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## Executive Presence

### The Art of Commanding Respect Like a CEO

#### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

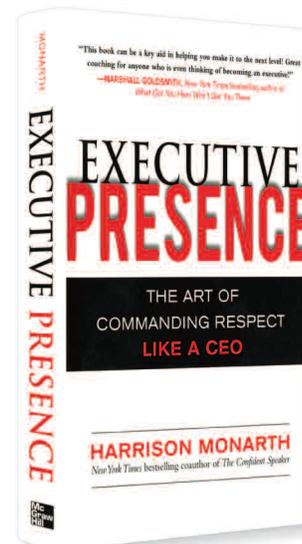
An expert in coaching high-level players in the art of perception management, Harrison Monarth reveals the critical difference between CEOs and those of us who wish to be CEOs. It's not a matter of intelligence, connections or luck. It can be summed up in two words: *executive presence*.

While most of us toil in obscurity and expect great things to follow, those on the path to corporate leadership spend their time perfecting the types of leadership communication skills that generate respect and get others to share their vision. They use these skills to establish how they are perceived by others and to manage their reputation throughout the organization. In other words, these soon-to-be top players have developed the presence of an executive through careful image management — and they make sure they have the goods to back it up.

In *Executive Presence*, Monarth shows how you can seize control of your own career using the same skills. People reach highly influential positions because they deeply understand the power of perception and know how to leverage it in their favor. The good news is, anyone with the will to succeed can do it. *Executive Presence* provides all the techniques you need to take your career to the highest level of any organization.

#### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to command respect like a CEO.
- Why social intelligence is an entire spectrum of survival skills that can make the difference in a career.
- How to boost your social intelligence quotient in only seven days.
- Why five storytelling techniques will help you to convey complex ideas.
- How trust is the fundamental element and criterion of persuasion.
- Why in dealing with any crisis, your response should always be two-pronged, with an operational response and a communication response.



by Harrison Monarth

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: EXECUTIVE PRESENCE

by Harrison Monarth

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## Introduction

The male lion isn't the smartest animal in the jungle; great apes, elephants and parrots are more intelligent. Nor is he the largest animal or, for that matter, the largest cat (the tiger is). He isn't even the hunter among his own pride; it's his female lionesses that track and subdue prey. Why is the male lion considered the king of the jungle? Because he has an impressive mane and even more impressive roar.

This doesn't mean the lion is a fraud. If called upon, he can back up that roar in spades. However, what makes the lion special is the combination of his genuine power with an image and related behavior that effectively communicates that power to the world.

If you want to be a lion — that is, the king or queen of your chosen profession — you need to adopt the same approach. The good news is that you don't have to be born with great looks or a silver spoon in your mouth or any other unique asset. You can start out with no money, no friends and no connections. All you need is the will to succeed and state-of-the-art techniques. ●

## The Natural Laws of Perception

We are, at our core, a society of pitchers. Pitching — the kind that pleads a case and asks for the order, that wraps an agenda within a message and ties a neat bow of sincerity around it — is the very essence of commerce, the lifeblood of law, politics and romance, the fundamental stuff of human interaction.

We pitch our beliefs and our dreams to our children. We pitch our qualifications at job interviews. We plead our case in courtrooms and at bars over drinks. We manage employees by pitching them our wisdom and

our vision for the future. We are pitching when we sell, when we lobby, when we complain, and when we seek to be heard and understood, which for most of us happens each and every day.

## The Path to Perception

The way we are perceived by those who experience what we say or do or even our mere presence is the product of a specific neurological process whose outcome can take any number of forms. Information is taken in by one or more of the senses and is then filtered or processed by a suite of specific mental mechanisms. These assign meaning and nuance to what has arrived through the sense, each with very different criteria and experiential rationales. ●

## Developing Your Social Intelligence

Today's generation of managers is realizing that nice guys don't necessarily finish last, that, in fact, being anything other than socially sensitive and evolved — whether it's a genuine or strategic agenda — can get you a seat at a congressional hearing and a few heavy-handed punch lines from Jon Stewart (*The Daily Show*).

This mysterious new requisite for managerial success and the attention of the C-suite is called *social intelligence*(SI).

