

# The Credibility Code “Codes of Conduct”

## Posture Codes of Conduct

- Keep your spine tall and strong
- Stand with your weight balanced equally over both feet
- Keep your head level
- Point your nose directly at the listener
- Command the space around you

## Gesture Codes of Conduct

- Avoid “masking” your face and hands
- Engage your gestures from the beginning of the conversation
- Reach out to your listener
- Keep gestures in the “gesture box”

## Vocal Codes of Conduct

- Speak with optimal volume
- Articulate clearly
- Keep your pacing relaxed
- Highlight your message with expression
- Engage your diaphragm for resonance

Vocal Drill: “Whether the weather is cold or whether the weather is hot,  
we’ll be together whatever the weather, whether we like it or not.”

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## Derailer Codes of Conduct

- Eliminate fillers
- Avoid misplaced upward inflections
- Avoid extraneous movement
- Eliminate self-commenting

## Eye Contact Codes of Conduct

- Hold eye contact for three to five seconds per person
- Engage the entire room
- Keep your focus up
- Be interactive

## Focus Codes of Conduct

- Project your energy:  
Meet them in their seats
- Elicit a response:  
Get their heads to nod
- Actively listen:  
Participate even when listening

# Balancing Authority and Approachability

## Positive Behaviors

### Authority

#### To cultivate an authoritative image . . .

- Take up space
- Maintain strong eye contact
- Keep head and shoulders level
- Be still
- Use strong volume and resonance
- Use downward inflections

### Approachability

#### To cultivate an approachable image . . .

- Maintain strong eye contact
- Use fluid, interactive gestures
- Use fluid, interactive facial expressions
- Use a wide range of vocal variety
- Elicit a response verbally and nonverbally

## Negative Behaviors

### Authority

#### Signals that can lead to a “too authoritative” image:

- Emphatic gestures (hands or head)
- Sharp vocal attack on words
- Asymmetrical posture (chin up, leaning in, looking out the corner of the eye)
- Lack of facial fluidity (poker face or locked-on smile)
- Lack of vocal variety
- Poor attentive listening skills
- Lack of eye contact while listening
- Tendency to interrupt

### Approachability

#### Signals that can lead to a “too approachable” image:

- Excessive smiling (or “tailwagging”)
- Weak posture (rounded spine or shoulders, chin down, head tilted, small stance)
- Excessive head movement (bobbing or nodding)
- Weak volume or breath support
- Soft vocal approach on words
- Verbal hedges (apologies and fillers)
- Misplaced upward inflections
- Lack of eye contact while speaking
- Conceding too quickly when interrupted

# The Credibility Code

## Self-evaluation Checklist

POSTURE		YES	NO		
Spine is tall and strong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Weight is balanced equally over both feet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Head is level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Nose is pointed directly at listener	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Head and arms move freely in space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
GESTURES		YES	NO		
Face and hands are relaxed (no “masking”)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Gestures are engaged from beginning of conversation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Hands consistently reach out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Gestures stay primarily within gesture box	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
DERAILERS		YES	NO		
Free of uses of filler words	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Statements end in downward inflections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Free of extraneous movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
Free of “self-commenting” and apologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			
VOICE	ABSENT	BELOW AVERAGE	ADEQUATE	OPTIMAL	TOO MUCH
Volume is full and consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Articulation is crisp and clear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pacing is relaxed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Message is highlighted with expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vocal quality is supported and resonant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EYE CONTACT	ABSENT	BELOW AVERAGE	ADEQUATE	OPTIMAL	TOO MUCH
Contact is held for three to five seconds per person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eyes engage everyone in the room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focus is consistently up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eyes, hands, and face interact with listener	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>