

# Five keys to executive presence

5

## Practice aloud

Presence requires preparation of your thoughts. Practice with notes and then put the notes away. Notice what you remember and think about what more do you want to add? Where does it feel like too much detail? Where do you notice your energy? Then adapt your presentation, speech, or other important communication based on your answers.

4

## Enter a room and acknowledge the moment

Remember what your intention is for your meeting, presentation or other important communication. Before you start, take a breath and get grounded, and release the tension from your shoulders by rolling them back and down. If you're giving a presentation then give yourself and your audience a moment to adjust to being there, before beginning.

3

## Use eye contact

Studies suggest that eye contact has a positive impact on the retention and recall of information and may promote more efficient learning. So ensure you make eye contact, particularly in a large room. When your listeners see your eyes scanning their faces, they feel invited to engage with you.

2

## Upward inflections and lack of clarity

Questions end with an upward inflection and sentences with a full stop. Avoid the tendency to end sentences with an upward inflection (a silent "do you know what I mean?"). Overusing upward inflections will make your listeners feel as if you will never come to the point, and it weakens your impact.

1

## Own the space

Move with energy and purpose and make conscious decisions when to move and when to be still. This is very compelling for your audience. You should avoid pacing back and forth as this is very distracting for your audience and it can make them tune out of what you're actually saying, resulting in them missing your point.

These five keys will improve your ability to project the right executive presence and credibility while handling challenging demands. They are part of Cranfield's Impact and Influence programme.



# #5Keys

Find out more:  
[www.cranfield.ac.uk/som/ii](http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/som/ii)