on your team to perform at your highest level, and so that we help you bring out the best in yourself and so that you can help your team bring out the best of themselves, and that's a little bit about what we do. If you'd like to get in touch with me, my contact information is at pricelessprofessional.com/suzie. S-u-z-i-e, and it's all lowercase.

I'm excited to be back with you talking about how you can improve, how you align, inspire, and engage people so that they take action. If you get better at this, you're going to know how to communicate effectively, and that's a skillset that we're constantly evolving and refining and sharpening the saw on, and so this knowledge and insight today is going to help you leverage your strengths and help you cover any gaps if they are there.

We started this series where I interviewed in episode 38 Scott Weighart, who is an expert in executive presence. **That was the first in this series, and you can find it at pricelessprofessional.com/executivepresence.** All one word, lowercase. Scott is an expert and has been my facilitator for becoming certified in the executive presence and the tool that we're using now, the executive presence index.

The show notes for today, this is episode number 39, can be found at pricelessprofessional.com/execution. And it is about execution, right? At the end of the day, how well do you execute? How can you execute better? How can you get other people to take action and align? That is part of the definition of executive presence, and I want to re-read or re-share that definition with you. Our definition of it is, the qualities of a leader as seen through the eyes of others that engage, inspire, align and move people to act.

It is about influence and what I'm excited about around this survey tool, the executive presence index survey, is that it's the only research-based multi-rater tool out there that provides accurate data on executive presence. It's going to take the mystery out of that. Often times, I'll see when people are going to promote an executive, they'll say, "Well, not sure he or she has the gravitas. I don't even know if I'm pronouncing that correctly, but they don't exude confidence or they just don't have that executive presence thing. It varies when you start asking questions as to what they're seeing missing. Sometimes it is about style and execution. Sometimes it's about their ability to gain trust. Sometimes it's about their ability to talk about vision. And what's cool about the executive presence index is it measures all of that, so all the different aspects. It's cool because it's the only tool that I've been able to find that does that.

About 360 Feedback

It's a 360 feedback tool. I don't know if you're familiar with 360 feedback, so I'll share a little bit about that. I don't know if you've experienced it, but 360 feedback is a tool for development where you get anonymous feedback, so raters go online and they answer questions and they provide you feedback about leadership traits and behaviors and competencies that they've seen from working with you. You can have peers give you feedback, your direct reports, your managers, and sometimes you can have customers give you feedback or clients. The results help you understand others' perception, hence the definition for executive presence; how do other people see you? Often times, we intend to execute effectively. We intend to build trust. And we don't always know where we're falling short, and the wonderful thing about 360 feedback is that you now get an understanding of what people are seeing and how they are experiencing you.

I had my first experience with 360 feedback before I started my business, so 15 plus years ago. I was working at a consulting firm, and they had us all take a 360. I got feedback from my peers, my direct reports, and my manager. I was intrigued about the process and interested in it because I love development, but I felt when I was getting ... When my internal coach was going to walk through my results with me and give me them, I can remember I felt light-headed, my heart was beating faster, my palms were wet and sweaty. I was a willing participant, but I was nervous about ... You know, it's very vulnerable. It's standing up in front and people just saying what they think about you. So I might have looked composed during that discussion, but I was really nervous.

It's normal to feel that way, and it's good to remember that feeling because it does take some bravery to participate in a 360 feedback and some willingness to grow, to actually get something from the feedback. All feedback is not necessarily about you. It could be about where that person is in their life right now and how they're experiencing you. But, all feedback is for you. So you can always ... When you get feedback, what you do is you context it. You think about business goals, you think about themes, not the one-off comments or one-off ratings. You look at the big themes and you look at the business context of goals and objectives you're trying to meet.

Eventually what happens when you get your feedback, and Scott Weighart talked about it, the interview I had at the episode 38, talked about this where he said, "**Get to a point where you go on a intellectual treasure hunt.**" Initially, it is when you get feedback like this from people around you, there is the nervousness and you do feel vulnerable, but once you get through that part, you then start to, if you choose, can start to be very curious about, okay, how do I use this? What are these folks telling me? What do I need to know? What do I want to know?