SI is not an inward awareness, though it's tough to master if you aren't in touch with your inner landscape (emotional intelligence) to some extent. SI can be as simple as knowing that a smile and remembering a name align with attraction and loyalty much more than do a scowl and a limp handshake regardless of how well a



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person executes the job description.

SI is not just a buzzword; it's an entire spectrum of survival skills that can make the difference in a career. Another way to view SI is to consider it the differentiator between the masses and the high achievers.

Executives looking to command the respect of their peers and superiors must remember that SI involves a lot more than an infectious grin and the endearing tendency to slap people on the back. SI is the confluence of a handful of distinct abilities, all of them driven by a keen understanding of what makes people respond. Even if you get along with everyone and are the first person people think of when composing their invitation lists, you owe more to the five dimensions of SI, as defined by consultant Karl Albrecht: presence, clarity, awareness, authenticity and empathy — than to your razor-sharp wit.

### How to Boost Your SI Quotient in Only Seven Days

If you can get your head around these concepts in the first seven days, chances are that you'll notice a change in the way people react to you and, more important, at least if it's working, a change in the way you react to other people and the way that makes you feel. Here is a day-by-day agenda:

- Day 1: Start Using Your Senses More
- Day 2: Critically Assess Your Strengths and Weaknesses
- Day 3: Practice Being Authentic
- Day 4: Start Communicating Simply
- Day 5: Practice Empathy: Look at Everything from Someone Else's Perspective
- Day 6: Practice Listening with Empathy
- Day 7: Make a Plan and Implement the Steps. ●

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### How to Read People and Predict Behavior

To gain the respect and executive presence that leadership requires, a deeper understanding of the art and science of reading people is imperative. The fact is that much of what we believe about body language is a myth — research shows that people are only 20 percent efficient in reading body language — and that to sense the true meaning in visual, verbal and nonverbal clues, we should rely on much more complex analyses and a host of other variables.

Experienced investigators know that body language provides clues to the truthfulness or validity of the spo-

ken word, though they go far beyond the shallow myths most people use. Eye contact is a major issue. They also watch the movement of the eyelids during interrogations. People in disagreement or disapproval tend to close their eyes longer than a normal blink. Context is another variable that expert interrogators understand and that an astute people-reader should always consider.

### Engineering Buy-in and Gaining Compliance

Abraham Lincoln said, "Public sentiment is everything. With it, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed."

Buy-in, which is often easier to define than to achieve, is an alignment of the thoughts and beliefs of a target demographic with your thoughts and beliefs as the managing or accountable entity. It is a process of working together with people — rather than dictating to them — in a manner that leads to their understanding of the goal and its strategic importance to achieve a win-win outcome, all within a common system of values.

To get your audience's attention, strive for a pro-social approach. Here are some tips — remember the context here is critical:

**Shake them up.** Do the unexpected: Call an off-site meeting, bring in food, play music. Be counterintuitive.

**Add value.** Attention lasts for only a blink or two, and so you need to seize the moment. Employees will always bring a what's-in-it-for-me mentality to the moment, so be ready to show them that what you are proposing is a win-win not just for the company and the customer, but for them, too.

**Be a storyteller.** Anecdotes are golden in the quest to get attention and recruit buy-in, because all stories have a beginning, middle and end; that equates to goal, action and results, all rendered in human terms.

**Be human.** It is highly effective in bringing an emotional context to a request for buy-in.

**Be the real deal.** Your credibility is always the pivotal variable in terms of how people respond to what you're asking of them. ●

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### How to Master the Art of Storytelling for Personal and Professional Success

From Harvard to Stanford and many places in between, the art and science of storytelling to achieve a business goal are wedging their way into mainstream

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business practices because a story can go where analysis is denied admission: the imagination.

Cold hard facts can't inspire people to take part in a mission of change; straightforward analysis won't get people excited about a goal you're trying to accomplish unless you express it in a vision that fires up the imagination and stirs the soul.

In his book *Meatball Sundaes*, marketing guru Seth Godin writes: "People just aren't that good at remembering facts. When people do remember facts, it's almost always in context." The way to put facts into context for people is to transfer those facts through the use of a story because a story is all context, all the time.

