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10 Habits of Remarkably Charismatic People

Charisma isn't something you have. It's something you earn. Here's how.

Some people instantly make us feel important. Some people instantly make us feel special. Some people light up a room just by walking in.

We can't always define it, but some people have it: They're naturally charismatic.

Unfortunately, natural charisma quickly loses its impact. Familiarity breeds, well, familiarity.

But some people are remarkably charismatic: They build and maintain great relationships, consistently influence (in a good way) the people around them, consistently make people feel better about themselves--they're the kind of people everyone wants to be around...and wants to be.

Fortunately we can, because being remarkably charismatic isn't about our level of success or our presentation skills or how we dress or the image we project--it's about what we do.

Here are the 10 habits of remarkably charismatic people:

1. They listen way more than they talk.


That's all it takes to show the other person they're important.

Then when you do speak, don't offer advice unless you're asked. Listening shows you care a lot more than offering advice, because when you offer advice in most cases you make the conversation about you, not them.
Don't believe me? Who is "Here's what I would do..." about: you or the other person?

Only speak when you have something important to say--and always define *important* as what matters to the other person, not to you.

2. They *don't* practice selective hearing.

Some people--I guarantee you know people like this--are incapable of hearing anything said by the people they feel are somehow beneath them.

Sure, you speak to them, but that particular falling tree doesn't make a sound in the forest, because there's no one actually listening.

Remarkably charismatic people listen closely to everyone, and they make all of us, regardless of our position or social status or "level," feel like we have something in common with them.

Because we do: We're all people.

3. They put their stuff away.

Don't check your phone. Don't glance at your monitor. Don't focus on anything else, even for a moment.

You can never connect with others if you're busy connecting with your stuff, too.

Give the gift of your full attention. That's a gift few people give. That gift alone will make others want to be around you and remember you.

4. They give before they receive--and often they never receive.

Never think about what you can get. Focus on what you can provide. Giving is the only way to establish a real connection and relationship.

Focus, even in part and even for a moment, on what you can get out of the other person, and you show that the only person who really matters is you.

5. They *don't* act self-important…

The only people who are impressed by your stuffy, pretentious, self-important self are other stuffy, pretentious, self-important people.

The rest of us aren't impressed. We're irritated, put off, and uncomfortable.

And we hate when you walk in the room.

6. …Because they realize other people are more important.
You already know what you know. You know your opinions. You know your perspectives and points of view.

That stuff isn't important, because it's already yours. You can't learn anything from yourself.

But you don't know what other people know, and everyone, no matter who they are, knows things you don't know.

That makes them a lot more important than you--because they're people you can learn from.

7. They shine the spotlight on others.

No one receives enough praise. No one. Tell people what they did well.

Wait, you say you don't know what they did well?

Shame on you--it's your job to know. It's your job to find out ahead of time.

Not only will people appreciate your praise, they'll appreciate the fact you care enough to pay attention to what they're doing.

Then they'll feel a little more accomplished and a lot more important.

8. They choose their words.

The words you use impact the attitude of others.

For example, you don't have to go to a meeting; you get to go meet with other people. You don't have to create a presentation for a new client; you get to share cool stuff with other people. You don't have to go to the gym; you get to work out and improve your health and fitness.

You don't have to interview job candidates; you get to select a great person to join your team.

We all want to associate with happy, enthusiastic, fulfilled people. The words you choose can help other people feel better about themselves--and make you feel better about yourself, too.

9. They don't discuss the failings of others...

Granted, we all like hearing a little gossip. We all like hearing a little dirt.

The problem is, we don't necessarily like--and we definitely don't respect--the people who dish that dirt.

Don't laugh at other people. When you do, the people around you wonder if you sometimes laugh at them.
10. ...But they readily admit their failings.

Incredibly successful people are often assumed to have charisma simply because they're successful. Their success seems to create a halo effect, almost like a glow.

Keyword is *seem*.

You don't have to be incredibly successful to be remarkably charismatic. Scratch the shiny surface, and many successful people have all the charisma of a rock.

But you do have to be incredibly genuine to be remarkably charismatic.


While you should never laugh at other people, you should always laugh at yourself.

People won't laugh at you. People will laugh laugh with you.

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How To Light Up A Room – O Magazine

The Charisma Meter
By Jessica Winter

Read more: [http://www.oprah.com/spirit/The-Science-Behind-Charisma-and-Confidence/2#ixzz2bgi2N9AL](http://www.oprah.com/spirit/The-Science-Behind-Charisma-and-Confidence/2#ixzz2bgi2N9AL)

What is the X factor that links all the luminaries on *O*'s Power List?

Is it stunning good looks, a sky-high IQ, a genius for witty banter? No, no, and no. It's **charisma**: an aura of personality that draws people in and holds their rapt attention. A George Clooney or a Sandra Bullock taps into this magic stuff at will—but so does your neighbor who brightens the dullest cocktail hour, or your office colleague with the infectious smile who's shimmying up the corporate ladder like Jack on his beanstalk.