It is a powerful process. I remember back then, how it jump-started. I actually ended up ... From the feedback, I figured out some strengths I didn't realize I had. I figured out some development opportunities that I needed to address to help me get to where I wanted to go, and that was about the time I started my business. So it was a perfect launch into better understanding myself. Self-awareness is the objective, and that is if I can become aware of how I'm being perceived, what my strengths are, what my blind spots are, then I can manage myself and from there, then I can start to do a better job of helping others become more self-aware and do a better job of influencing.



I revisited those feelings that I talked about feeling a little vulnerable and nervous when I had another 360 done, where I participated in, as a recipient of feedback, in the executive presence index survey, which is a 360 all about executive presence. So I got feedback from clients and from the people I consider as my board of advisors for my business, and from peers since I have limited direct reports. It was again a feeling of vulnerability when I got on the phone with my coach, feeling a little self-conscious. But at the end of the day, the results from my report helped me in so many ways. One, I have a new development plan for myself. I have some new things that I'm aware of, new strengths that ... what I call happy blind spots. It's something other people see that I didn't see that are good things, so that actually is very helpful. It helps me be stronger in my business. And also some areas that I can work on and develop and do more of. It was helpful in that way.

It was a good reminder, as someone who facilitates quite a few 360 feedback-type tools with clients, what that vulnerability feels like and continue to be as empathetic and supportive as I can be while also being direct and helpful in regard to the feedback and helping people use it. And I also think if you're going to become an expert in any tool, it's important that you experience it and own it in that way, because you can't help others learn from a tool or get something out of it if you haven't yourself. It's been a good experience. I needed to complete the assessment or have feedback given on myself and then when I went to Boston to become certified in the tool, we were there for a few days in pretty intensive, solid training.

Think of Senior Leaders and Executives You've Worked With In the Past...

So what I want you to do right now is think about senior and executive leaders that you've worked with, that you've known and that you've observed in action over the years. I want you to think, who do you know, who do you currently work with, who have you worked with. Who comes to mind first? Think of their names and the companies they worked in. Okay? I have six names that come to mind right away, and their companies. Different companies. People who I worked for or worked around, and then ...

So I want you to have your list. Now I want you to think of your interactions and observance of each leader. Okay? **I want you to pick one or two people out of that list. One who didn't exhibit executive presence, and one who did. I'll read to you the definition of executive presence again. Executive presence is the ability to engage, inspire, align and move people to act. Out of those senior leaders and executives that you thought of from your history, who inspired you and who did not? Who caused you to want to take action? Who did not?**

Probably the not comes up first, as it did for me and most people. We always remember the people who weren't effective first. I think of a senior leader I observed in action. I've actually worked for her at an international company. She had great experience. I respected her experience, but she did not influence us to high performance. And now, what I know today about executive presence, if she'd have gotten some feedback in this tool, if she'd gotten some feedback, because she had so much expertise, and if she had have been open to considering the feedback and done something with it, she might have been a more impactful leader. But she is probably somebody who had all the ability to be impactful, and had the power to be impactful, because she was in a powerful position, but we did a lot of saying yes to her and there wasn't a lot of follow-through. It was a dysfunctional team, not a lot of trust. A lot of the



things that we're going to talk about in these series that I'm doing around executive presence, we would have probably marked her lower in, if not very low. Eventually, her department was disbanded. She's still with that organization, but she did not influence us to ... and align us and engage us.

Now, on the flip side, when I think of that person, I think of, now who did? It's another executive who is here in Atlanta, and I get to see this executive up close and personal and have watched his success. He does influence, engage, align, and move people. He does many things right. He has high trust with his team and his employees. He's credible, and they work all over the country. They have about 800 or so employees. When he communicates, he shows up and executes in a way that causes people to want to take actions. That he gets buy-in. He has what I would think of as very strong executive presence.

I want you to have those people in mind as we go through, and the behaviors that you see. **As you listen to this series about executive presence, think of those two people and think about the items as well as yourself when we're talking about the different items that are being measured.** How would you score, and how would that person score? And how would the person who does it really well score? So that you can kind of see the relevance in it.