### Five Storytelling Techniques to Convey Complex Ideas Easily and Persuasively

The following techniques will help you tell your stories with clarity, energy, a discernible theme and appropriate emotion:

**Technique 1: Pick a Theme.** Great stories have a central theme that transcends the story: an insight to share, a lesson to be learned, a heroic deed to emulate or a danger to avoid.

**Technique 2: Brevity Rules.** "Be brief, be seated." The master orator Franklin D. Roosevelt said that one. Granted, he added "be sincere," but he knew that to get your message across, you have to respect the audience's time and, more important, its tendency to tune out if you go on for too long.

**Technique 3: Understatement Packs a Punch.** Some trial lawyers are among the best storytellers in the world. You don't have to be a trial lawyer to create an emotional impact with understatement. You can let the audience's imagination deliver the biggest punch.

**Technique 4: Transport the Listener.** You may not be Shakespeare, but you can try. Tell your story in the present tense. Tap into the listeners' memories and thoughts.

**Technique 5: Keep It Simple.** Avoid the use of \$10 words. Instead of "It is not efficacious to indoctrinate a superannuated canine with innovative maneuvers," use the simple and time-tested "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." ●

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## Secrets to Changing Behaviors and Attitudes

The fundamental element and criterion of effective and ethical persuasion is *trust*. Manipulators are heard, but persuaders are believed because they are trusted.

Without trust, an audience hears on only one level: What are the consequences of compliance or apathy? With trust, audience members care about what they hear and give the message every chance to be meaningful on multiple levels: their own and the manager's.

Once you make the shift from being someone who influences through manipulation to being someone who influences through persuasion, your leadership upside becomes unlimited. You'll never reach your potential alone and, in the end, those who rely on manipulation often seem to find themselves in that position.

### The Science and Art of Changing Attitudes

A leader's ability to influence others depends on the specific tools in his or her arsenal. There are a number of principles that will vastly and quickly increase your ability to persuade ethically. Here are 10 approaches that when combined and implemented will exceed the sum of their parts in making you a more persuasive source of influence:

**Approach 1: The Visibility Principle.** Enlightened persuaders get plenty of face time and interactivity with those they need to influence on a regular basis.

**Approach 2: The Supply-Control Principle.** There are situations in which using a limited supply of time or benefits can be a very compelling factor in terms of exerting influence. We become urgent about that which is in limited supply. Creating demand by letting others know that what you're offering truly is in short supply keeps you in the ethical clear.

**Approach 3: The Framing Principle.** Words are powerful tools. They are so powerful that they become weapons of influence in the hands of professionals and reputation busters in the hands of the uninitiated.

**Approach 4: The Authority Principle.** People trust authority. Research has shown that people listen more carefully and trust more quickly when the information comes from a source they perceive as authoritative.

**Approach 5: The Evidence Principle.** The evidence principle holds that information that is corroborated by outside parties — eyewitnesses, research, past experiences and, best of all, the firsthand knowledge of the listener — is accepted immediately by the listener.

**Approach 6: The Likability Principle.** People more easily trust those they like. Likability ties in directly with similarity. We trust those who are similar to us.

**Approach 7: The Reciprocity Principle.** The essence of the reciprocity principle is concerned not as much with the trading of favors and things as with the exchange of value.

**Approach 8: The Experience Principle.** This is the evidence principle taken to a personal level. Nothing says credibility quite like having been there, done that yourself.

**Approach 9: The Highlighter Principle.** We should amplify elements of information that conform to all the other principles presented here: those which build trust, those which create a win-win and those which don't take advantage of others for one's own gain.

**Approach 10: The Passion Principle.** Passion can't be explained. It is felt. Whenever you are looking to influence someone to accept your ideas and share your vision, you have to have a feeling that energizes your insides, that makes you become expressive and use language that stimulates the heart as well as the mind. ●

## Secrets to Managing Interpersonal Conflict

Anywhere two or more people occupy the same space, professional or otherwise, in the context of a shared mission and under the looming shadow of personal goals, the laws of human behavioral dynamics kick in. When they do, sooner or later the inevitable result is conflict.

