

# Tools for Leading with Presence

These communication tools hold the keys to effective leadership.

*Reviewed by Terrence Fernsler*

**Leading with Presence.** By *Antonie T. Knoppers, Milly Obdeijn, & Steffen R. Giessner.* Emerald Publishing Ltd, [emeraldgroupublishing.com](http://emeraldgroupublishing.com). 305 pages. Softcover.

There's more to communication, of course, than just words. How you present your words is as important – or sometimes more important – than the words themselves. Voice – volume, register, tempo, emphasis, and clarity – and body language – posture, movement, and gestures – play key roles in how presentations are received. These are elements of “presence” in any setting.

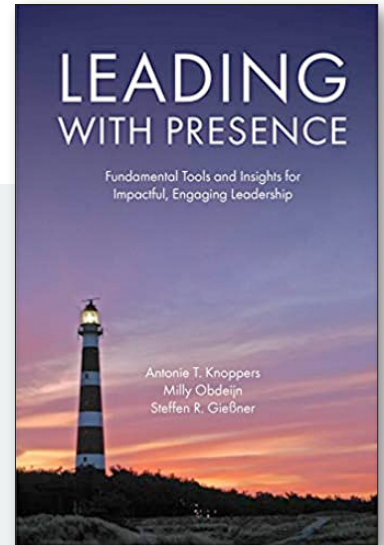
Presence can reinforce your verbal message when it coincides with your words. But you can damage your intentions when your presence contradicts what you say. The authors of *Leading with Presence* combine research in psychology, performance, and body movement to explain how your presence is affected by your voice, gesture, and posture. They explore how to match these attributes with your message, and they offer exercises and warm-ups you can use to strengthen your presence. Authenticity is a core component in presence, so the exercises are intended to make your presentations more engaging and to replace any harmful habits that could undermine your messages.

Presence is critical to all your presentations – conferences, classrooms, team meetings, or interviews. Your presence includes more than how you look and sound. Being aware of your own habits will help you connect with audiences large and small.

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## Prepare for Great Interactions

The tips in *Leading with Presence* will help you create effective presence in every interaction. A few examples:

**Ground** yourself. When you're grounded, you're centered, balanced, and in the moment, with your feet planted firmly against the ground. Your breathing is deep, and you're present in your body.

**Practice** good posture – not slumped or too stiff.

**Make sure** your verbal and non-verbal languages are always in alignment.

**Give people** your full attention, and connect with them by making good eye contact.

**Understand** the power of storytelling, and always have relevant stories at the ready to make your points. **S**