Three Areas Are Measured

What I want to do is talk about the three areas that are measured in executive presence, just mention them very quickly. We're going to talk today about style and execution. In separate episodes, I'm going to talk about substance. That's an area or dimension of executive presence, and it's about credibility. And then the third area that we're going to talk about is character. Those are qualities that help you build trust. These all intermingle, but those are our three categories; style and execution, substance and credibility, and character and trust.

We're going to go into the style and execution part, and I want to ... I'm going to quote to you from Suzanne Bates' book. She wrote a book called, I have it here in front of me, **All the Leader You Can Be, the Science of Achieving Extraordinary Executive Presence.** I'm going to read some quotes from her about this area of style and execution as I talk about the areas that are within this bucket of style and execution, and I want to let you know that her book is available on Audible. Today's broadcast is brought to you by audible.com, and you can get a free audio book. You can get a audio book download and a 30 day free trial, can't say it. At audibletrial.com/wakeupeagerworkforce. They have 150,000 titles to choose from. You can listen to it on your phone, Android, Kindle, MP3 player, and you can find Suzanne's book. I'm going to quote from it today, as I mentioned. All the Leader You Can Be, the Science of Achieving Extraordinary Executive Presence. If you go over and use the link audibletrial.com/wakeupeagerworkforce If you decide not to keep the trial, you still get to keep the book.

Let's talk about execution and style. This is the perception of energy and preparedness and readiness. I'm going to read you a quote. It's in Suzanne Bates' book, page 59. It says, "*The word style is commonly used to describe a person's wardrobe and grooming as in stylish appearance. A more accurate and complete definition of style is a way of doing things.*" What you'll notice, a lot of people equate executive presence with that whole what she says, stylish appearance. That is a piece of the puzzle, but it's only one piece. **It's really how do you go about doing things.**



The way we measure it in the survey, or 360 feedback, is **appearance**. That's one aspect. But it's also **intentionality, inclusiveness, interactivity, and assertiveness**. We're looking how each ... When people are looking at these items within these areas, they're rating you on a scale of one to five. I'm actually opening my results right now and I'll give you some feedback I got and some of the insight. I won't do too much of that, but I'll give you a little bit, just in case you're curious.

Appearance

Let's look at the first facet. They call them facets. The dimension is style and execution, and the first facet of five facets is appearance. This is looking and acting like an executive, commanding the room, energy and vigor. How would you rate yourself overall when you think about do I command the room? Do I bring energy and vigor to my interactions? How would you rate? Where do you think you are on a scale of one to five? What do you think your team members would rank you as? Would it vary? Would it be consistent? What about your peers? What about your manager?

Here's something that Suzanne Bates says in her book about energy, and it's page 61 of her book. "A leader that doesn't appear on top of his game and ready for the day will be less visible. This is one reason smart, thoughtful professionals get passed over on promotions and opportunities. Meanwhile, those who bring energy into a room tend to get noticed and evaluated as quote unquote 'executive material'." So the role of energy plays a part as to how you are perceived. I like what she says, one reason smart and thoughtful professionals get passed over is because maybe they aren't owning this piece of the puzzle.

We don't want to, with appearance, be so focused on it that the over-focus of it would be being seen as an empty suit or being so energetic and vigorous that you exhaust others. That would be an over-focus. We want to strike the right balance. A couple of items that are measured, there are six items, I think, in this one. When people are taking the survey, they would read these items and give you a score. A couple of them that are listed, I'll give you an example. Whether the setting is formal or informal, he or she always seems to look the role. And then another one is, does not show up looking fatigued, poorly dressed, or unprepared. I got a good score on that one. That was my highest one in the facet of appearance for this style and execution area. Doesn't look fatigued, poorly dressed, or unprepared. That was good. I focus on that, too, though. I have to, because it does not come natural to me in regard to dress.

My motivator's very high theoretical, and or intellectual, if you're familiar with my tri-metrics assessment. That means we can get caught up in the data and we can ... The blind spot is you can leave practical matters behind because you get so caught up in the research and the information, and so I manage that blind spot by getting some support around that and actually just consciously making sure I don't let the practical matters of my life go by the wayside because I'm so caught up in learning and applying it to my business. I'm also high utilitarian, which means you can work a lot. Those two together could cause me to show up looking fatigued, poorly dressed, or unprepared. But I've consciously worked on that, so I was very pleased to see very high scores. In fact, perfect scores. So I'll take it, because I have worked on that.