### Ten Powerful Ways to Resolve Conflict, Restore Harmony and Strengthen Interpersonal Rapport

Although conflict should not be and rarely is a recreational pastime or game, it's easy to compare the skills it requires to those used by successful athletes. Athletes have muscle memory and a trainer to help them prepare, but managers and professionals striving to bolster their executive presence can and should adopt the following techniques to their conflict resolution repartee — not so much to win as to navigate conflict situations toward outcomes that include strengthened relationships, a greater sense of teamwork and a mutual resolve to take the organization forward:

- 1. Use active listening.** Hearing and understanding the logic and reasoning of both sides is critical to the creation of a mutually satisfying resolution.
- 2. Separate the positions from the issues.** Begin with the issue and then view the positions in that context.
- 3. Understand and validate.** As an arbitrating manager, it is critical that you not only seek to understand both positions in a conflict but also validate each party's claim to what he or she believes is right.
- 4. Empathize.** The power of empathy in conflict resolution cannot be overstated.

## Why Google Gets Buy-In

Google is as famous for its corporate culture as it is for the services it provides, including its de facto association with the art of searching the Web as a verb rather than a noun. This is a place where free goodies abound; there are more perks than executive parking spaces. It is a place where employees become the envy of their friends not because of a paycheck or a piece of the pie, but because they get to work in a culture that's creative, energized and downright fun.

None of this cultural nirvana is positioned as a reward for performance; it just is. Because it just is, employees buy in to the company culture and its mission, and that sets the stage for buy-in to specific strategies and assigned roles. They haven't created consequences for performance as much as they've created a culture of buy-in that leads to performance.

### 5. Implement boundaries and expectations.

Because you are a manager, people are looking to you to clarify boundaries and expectations for behavior and outcomes.

**6. Be tactful.** If you remain sensitive to their feelings, they'll remain open to your input.

**7. Explore the issues and alternatives.** If you can get them to talk about an alternative, you're on the way to getting them to accept one.

**8. Use "I" statements.** When you are a party to a conflict, using a first-person context is much more productive than making statements that are easily perceived as wrong.

**9. The power of stroking.** Conflict goes off the rails when it becomes personal and, ironically, injecting something personal in a positive manner is the best way to keep it from going there.

**10. Attack the issues, not the person.** As an arbitrating manager, listen for anything that is personal in nature and bring the conversation back to the issue as quickly as possible. ●

## How to Hold Conversations Nobody Wants to Have

A strong executive presence is an asset when you're a counterparty to a difficult conversation. The confidence and professional poise you exude can imbue the situa-

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tion with a healthy sense of respect. Also, successfully negotiating a difficult conversation can add another dimension to your stature as an influential executive presence. However, as with most managerial skills, there is a learning curve that can help aspiring leaders establish the critical perceptions that set them apart from their peers.

### Preparing for a Difficult Conversation

Preparing to launch a difficult conversation involves more than simply having an idea about what you want to say. The strategy of conducting an effective conversation resides at its very core in managing the emotional component, including your own, so that you don't run the risk of taking a hit to your executive reputation. Here are the three stages of a process that can result in optimized conversations, no matter how difficult:

1. **Make sure you are clear about the issue.**
2. **Don't hesitate.**
3. **Execute the message.**

People tend to hear what they want to hear. Sometimes what they hear isn't precisely what you intend to communicate. One way to bridge the gap between intention and comprehension is to repeat back what you've just heard, paraphrasing and assigning meaning as you go.

Inviting feedback on what you've just summarized is an important part of the exchange, as it shows your evolving executive presence. This draws the other person into the dialogue, which is a dynamic of coaching that doesn't exist in lecturing and punishment. ●

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## Why Self-Branding Is No Longer a Choice and What Your Personal Brand Says About You

Famed business tycoons, such as Donald Trump, Martha Stewart, Oprah Winfrey, Steve Jobs and Richard Branson, owe their ascent to executive presence and instant recognition as much to successful branding as to the viability of their products and the weight of their experience. They command respect from a global audience not only because of their superior products but also because they understand the power of creating a strong presence that connects emotionally and intellectually with their constituents.

To ensure the respect of your peers, employees, bosses and eventually the general public by using the power of branding to further your career and personal goals, you

want to use a controlled approach to the art and craft of branding that is every bit as effective and rewarding as the strategies employed on Madison Avenue.

