Gravitas and Levitas

Michael Brooke
Many people say they would like to have Gravitas at work.
What is gravitas?

How do you know someone has it?
Understanding gravitas

Gravitas

Serious
Authority
‘Weight’
Presence
Controlled
Deliberate
Deep voice
Pausing
Slow/still
Feeling of ease
What are the **benefits** of gravitas?

- Impact
- Authority
- Credibility
- Reputation
- Leadership
- Influence
- Power
When do you want to have more gravitas?
Understanding gravitas
Understanding levitas
Developing your gravitas
Developing levitas
Gravitas and levitas combined
Action Plans/Next steps
Michael Brooke

- Experienced Trainer
- Senior level roles at BNP Paribas
- Expert in Leadership & high performance teams
- Chartered Psychologist and MBTI accredited
- Senior Consultant Speak First
Global training and coaching excellence
Understanding Gravitas and Levitas

**Levitas**
- Playful
- Light
- Spontaneous
- Emotional
- Dynamic
- Humorous
- Faster
- Musical voice
- Energetic
- Movement

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- Ease
People form lasting impressions of others in just a few seconds.

Recent research from Harvard Business School shows this is focused on 2 main factors.
80%+ of your impact relates to Warmth and Strength
‘When we form a first impression of another person it’s not really a single impression. We’re really forming two.

‘We’re judging how **warm and trustworthy** the person is, and that’s trying to answer the question: ‘What are this person’s intentions toward me?’

‘We’re also asking ourselves: ‘How **strong and competent** is this person?’

Professor Amy Cuddy,
Harvard Business School
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When people are able to express both warmth and strength we say they have...
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CHARISMA

How do we know if someone has gravitas or levitas?

Via the 3Vs

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The 3Vs of gravitas

VISUAL

VOCAL

VERBAL

GRAVITAS
The 3Vs of levitas
the wrong verb
Developing your vocal gravitas
Vocal gravitas
Developing your vocal gravitas

• Speak **clearly** and **slowly**
• Be **deliberate** and **purposeful**
• Speak with absolute **conviction**
• **Emphasise** your key words/ideas
• Don’t mutter – **project** your voice
• Pause, pause and **pause again**
Developing your verbal gravitas
Classic verbal (and vocal) impact from the film Wall St
Developing **verbal** gravitas

- Be concise and precise
- Focus on your key messages
- Talk in punchy ‘bullet points’
- Avoid the never-ending sentence
- Eliminate waffle and vagueness
- Avoid ‘sort of’, ‘hopefully’, ‘I think’
Avoiding verbal gravitas killers
PAIR ACTIVITY

Vocal Gravitas (+verbal)

A gives B an update about something they are doing at work, with the focus on vocal (+verbal) gravitas:
- 2 min to prepare
- 1 min to present
- 1 min feedback
- 1 min to do it better based on the feedback

Then swap — 8 mins overall.

The focus should be on verbal gravitas — ie precise, concise, punchy, with a focus on key messages and avoiding the never-ending sentence.
Developing your visual gravitas
Developing visual gravitas
Developing visual gravitas

- Stand and sit **tall**
- Have **open** body language
- Hold confident **eye contact**
- Use strong, **powerful** gestures
- Move **purposefully** and smoothly
- Smile but **don’t smile excessively**
Avoiding visual gravitas killers
PAIRS ACTIVITY

Visual Gravitas

A seeks to persuade a stakeholder of their choice to do something (simple, but real)

1-2 mins to persuade
1 min feedback
1 min to do it better based on the feedback

Then swap – 8 mins overall

The focus should be on visual gravitas – good posture, strong eye contact and effective gestures
we want more levitas
Business is personal

Engage with people, internal and external, at a human level
Don’t be a robot at work
Be a living, breathing human being
Levitas comes from expressing emotion and being engaging with others.
Developing levitas
What did you notice Will Smith do and say that contributes to the warmth and levitas he expresses?
• Be **warm** and friendly
• **Smile** with your **eyes**
• Have a **positive** energy
• **Express** your **emotions**
• Tell interesting **stories**
• Be more **spontaneous**
• **Think** ‘hello old friend’
Pairs exercise

**Levitas activity**

Chat with your partner briefly as if before the start of a meeting. Keep the conversation personal, friendly and warm. Ask questions and try to find as many ‘clicks’ as possible.
The power of gravitas and levitas combined
Gravitas and Levitas

Gravitas is a set of impersonal, communication and relationship skills that anyone can learn.

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Next steps and action plans
Gravitas and Levitas

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