Does Appearance really Matter?

Let's go into the next area. That one facet was appearance. Here is another facet that people are looking at and rating on. Oh, I want to mention one thing before I go there. I just found a page covered in Suzanne's book where she talks about does appearance really matter? I think it's relevant here, because those of us who love to learn and knowledge would like to say, you know, gosh, that doesn't really matter. I know a lot. I'm a great XYZ. Whatever it is that you do. But here's some good quote from her from her book, page 63. *"For those who believe appearance shouldn't matter, our response is, whether or not you believe it should, it does, a fact widely affirmed by credible research. Implicit leadership leader has shown that representations unconsciously held by followers help distinguish leaders from non-leaders. This is yet another reason that it is so important to provide leaders with multi-rater feedback. It makes them aware of blind spots that are often significantly affecting how others evaluate their competence, capability, and suitability for the role so they can take action."*

Around this whole aspect of appearance, the next episode in this series, I'm talking to two image consultants; one who deals primarily with women executives and another who deals primarily with men. They both have really interesting perspectives and it is very grounded. So if you're skeptical about why appearance matters and you're like me where that's not your strong suit ... I mean, I actually had to put a lot of effort into it. I'm very low on the motivators around aesthetic, so it's kind of like the last thing I think about. Aesthetic is paying attention to how things look and feel. I also have to work on managing that. If that describes you at all, you might want to tune into the next set of episodes, and I think the key phrase for that ... I haven't created them yet, they're coming up, pricelessprofessional.com/style. That'll give you some insight from those image consultants around this area.

Intentionality

Now let's go to the next area that we're talking about when we're talking about your ability to execute, and it's called intentionality. This is about articulating vision. It's about people leaving meetings with a clear course of action. How well do you articulate vision? When people leave a meeting with you, do they know what's next? Do they have a clear course of action? What would your team members say? What would your peers say? Here is some notes from Suzanne's book, Suzanne Bates, about intentionality. *"It can be helpful to think of intentionality as a purposeful kind of vision. In fact, we sometimes refer to intentionality as vision with a small v. Intentionality becomes a compass for the organization's energies, pointing people down a productive path so that they focus their effort and time on what matters. It serves to clarify direction and keep actions aligned and on track. An intentional leader guides others on a path forward."*

Hopefully you were listening to that and thinking about how you might be scored in that area. If it's an over-strength, if you're doing too much intentionality, there might be too much back and forth between others, and the process might become onerous or challenging. When I look at my scores on intentionality, my lowest rated score, I actually rated myself low here, too, so no surprise. It didn't get low low, but it's not one of my strengths. Low enough that I need to work on it, and it's takes time to explain his or her rationale or the principles underlying his or her decisions.

I move pretty fast and that would be a strength, and it's a blind spot sometimes when I don't stop, back up, and explain rationale. My highest rated item in the area of intentionality was, from the feedback, keeps meeting on track without being heavy-handed or authoritarian. I actually got perfect scores in that, so that felt really good. I wonder sometimes if I'm too heavy-handed. I do like efficient meetings, and I like and teach a little bit about meetings, and so I think it's important to demonstrate someone who can hold good meetings, but sometimes I wondered if I was too antsy or too dominant, and so it was nice to get some positive feedback around that. That's intentionality. Think about that, and about your ability to do that, because that impacts ... or your strengths in this area, that impacts your ability to execute effectively, which impacts your ability to positively influence.

