



# PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE & THE 4 CORE COMPETENCIES FOR INCREASED CAREER (& LIFE) SUCCESS

The new workplace environment is increasingly sophisticated, economically uncertain, and focused on personal accountability for performance results. There is a strong correlation between exceptional performance and behaviors that are considered professional. It is typified by teams that are loosely created on a project-basis and that dissolve just as quickly, and succeed by agility of thought, problem solving, and turnkey skills application.

Star players are those who are able to convey a sense of strength and control. The key to their career and personal success lies in maintaining critical professional competencies and conveying a robust professional presence.

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*“Professional presence includes a pride in your work and a desire to do things right, regardless of the type of business you are in or which job function you perform. It has absolutely nothing to do with how many degrees you have or what your corporate title is. Inherent in professionalism is a sincere desire to help clients (both internal and external) achieve their goals and missions while you are achieving your own. Real professionals have an attitude of service and quality.”*

*– Suzanne Updegraff, CEO,  
Employee Development Systems, Inc.*



4 Core Competencies  
of professional success  
in today's workplace.



Employee Development Systems, Inc. (EDSI)  
[www.employeedevelopmentssystem.com](http://www.employeedevelopmentssystem.com)  
800.282.3374



# #1 DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

## Ask the Tough Questions

Honestly reflect on your own core competencies.

1. What do I do that adds to every team or work environment I enter? What is my meaningful contribution? Your answer here is your brand promise.
2. Does my brand promise directly relate to my career direction?
3. Do others see the same professional presence that I am trying to convey?
4. Are there gaps in my intended professional presence and others' perceptions of it?
5. What can I do to close those gaps?

Those who can't harness and develop the core competencies of professional presence will stagnate or lose ground, while others are embracing the new workplace and watching their careers (and lives) speed ahead. Professional Presence is a dynamic blend of behavior and presentation. Competency in professional presence includes communication patterns, image, professional and social etiquette, dress, appearance, self-confidence, control, and personal and professional interactions. These qualities are quickly perceived the first time someone meets you.

How do you harness that elusive Professional Presence?

### Establish Your Brand

Your professional presence is your personal brand. It is how you convey your value to everyone you work with and every organization you work for. People who have developed a robust, positive professional presence are the people who will advance in their career in the new workplace. Your brand influences the perception of your worth. That includes your sense of self-worth, your worth to peers and managers, and your worth to the organization.

*People with the most impact on their workplace and their own careers are those who intentionally close the gap between their intended and actual professional presence.*



Your contribution  
to every team  
or workplace environment  
is your brand promise.



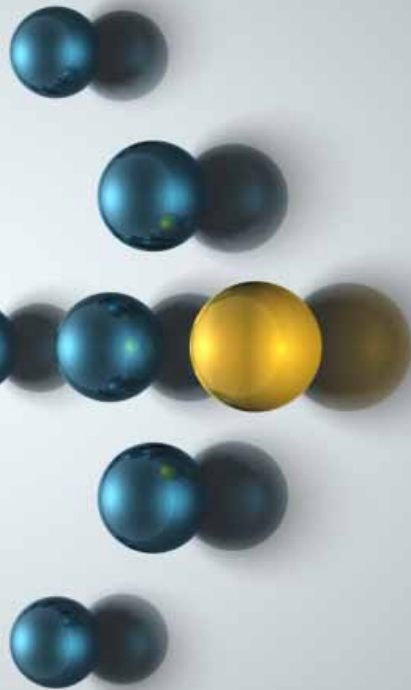
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## #2 ALIGN YOURSELF

## WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CULTURE



### Is Cultural Fit a Cop-Out?

**Yes and no. The definition of professional culture is often a cursory reflection of the stated values of an organization, a seldom-used mission statement that appears in the annual report and a few catch phrases from the CEO's most recent speech. While these may not be opposing the actual culture, you need to dig deeper to find the real professional culture of an organization. According to a meta-analysis by Kristof-Brown published by the Journal of Personnel Psychology\*, good cultural fit is associated with many positive outcomes, including:**

- greater job satisfaction;
- stronger identification with the organization;
- higher likelihood of remaining with the organization;
- more commitment to boss, coworkers, and organization, and
- superior job performance.

### Organizational culture is the DNA of a company.

Just like individuals, every firm is unique. The top layer of an organization includes things like dress code and flextime policies. It is under those initial policies that you find the even more important cultural mores of that organization. How are people managed, motivated, and developed? Consider how employees succeed or fail, regardless of their ability. If ability is not determining those outcomes, what is? The answers to these questions will reveal the heart of your corporate culture.

