

# CBODN: In The Know Recap



April, 2020 In The Know Summary

## **Executive Presence**

**The Art of Commanding Respect Like a CEO**

Harrison Monarth

**Facilitator:** [Jessica McGlyn](#)

### **About the Book**

In this book, Harrison Monarth presents a rich discussion on executive presence—how others perceive us and strategies for developing presence. Gravitas, the ability to remain calm under pressure, acting decisively, and demonstrating EQ are all important aspects of presence. Monarth says presence involves communication, competence, personal brand, courage, and savvy. In our discussion, the group added to the list: having a vision, authenticity, vulnerability (“I’m not perfect.”), curiosity (i.e., knowing to ask the right questions), managing emotions, courage, calmness, resilience, and flexibility.

### **Discussion Highlights**

- Monarth discusses how executive presence is largely about how you are perceived. It is important to build self-awareness to understand how you come across. The group shared several strategies for Building Self-Awareness:
  - One client used to ask employees to type up anonymous feedback and place it in a box when he was on vacation. After vacation, the team would go through the box.
  - Question prompts that are useful to inviting feedback:
    - Stop, Start, Continue. What am I doing well? Where can I show improvement? What can I do more of?
    - What is it about me you that admire? What is the one thing I can do that will impact the business?
    - I am working on these three things... Is there anything else you think I should be thinking about?
    - Ask for advice about how to approach something. This is easier for someone to respond to a request for advice than the question, “What am I doing wrong?”
- When leaders say it’s hard to receive feedback, here’s what we tell them:
  - “Pretend you are doing the interview about someone else. You are a reporter.”
  - “Don’t react. Just take notes” Only say: “And what else?” or “Thank you.”
  - Remember ‘W-A-I-T’ = Why Am I Talking?
- Think about the feedback you have heard in multiple contexts, not just at work. Zoom out. Is this type of situation difficult for you?
- Monarth presents a “Frame-Storm Exercise” for managing emotions:
  1. Ask calibrating questions. What’s the view of the situation? What might it trigger? Do I feel good about how I am framing it now?

2. Brainstorm. Come up with 15-30 alternative perspectives to look at what could be happening.
  3. Choose one of those.
- Ideas for how to manage emotions:
    - “Pause,” wait before you react. Notice how you are feeling in the body. Take deep breaths. Get grounded. Label the emotion (“this is fear” or “this is anxiety”). Think about what is setting you off. Acknowledge it. Shift perspectives. Take a different frame.
    - It can be useful to notice the physical flags – such as a flushed face, tightness in the chest, or short breathing. Sometimes it is easier to notice what is happening physically if you are not able to name the emotion.
    - Practice a script to have ready for when you are triggered. Such as, “I’d like to reflect on that and get back to you.”
  - Monarth presents aspects of Social intelligence
    1. Physical Presentation: Non-verbals, how you communicate confidence and level of respect.
    2. Clarity. How clear are you about expectations? How compelling are you when you speak?
    3. Awareness. Ability to read people, respond.
    4. Authenticity. How genuine and honest are you?
    5. Empathy. The more we show interest in others (work + personal), the more they like us.
  - How to help someone learn to read others:
    - Get curious. Change “yes/no” questions to “how?” and “what?” Helps clients get out of assumptions.
    - Imagine your brain as a condo. You have control over who and what gets into it. You view the world from that balcony, what is the view? The view from the other person’s condo is different. “Tell me about their view.”
    - Role play. Take on the role of the employee. Coach takes on their role.
    - Ladder of Inference.
  - Reducing Anxiety
    - Set boundaries. What is the goal minimally? Create a common set of values.
    - Write down expectations.
    - Ask leaders to be clear on the next 2-3 weeks. Then check in. (You cannot predict the future.)
    - Talk about what is known, and what is unknown.
    - Leaders are feeling pressure that they need to figure it out for their teams. Leaders need to “co-create it” with the team. (It’s not a time to be brilliant. It’s a time to leverage resources.) “Team, here is what we are challenged with...” Invite them into the conversation. “I value your ideas and opinion.”
    - The greatest fear is uncertainty. Share whatever information you can be certain of. “I don’t know much more than you do. But if I hear any update, I will share it immediately.”
  - Influence – Ways to build it
    - Visibility: People gravitate toward what is familiar.
    - Framing: Create context, mental structures, storytelling. Connect meaning to what you are trying to do.
    - Likability: The more likeable you are, the more trustworthy.
    - Passion principle: Be energetic, expressive when you give information. (It’s another side of managing emotions. Managing emotions is not always about being calm and collected.)

## Resources

- Laura Mendelow’s [blog](#)
- Influence Style Indicator [assessment](#)
- Book: [Brag. The art of tooting your own horn without blowing it.](#)

\*The Chesapeake Bay Organizational Development Network (CBODN) Book Club is a monthly session, open to all learners. Each month, a presenter shares highlights from a book related to leadership, business, or coaching. There's no obligation to pre-read the book. The session summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. [Register here](#) for upcoming events. For a listing of Book Club summaries, [click here](#).