Inclusiveness

The next area measured in style and execution is inclusiveness. I'm going to read another quote from Suzanne's book. I'll restate the title one more time: *All the Leader You Can Be, the Science of Achieving Extraordinary Executive Presence*. Here's what she says about inclusiveness. *"Basically, it means that you're able to get the right people to the table, or reach out to the right stakeholders to make sure people have a voice and a stake in the discussion. Inclusiveness is essential to building support for initiatives and getting the best of people's thinking and effort. Inclusive leaders tend to bring a lot of people into the discussion. They are approachable and convey the sense that all views are welcome."*

The over-strength, if we do too much of this, we might invite too many people to too many meetings, and we may take forever for everybody to be heard and not get things done. But if we're doing the right balance of inclusiveness, we're going to be doing some deep listening. People are going to feel valued. You're going to actively invite different points of view. I'm looking at mine, how did I do on inclusiveness? I scored strong in others have learned that they can speak up and approach him or her with ideas. That's good. I had perfect scores on that one, so that's very cool.

One that I thought I was really good at, I rated myself really high and a lot of things, I rated myself lower than others, but on this one, this is a blind spot because I rated myself as, oh, I absolutely do this. I gave myself a five, and other people did not rate me as a five. The item around inclusiveness, expresses a refreshing curiosity and interest in the ideas of others. A little bit of my bulldozer and my style, the high D and that high knowledge seeker person. Sometimes I'm not as curious and interested as I think I am, so that is a gap area for me.

How do you do and then those couple of examples. Again, there are six questions that are asked of raters around each one of these areas, but just kind of giving you taste of what's measured there. **How would you rate in this area of inclusiveness, deep listening? Are you listening? Are people feeling valued? What would your boss or manager say? And what would your team say?**

Assertiveness

The next one, assertiveness. That is for people to be able to speak up without being shut down, finding that right balance. Let's see what Suzanne says in her book, page 78. *"Assertiveness is defined by our research as the ability to be direct, forthright, and willing to raise issues without unnecessary delay, and also to work through differences constructively. This type of assertiveness takes a reasonable tone,*

speaks up for rational purpose, and puts just the right emphasis on the relative urgency and importance of the matter at hand. Assertiveness reflects confidence and builds others' confidence in us."

I like that, the ability to be direct and forthright, reasonable tone, right emphasis on urgency, so not too much urgency, not too little, not too laid-back, not bulldozing people. It shows confidence. It represents confidence to people. **Are people able to speak up, and would they say that you reflect confidence and you build confidence in others by being direct and forthright? Is that a strong area for you or could that be a blind spot?**

One over-strength, or a couple over-strengths around being too assertive, if you're using it too much, is no subject is too small for intellectual debate. So those of us who are high theoretical or intellectual on the motivators assessment in tri-metrics, be aware of when you need to just let it go and when you don't need to debate. The debate part is a piece of it. Not everybody wants to get into an intellectual discussion. Then the other over-strength, if we're too assertive, people get exhausted.

What I also want to say is ... Let's look at my results, pulling it out. I scored strong in, one of my highest ones in this area of assertiveness, and here's just another sample item, believes we can disagree without being disagreeable. How would people rate you? For me, I score pretty strong in that one. That feels good, so there is a part of me that does allow people to disagree. I don't bulldoze everybody all the time.

And then my biggest takeaway for development on the tool is in this area of this question. Does not shy away from making his or her opinions, views, and reactions known. I rated myself a three on a scale of one to five, and my overall score is above the three, a little better than how I rated myself, but definitely an area of development. I need to be more transparent around what I think and not hold my opinions back, and I do that. I'm aware of that. It's a little better. But that's one of my key development areas in this area or this dimension of being able to execute. I need to speak up about my opinions and views. What about you? What would you say?

Interactivity

Last item, and we're going to go into more detail about this item because it is one that highly impacts other items within the area of executive presence. It's called interactivity. This is about how accessible are you? Do you have the right quality or quantity of interaction with people? The last quote I'll read from Suzanne's book is, *"Interactivity is among the most sociable of variables in executive presence. It implies accessibility, a frequency of communication action, a personable style of relating to others, and attunement to the spoken and unspoken elements of communication. Leaders strong in interactivity employ a conversational style that puts people at ease and encourages them to speak up and be heard. While these leaders utilize all forms of written, electronic, and formal communication, they also tend to be personable, approachable, and easy to connect with in person."*

This is about communication, and it is are people able to reach you, see you, connect with you? An over-strengths, if we do too much of this, we might send a ton of emails that we're touching base, or we have meetings that are irrelevant. They're getting interaction with us, but it's not meaningful. Or if there's a lot of red tape and hierarchy, that can also impact interactivity scores.