### Gain an awareness of what's important to you, personally.

What do you want to accomplish in your career and, more importantly, in your life? Are both of these areas easily aligned? If not, that may be why your career feels stalled. If you're concentrating on developing your skills in an area that is not valued by your organization, or the company uses incentives you don't relate to, then it's time to work on aligning these two parts of your life.

### As a leader, are you crystal clear about your professional culture?

On the other end of the spectrum, as a leader who is in the position of making hiring decisions, do you make your culture completely clear to candidates and new hires? It's far better to screen out people in an initial interview, than to learn six months later that they aren't comfortable with your values and work style.

*In addition to these positive outcomes, studies of cultural fit across many countries have found a relationship between cultural fit and mental and physical health—if your job fits your personality, you're less likely to exhibit signs of depression, anxiety and the like, and you might even live longer!*

*With such positive outcomes waiting for you, prioritizing your alignment with the professional culture is a move toward a richer professional and personal life. So how do you ensure alignment?*



Dig deep to find & align yourself with the culture of your organization.



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## #3 BUILD PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The next logical step to aligning yourself with the professional culture is to build the most important competencies for the future. Identify the alignment between your personal competencies and your organization's mission and vision. What are some steps you can start to take now that will strengthen that tie?

Break your personal competencies down into the following three areas and take an honest look at how you are doing in each one:

### Personal Competencies

Personal Accountability,  
Presentation Skills,  
Interpersonal Communication

### Business Competencies

Technological Innovation and Literacy,  
Leadership Skills,  
Strategic Imperatives

### Strategic Competencies

Global Application,  
Collaborating as One,  
Problem Solving

Competencies that work for you today might need to be re-addressed for future growth and development. Where do you stand in each of these areas?

Our [Professional Presence in a Casual World](#) program explores and develops these important skills for the new workplace.



Workplace manners  
in a microwave world?  
Priceless!



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## #4 ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL MANNERS

### Ask the Tough Questions

- Do you
- understand stated and implied dress codes?
  - understand how to enter a business meal setting?
  - know how to properly introduce people to each other?
  - know when to sit down, begin eating, properly use utensils, or where to place your napkin?
  - understand what to do when the meal is finished?

### Do manners really matter in an increasingly multi-generational, diverse workplace?

It is often said, that the real evidence of perfect manners is never to offend the sensibilities of others. With such a myriad of cultures, ages, and lifestyles in the workplace, learning to be sensitive to the sensibilities of others matters now more than ever!

Etiquette expert and author Peter Post says, “How you present yourself to others in the business world speaks volumes. Business etiquette provides a framework for building successful professional relationships and showcasing your professional presence. People form first impressions about others within seconds of meeting them—therefore, it is crucial to ensure you are properly prepared to present yourself as a professional.”

The most important interactions in the business world often happen over food. We’ve all been there. You may go to lunch or dinner with co-workers or your manager. Many job interviews and contract decisions are made over a meal. The business lunch (or dinner) is the tried and true tradition that separates the men from the boys and the women from the girls.

*According to Suzanne Updegraff, author, leader, and CEO of Employee Development Systems, Inc. (EDSI), “The gift and skill of knowing and practicing refined table manners in a microwave-world will enhance your personal presentation and allow you to feel comfortable in diverse groups.”*



Professional presence separates the men from boys & women from girls.



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ALIGN YOURSELF WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT, PRODUCTIVITY, CAREER (& LIFE) SUCCESS!

BUILD PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL MANNERS

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

### #1 DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

Competency in professional presence includes communication patterns, image, professional and social etiquette, dress, appearance, self-confidence, control, personal and professional interactions. These qualities are quickly perceived the first time someone meets you, and help place you with those who are excelling in the new workplace.

### #2 ALIGN YOURSELF WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

Gain a solid understanding of your own professional priorities and the core values of your organization, then begin to close any gaps between them.

### #3 BUILD PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Take a hard look at your own overall personal, business and strategic competencies and decide where you need further skills training, learning, or a shift in attitude.

### #4 ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL MANNERS

With such a myriad of cultures, ages, and lifestyles in the workplace, learning to be sensitive to the sensibilities of others matters now more than ever. Give yourself the benefit of knowing how to confidently navigate any business situation with composure, strength and self-confidence.

### THANK YOU!

At EDSI, we are passionate about our mission and message. We invite you to learn more.



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Employee Development Systems, Inc. (EDSI) has been resolving employee development, leadership, generational, professional presence, and personal effectiveness issues for over 30 years. We partner with companies, (many of them are members of the fortune 500) to help them increase engagement and productivity in their workforce.