### The Steps to Personal Branding

When you reduce the process of personal branding and executive presence building to a sequence of steps and checklists, a road map emerges that will lead you to higher places in your career and your personal life:

- Recognize that you could be doing better in your career, in your personal life and that, in general, you want something more. Commit to improving things by creating a personal brand that better serves you.
- Decide to move from random branding to controlled branding in your life.
- Assess the nature and status of your existing personal brand. How are you perceived?
- Identify specific changes in attitude, behavior, techniques, character and general energy that will strengthen your brand and reinforce your executive presence; then commit to them.
- Develop a strategy that plays to your strengths and applies them to creating and implementing solutions, to being of value, to helping others and generally bringing your new brand to your personal marketplace.
- Market yourself. Put yourself out there and make sure people understand the new you, your new brand.
- Understand that everything matters in establishing the brand and the perception of your executive image.
- Continue the feedback-gathering and self-assessment process as you make adjustments along the way.
- Discover your personal power, which has everything to do with credibility and influence.
- This world is defined by projects in a way that is anything but linear. The best you can do, the most you can expect, is to create wins one project at a time.
- Stay the course. You may become the living embodiment of your new brand quickly (or not), but it will take time for others to notice, especially if a shift in perception is required. It's all about word of mouth, and that process takes time.
- Grow as you go. Keep what works; revise what doesn't.
- Enjoy the ride. Good things will happen to you when you stick to your commitment to yourself regardless of the time it takes. You'll find you have a new awareness of everything, especially the consequences of your actions, behaviors and decisions, that will empower you to reach your goals as never before.

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### How to Use the Internet to Build and Expand Your Personal and Professional Brand

Your challenge in creating a personal or professional brand through social media and by fashioning your executive presence is to reposition yourself, your products and your services in the way people want them; then those people want to share the experience with others, for which the social networking culture is a superhighway. Find a way that people can have a visceral experience that is based on what they perceive from you and you'll have their attention.

The traps in building brands are boredom, irrelevance and lack of emotional experience among one's constituents. Overcome that and give people something that causes a strong emotional response that makes them want to share their experiences with others and you're on your way to creating your own tribe, in the process building and reinforcing the emotional bonds that make up your personal and professional brand.

Your Web site, portal or whatever it is that people get to first that is your home on the Web should be spectacular. It should be spectacular as in simple, elegant and ultra-user-friendly: easy to navigate, easy to figure out and easy to find what one is looking for. ●

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### How the Media Create Meaning in the Minds of an Audience

What are reporters really after in an interview? How can you speak to the media in a way that will get your most important messages into the news? Here is a deceptively simple three-part strategy:

- 1. Know exactly what your messages are.** You have to understand your objectives, goals and key messages thoroughly.
- 2. Get your key messages across no matter what it takes.** No matter what the situation is, it's imperative that you find a way to tell your side of the story.
- 3. Understand and accept that once you say something, it's true.** It's true in the eyes of the public, that is. This can be a valuable tool but also a dangerous weapon.

### Spin: Why There Is No Such Thing as Unbiased Communication

The term "spin" first came into general use in the 1980s when the media labeled public relations experts with the pejorative name *spin doctors*. This use of the word spin was derived from sports such as baseball, in which a pitcher puts a spin on the ball to trick a batter.

Today, the word maintains connotations of deceit and trickery. Sometimes that's fair and sometimes it's not. It is probably the most ubiquitous phenomenon in human communication. In many cases, it's just another word for what most people do every day: tell a story from their own perspective. ●

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### How to Use the Media to Enhance Your Reputation

Sound bites — well-thought-out intentional ones at least — are a communicator's best friend, as they get the message across in a pithy statement, catching people's attention and ringing in their ears long after the talking is done. Contrary to what its detractors say, a well-crafted and strategic sound bite gives the listener context as opposed to voiding it.

Even if you're not in the public eye, sound bites are every bit as important whether they occur in crucial conversations in which you want to have an impact, job interviews or speeches. The common denominator here is that you want to be memorable. You want the core of your message, your argument, to be remembered.

Everything matters and everything is magnified when you're in the public eye. For the most part, people expect corporate executives to wear a suit and tie.