When we look at that area, some items that people are rating you on ... I'll look at mine again. Interactivity. Accessible, easy to connect with and talk to. How would your team rate you? That was one of my stronger scores. I thought I was a three, and I got strongly agree from all raters, so that was a happy blind spot. Another area, encourages and expects frequent interaction to coordinate action and sustain alignment. That's another area. How would your team rate you?

I mentioned that this facet or area of executive presence, how well you do here impacts a lot of other areas within the whole picture of executive presence. How well you interact with people, if you can improve in this area, it impacts how people see your humility, your ability for restraint. These are all areas measured in other aspects of the executive presence. How concerned are you? How authentic are you? Do you have practical wisdom that you share? Your level of confidence, your composure, your ability to build resonance with people, how inclusive you are. This one aspect is key to think about, and so when you ever take any kind of executive presence index type survey, you can focus on this interactivity dimension or facet and work on that.

I'm going to talk a little bit about ... give you a little bit more of a definition on interactivity, the behaviors, and some action items. You can find all of this in the show notes, as you want to go back and you want to just print out this section around interactivity and focus there if you think this could be an area that you could improve upon. You're going to see great movement here in other aspects of how you come across to others and their perception of your ability to influence and align and engage.

The show notes, I don't know if I said it, but pricelessprofessional.com/execution, all lower case, that's where you'll find the show notes.

Okay, so let's go into interactivity a little bit more deeply now. **It's about free-flowing exchange of information. You're not rushed, you're not impersonal. You find that right balance. You pay attention to what's being said and what's not being said. You're seen as approachable. You address conflict.** And so here are some actions when people score strongly in interactivity. They ask questions and they communicate well to coordinate action. It's a two-way dialogue, not a one-way dialogue.

Actions of Someone Who's Scores Strong in Interactivity

I want you to, as I'm saying these behaviors, think about you. How well do you think you're doing and what do you think other people would say? **You rarely cancel one-to-one meetings.** So when you have a meeting with someone on your team, you keep it. But if you do have to cancel, you make sure you reconnect. You don't leave all that stuff loose. How well are you doing there? **People find that your door is open and if it's not open, they know they can schedule a time with you if needed.** Others comment that you always get back with them with an answer. It's not, "I'll get back with you," and then they never hear from you. **You always follow up. You don't go dark just because something's not decided.** So you've talked about a topic and then you just go dark. You know what that is, right? If they don't hear from you, they don't know where the issue stands. They think it's important, you're not responding.

If you're doing interactivity well, **your calendar is filled with communication activity because you see it as a priority.** That is key. Look at your calendar. Are you communicating with you are team? Are you

finding the right balance? Do you have a lot of communication activity? Or do you see that as not productive, quote unquote, "not productive"? The higher up you go, the greater your influence is and the greater your role is to influence. This having calendars that are filled with communication-related activity is part of the role, and it is a shift for senior leaders and executive leaders.

Last and big one is how about conflict? Do you allow it to simmer, or do you pull people together and say, hey, I noticed a little conflict here, or we need to have a discussion or a disagreement. Do you discuss? Do you address? Those are some things that, if you can get strong in these areas that are mentioned here and say that you do these behaviors well, then you're going to score stronger in interactivity. I want to give you some development actions. I have one, two, three, four, five actions for you.

Five Actions You Can Take to Improve Interactivity

- 1) **One is figure out how you can be less formal with people and more available.** How can you do that? What can you do more of now that you're not doing? There are some clues. If you're being very formal or not available, if you have taken the tri-metrics assessment, you'll see some clues around some of the blind spots and strengths. In the motivators area, if you scored traditional regulatory or high individualistic political, both of those motivators sometimes can be very protocol-oriented and very structure and hierarchy oriented. Your tendency might be to say, well, that's not ... I'm not in the line of command, or they're not in my line of command, so I don't have time for that.

