

LEADERSHIP

# Learn how to identify leaders who need to build executive presence

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When seeking out the underutilized members of your organization's leadership, how are you identifying those that need to build a broader, stronger executive presence?

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In my talk, "Executive Presence: Four Ways to Convey Confidence and Command Respect as a Leader," which is popular with companies

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wanting to tap into the hidden potential of their existing employees, I share the key components of this widely sought after but often mysterious quality. Here are some of the reasons why your greatest resources might be going unnoticed until you help develop their executive presence.

## Too quiet

Some of your sharpest minds might be hiding at the back of the room in every meeting, quietly thinking up some of your best ideas, but not likely to share them, due to [hesitation around speaking up](#) and being noticed. You can offer the tools and techniques through [executive coaching](#) and corporate training to help your silent individuals learn to prepare, strategize and speak their minds in those group settings.

Look for: Those deep thinkers who email you with great thoughts after the meeting but say nothing in the moment.

## Too deferential

Some of your best-untapped resources may have come from an environment where questioning authority is strongly discouraged. Whether this stems from culture, upbringing or early work experience, some of us learned early on that we must always defer to senior members or those with a more forceful opinion.

Sometimes, there is a [lack of confidence](#) in their own decision-making skills or they haven't properly taken inventory of the value they truly bring to the organization. Working with these leaders, you can help build their abilities in respectful disagreement, challenging the status quo and presenting new ideas with conviction.

Look for: Those employees who follow the crowd but quietly give up their unique ideas to senior leaders who incorporate them as their own.

## Too understated

Similarly, many of us may have raised to bring up our ideas in the least threatening way possible. Often, these team members may be overly concerned with avoiding conflict or ensuring everyone likes them. If you hear the words “maybe if we ...” or “I feel we could possibly ...” you might have an untapped leader who is trying to quietly share their thoughts without being too aggressive or decisive.

Perhaps they’re even [trying to avoid the spotlight](#). Leadership training can help build trailblazers who know how to speak convincingly and with authority and can help them practice finding a voice that is both powerful and charismatic.

Look for: Gentler members of the team, who tend to have more of a cajoling or coaxing style that could benefit from a stronger voice.

## Too disorganized

You may have many untapped potential leaders with plenty of fantastic ideas, great charisma, and a convincing style, but who lack the ability to follow through, stay on track and meet their obligations consistently or deliver on their promises. These disorganized leaders may have developed a bit of a reputation for flaky behavior, but you can help them build solid, consistent habits and improve the overall perception of their executive potential. Training can help them identify the problem areas, incorporate personal feedback and set them on a path to a more trustworthy standing.

Look for: People with great ideas, but a messy approach — the disorganized and the multitaskers who are challenged to get things done on time or without error, or the unpolished who have trouble meeting conventional expectations for dress and communication.

Don’t seek new talent until you’ve invested in the underutilized members of your existing team. You don’t need to find great leaders, you already have them! It’s a matter of leveraging your overlooked potential and helping them build the skills to [strengthen their executive presence](#) and make others take notice, too.

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