Whether we think it is important or not is often beside the point. The public cares very much about these seemingly insignificant and personal aspects of self-presentation, and smart communicators heed their expectations. Your clothing and grooming speak volumes. If nothing else, they say you respect your audience and pay attention to details. ●

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### Top Seven Secrets for Success With the Media

Think of the media this way: The conversation is already happening and you need to get into it. To be heard, you have to say or do something worthwhile that will get people's attention. Here are seven secrets to help you connect with customers, key stakeholders and the general public as you aim for your share of minds and markets through the media:

- 1. Accept the invitation.** Sift through the invitations and decide which ones give you the biggest return on investment — the biggest bang for the buck.
- 2. Fashion yourself as a thought leader.** If you are an expert in your industry and can offer cutting-edge ideas,

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opinions and angles no one else has thought about — or hasn't spoken up about — you are interesting to the media.

**3. Mind your message.** Nothing will get you quoted faster and with more certainty than a well-crafted sound bite that contains the core of your message or argument. But be careful about what you say and where or to whom you say it.

**4. Create a stunt.** Richard Branson, for example, has garnered widespread media coverage and millions of dollars in free publicity in promoting the Virgin brand with everything from driving a tank down New York City's Fifth Avenue to crossing the Pacific in a hot air balloon, breaking a record in the process.

**5. Write something worthwhile.** A book. A white paper. A research study that revolutionizes what people know about your industry or any industry. Your expertise needs to be documented. Write important things that people want to read and your reputation and executive presence will grow.

**6. Put your name on something.** You could name an award, a charity you started, a scholarship you could give out every year or an annual event you sponsor. Promote it on your Web site, online postings and print collateral to let the media see it's not just a gimmick but a real effort to bring value to a group of people.

**7. Ride the wave.** You can ride the buzz wave if you have something to contribute to the conversation. Be specific and aggressive in getting in on the conversation. The momentum of your message can carry you onto the major networks if you're spot-on, timely and good at what you do.

These seven secrets are your starting point. With creativity and a burning desire to share your message, you'll discover other ways. ●

### You've Been Googled: What's the Verdict?

*Google is not a search engine. It's a reputation management system. Online your rep is quantifiable, findable and totally unavoidable.*

— WIRED magazine

Google doesn't give specific numbers — for competitive reasons, it says — but estimates put the number of Google searches per day anywhere from 700 million to 2 billion. Chances are that someone is googling you right now.

Considering the cyberthreats to your reputation and the pressing need to manage public perception, here are

three critical, proactive steps every executive and professional can take online to avoid the wide-ranging effects of any amount of loss of one's corporate or personal reputation:

- **Mind your Web site.**
- **Start blogging.**
- **Launch a good news assault.**

### Reputation Management 2.0

Ignoring the media is the worst thing you can do. Reporters tend to be inquisitive, and when they don't get answers to their questions, they ask more questions. A small crisis, if properly handled with the media, frequently becomes a nonissue, but if it is handled improperly, it can turn into a big story as every reporter asks, "What are they trying to hide?"

In dealing with any crisis, your response should always be two-pronged, with an operational response and a communication response. The way you face the issue can have a major impact on the way you're perceived by your key constituencies, from direct reports and colleagues to bosses and shareholders.

To protect your executive presence and gain everyone's respect, your plan should include two parts: What are you going to do to correct the problem? How are you going to communicate the problem and the solution to your stakeholders and the public? ●

### Commanding Respect Like a CEO

It's definitely not your father's company anymore, and you need to understand the new world of empowered leadership.

The presence and essence of the effective CEO have changed markedly in the last two decades, and since the techniques are available to all and the standards are now universal, there is no hiding behind a title. Executive presence is the key to moving up and, once you are there, to becoming optimally effective. ●

#### RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Executive Presence*, you'll also like:

1. ***What Got You Here Won't Get You There* by Marshall Goldsmith.** Goldsmith details the 20 habits that might be holding you back from reaching your pinnacle as an executive
2. ***The Next Level* by Scott Eblin.** Eblin identifies the key behaviors and beliefs that successful executives pick up and, more importantly, what they leave behind.
3. ***Be a Shortcut* by Scott Halford.** One of the best ways to advance one's career is to be a solution to someone's problem. This book demonstrates the best way to be the shortcut between a company and its goals.