Utilitarian can also, you know, I need to get return on investment. Bang for the buck here. I don't have time to sit and connect and communicate and have how's it going meetings or address conflict. They just need to figure it out. Also, that actually will impact negatively your scores on interactivity, which at the end of the day is going to impact negatively your ability to influence and move people to want to take action.

Go back, look at your TriMetrix assessment. Some of the style people, aspects of the style, what vehicle you drive, the bulldozer, which is the high D, or the train, the high compliance, can be very task-oriented first. Doesn't mean they don't care about people, because you know, style is not the whole picture. But you can, if those are your styles, get very focused on the task and having communication-related activities doesn't feel necessarily like it meets that need for checking things off the list. The high compliance style likes to have the door closed quite a bit because they need to think. And you need to take care of that and do what you need to do for yourself, but find that balance. Find that balance when you can. What can you do? It's not all black and white. What's a little bit that you can do now that you didn't do yesterday that could have you be less formal and more accessible?

One last comment on the TriMetrix assessment. If you look at your acumen report, that's the third science. It's under the hood. Look at areas like interpersonal skills, so that's the ability to build rapport. Are people really telling you what they think? How strong is your ability to do

that? You may be a people person, but at the end of the day because of your level and your position, how you're communicating. Are they willing to tell you what they really think so that they can align with you and not do what my boss who had wonderful expertise but did not have us aligned did, which she would shut us down. She didn't really align us because of that lower interpersonal skills. She didn't align us as much as she thought she did.

Could also look a little bit at empathy. That's ability to appreciate others. Persuasion, and understanding and evaluating others. Are you reading the vibe in the room? Are you hearing and understanding what's not being said? Those are all skillsets that can be grown if they're not as strong now. All the under the hood stuff, you can develop that if it's crucial to your role. Okay, so that's one key action. Go back to your TriMetrix assessment. Look at pieces and parts of that, and if you're being too formal or not very accessible, you might get some insights as to why and find some ways to adapt. Cover blind spots or build a skill under the hood that you have under the hood or the acumen.

- 2) **Also, a next action that you can take to build interactivity is think about who you regularly meet with and work with. Look at your calendar.** Go over and look. What could you do to change a little bit of pattern or habit that you have now? Can you allocate your time differently? You may want to resist if you're the high dominance or high compliance style, of your high utilitarian or high individualistic, because you're wondering if that's going to get you the return on investment. But realize that if you don't manage the over-strength of your style, it could become a blind spot and it could hinder the very thing that you care about, which is wanting people to take action. So go look at your calendar and see where you can add, if you need to, a little bit more communication activity. Remember, small efforts add up. I'm not saying rearrange everything tomorrow, but start today rearranging something. One percent a day in 70 days, you're twice improved. So take some action there.
- 3) **Number three action item, get feedback on how you conduct meetings. Are you having effective meetings so that people leave meetings knowing what to do?** Are you putting in enough planning and prep time? Do you have somebody who helps you with that if your schedule is overloaded? Because good meetings don't happen by themselves, and I have a actual two hour workshop that I do on better meetings, and I did a podcast on it. So if you feel like you could have better meetings and that people aren't speaking up and you don't have some of the processes you need for the meetings to be effective and productive, go check out episode number seven. it's the way to reach it on the show notes, and you can download it and listen to it or do it on the app. Episode seven, pricelessprofessional.com/bettermeetings. All one word, lowercase. www.Pricelessprofessional.com/bettermeetings It is a skill. They don't naturally happen by themselves, and it does require some prep work to have good meetings.
- 4) **Fourth development area, check your listening skills. Are you listening deeply?** I call it listening aggressively. There's, again, a skillset. And it is something we can become better at. If you're a high I style or a high D style in the DISC, you may not always listen. It might not come as natural

to you. It's something that I constantly work on, being more present. I have lots of other episodes about this, too, if you look at the list of communication items around. I have a podcast around communication. You'll see that on the directory for wakeupeagerworkforce.com of episodes. But, if you want to learn about listening aggressively, it's a great place to start. It's episode number 27, and it's www.pricelessprofessional.com/listen. Think about it.

