Worksheet for Vanessa Van Edwards | How to Captivate with Social Cues (Episode 30)

Language is more than knowing *what* to say — it's knowing *how* to say it whether or not words are being exchanged. And understanding the way people interact on a nonverbal level can make or break communication or cement how we perceive one another — whether positively or negatively.

In episode 30, *Captivate: The Science of Succeeding with People* author Vanessa Van Edwards shared a ton of practicals for optimizing our verbal and nonverbal communication skills to captivate the attention of others through social cues.

Future Mentions and Graceful Exits

Even if you know how to gracefully enter a conversation and leave a great first impression, tactfully exiting a conversation and leaving a great last impression is just as important. Vanessa offered some great tips to prepare people for an exit. One is asking about the future ("What are you doing this weekend?") to break them out of thinking in the present tense. Another might be to allude to a follow-up ("Could I get your card?" or "Let's try to follow up on...") to indicate things are wrapping up.

Do you struggle to exit conversations gracefully? If so, why do you think this is?

Coping with Interrupters

Vanessa also gives strategies for how to deal with interrupters — people who won't let you get a word in or always feel the need to fill the silence. She offers some nonverbal strategies to help, including "the fish" (opening your mouth as if you were about to say something) or putting your hand up, palm out. Jordan added that if you slightly open your fingers in that hand up position, it is less threatening.

Do you use these nonverbal cues to deal with interrupters? Do you use others that Vanessa didn't mention? List them here.

Cooling Down Romantic Advances

Jordan also wanted to address proper ways to deal with a situation in which you want to clearly indicate you are not romantically attracted to someone you are having a conversation with. Vanessa pointed out that nodding is already a possible indicator of attraction and that can get "supercharged" by haptics like smiling, touching, and laughing. On a practical level this means resisting the urge to nod and instead slightly tilt your head instead. This still indicates engagement without giving the wrong impression.

Have you given someone the wrong impression before because of your body language during a professional conversation? Can you think back to those situations and identify whether you were doing any of the things Vanessa discusses?

What can you do to remember to be mindful the next time you are in such a situation?

Recovering from Misreads

Extra Credit: Vanessa shared a story in which she hugged someone who was a self-declared "non hugger" (and she thinks it was a factor in her not getting a TV show). Have you ever made a gross error in judgment in misreading body language or offending someone unintentionally before? Using the mindsets and techniques from this episode, replay those incidents and write down what you could have done differently to handle the situation better.

Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).

About

Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

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support@jordanharbinger.com

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