Are your communications more one-way or are they two-way? And when they're two-way, what's the percentage? I like my ... Uberconference.com is the tool I use to record discussions and send to people, and often times, if I record them or I record them for the podcast, it will tell what percentage of time I talked and what percentage of time they talked. That would be an interesting tool, too. I just thought about that. But I always look and say, okay, did they talk more than me? Because that's what I want. There are times when I need to, and as the leader, you need to be talking and speaking, but there are a lot of times where you just need to be listening, tuning in. So work on that skill and realize the importance of it if you think you're not as strong there as you could be, because it will impact your ability to be seen as someone as a leader who aligns and engage people.

- 5) Then last but not least on the actions, **how strong is your ability to handle conflict? Do you avoid it? Do you say, "Oh, just let them work it out"?** Certain communication styles in the DISC tend to avoid conflict, the S and C might hold back or not say what they really think. The D and the I, they might get in and just act really quickly. They tend to go fast and say, "Well, just figure it out!" So neither approach really helps, but there is a process. I have a workshop that I do, a half-day workshop on conflict and how to handle it. I have a prep model. PREP is the acronym that I use, and I explain it all in a podcast episode, of course. That's what this podcast is for. You can find out about that. It's actually another thing, it's a skill, and if it's not your strength, you can grow that strength. If you'd like to listen to that episode, it's episode number 35 and it's www.pricelessprofessional.com/conflict

This wraps up, losing my voice, executive presence podcast episode number 39. **Style, how well you execute.** The show notes are at pricelessprofessional.com/execution, and if you would like to connect with me, I'm on Twitter at Wake Up Eager. And I'm on Facebook at Wake Up Eager. I'm also on LinkedIn, look me up at Suzie Price. I'd love to stay connected. If you have thoughts and comments about this podcast, let me know and you can contact me at pricelessprofessional.com/suzie. S-u-z-i-e.

We do have a Wake Up Eager Workforce app. We've got it for iPhone. There's one coming for the Android, and it's also coming that if you have the app, you can leave comments on the app. It's not alive yet, but it's coming, so I'll let you know about that. What else? You can get the app if you go to the directory of all of our episodes, it's wakeupeagerworkforce.com.



Closing Thoughts...

I loved sharing this with you today. I really appreciate you being a part of the Wake Up Eager Workforce community, and it gives me joy to do the work that I do every day. And I know that I excited about all the things that I talk about today or in these podcasts, but I truly am interested in every aspect, and I wouldn't have it any other way than to be able to be here and share we you, so thank you and thank you for this possibility.

And just remember what we started with today. **When you're looking in the mirror, you're looking at the problem. But you're also looking at the solution. And we can only find those solutions when we're willing to open up and pay attention to what others say, what their perceptions are, and guide our actions based on some of that feedback so that we can grow.**

All feedback is not about us, but all feedback is for us. So sometimes, somebody's negative feedback really isn't about you, it's about the space that they're in. But there's probably something in their feedback that could be helpful, and that's why I'm a fan of the assessments. That's why I'm a fan of something like 360 feedback.

I can't tell you how often I get to grow, because every time I do an engagement as a consultant, I get feedback. Sometimes in the past, and sometimes currently, it can feel like, oh my gosh, I don't need any more feedback! But at the end of the day, it helps me become a better version of myself, and I can't help others if I'm not constantly doing that myself. I really do believe as leaders, that's our job. That's our job. **That's your job, to grow and expand and become the best that you could be, the next better version of yourself. Good where you are and getting better and better every day, and from that place, then you're unstoppable. Your team will be unstoppable, and they will come with you.**

Many blessings. Look forward to talking to you. On our next episode, we're going to go back to this area of appearance and as I mentioned, we're going to talk to two image consultants. We're going to talk a little bit about style and looking and acting like an executive. I was trying to find the definition. Looking and acting like an executive, adapting dress and demeanor to the situation, and handling social situations with tact. That's going to be our focus on the next episodes. After that, what we'll do is talk about credibility and substance. Look forward to that. All the best. Hope you have a great day.

Speaker 2: This episode of the Wake Up Eager Workforce podcast was brought to you by Priceless Professional Development. Thank you for tuning in. If you enjoyed today's show, head over to pricelessprofessional.com to gain access to more professional development resources.