Charisma is as seductive as it is elusive; its powers are hard to resist and equally hard to pinpoint. But in recent years, researchers have been studying this seemingly intangible quality—the je ne sais quoi that separates, say, a Bill Clinton from an Al Gore—and making it concrete. In doing so, they've taken what we think of as a mysterious gift and distilled it down to a science.
The Charisma Recipe

Charisma has three main ingredients, according to Ronald Riggio, PhD, professor of leadership and organizational psychology at Claremont McKenna College. They are expressiveness (a talent for spontaneously striking up conversations and easily conveying feelings); control (the ability to fine-tune your persona to fit the mood and social makeup of any group); and sensitivity (a gift for listening and sussing out other people's mind-sets). "A lot of charisma comes down to how you communicate," Riggio says. "It's your ability to pick up on other people's emotions as well as express your own."

This may sound highly subjective, but MIT computer scientist Alex Pentland, PhD, has found that all three of these traits can be measured empirically by studying the largely unconscious gestures and expressions we all make. For example, a modest amount of fidgeting and nervous energy—which might normally be viewed as a negative—is often a sign that someone is excited about a conversation and wants the other person to catch that same passion. "When a charismatic person connects with someone, their autonomic nervous system becomes aroused—their attention is locked onto that person and they're tingling with energy," Pentland says. One result: They talk faster. In fact, a 2005 study showed that people who speak quickly were rated as more charismatic than those who take their time.

A speaking style that's fast yet calm and fluid—no irregular pauses, only a few ums or you knows—is the most charismatic of all, because it shows that a person is confident about herself and her ideas. Charisma also shines through in gestures as simple as nodding your head when another person is talking, holding eye contact, and trading smiles, sures, and uh-huhhs, which all demonstrate that you're listening—and ascribing importance—to what's being said. (TV hosts like Meredith Vieira and Kelly Ripa have made an art of that give-and-take.)

Such mimicking behaviors create a feedback loop that helps two people bond. "If we're nodding at and copying each other, we feel empathetic," Pentland explains. "Our bodies produce endorphins—natural opiates, basically. It's like being engaged in a synchronous dance." In fact, the "mirror neurons" that light up are the same ones activated in a baby's brain when she tries to copy her mother's facial expressions.

Read more: http://www.oprah.com/spirit/The-Science-Behind-Charisma-and-Confidence/1#ixzz2bgNmiqPq

To study that synchronous dance, Pentland and his colleagues at the MIT Human Dynamics Laboratory have developed a gadget that detects the signs of charisma and measures them in action. Called a sociometer, it's a wearable digital device about the size of an iPhone that's equipped with an infrared sensor and a tiny microphone. The gadget tracks patterns of speech and bodily movement, although it doesn't record one word of what's being said. Studies using the sociometer have found that people who incorporate lots of the unconscious gestures and
expressions that researchers associate with charisma are more likely to be successful in pitching a new business venture or negotiating a salary hike.

In other words, it isn't just what you say but how you say it. "If a charismatic person pitches you a business plan, you're not going to know all the details," says Pentland. "But you know that she sounds like an expert and she's very enthusiastic, and you know that she seems honestly interested in you and what you think. So your mind makes a reasonable inference: 'This must be good!'"

Sounding like an expert and actually being one aren't always the same, of course—but researchers agree that bona fide charisma isn't a ruse. Nor can it be turned on and off like a light switch. "Truly charismatic people are authentic," says Howard S. Friedman, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Riverside, who developed a frequently cited measure of charisma called the affective communication test, or ACT. "It's not like Clark Kent walks into a party and turns into Superman."

As Riggio puts it, "Charisma is a skill set. Michael Jordan might be messing around on the basketball court, missing shots, but if someone challenges him to a game, he'd blow everyone away. That doesn't mean he's 'faking it.'" Charisma works the same way. "A charismatic person genuinely likes, and is curious about, other people," Riggio adds. "The emotional component of that is really hard to fake—you either pick up on other people's emotions or you don't."

**The Attraction of Opposites**

Though charisma hinges largely on expressiveness, control, and sensitivity, its magnetic power intensifies when you mix in mystery and contradiction, says Joseph Roach, PhD, a professor of theater and English at Yale. In his book *It*, Roach writes that a supremely charismatic person has two sides: He or she is warm and tough, strong and vulnerable, down-to-earth and one of a kind. Think JFK, or FDR—or think of the most charismatically well-endowed man in contemporary popular culture: Don Draper of *Mad Men* (played by Jon Hamm), who is wounded yet stoic, ardent yet repressed, a suave man of means hiding a hardscrabble past—a swami of the sale who throws his clients and colleagues off balance with his singular alchemy of charm, irritability, and laser-beam eye contact.

But even at the rarefied level of presidents, talk show hosts, and fictional advertising executives, charisma is never simply about one person casting a spell over another.

"I once watched Bill Clinton enter a room at Yale, and he knew instantly who needed him most," Roach says. "It was like radar. Diana, Princess of Wales, had this, too. She could walk into a hospice and know exactly who needed her, but—and this is the paradox that makes charisma so powerful—the suffering person knew that she, Diana, needed him or her, too. There's an arc of mutual need underneath this magic."

Though Diana bloomed into her role as "the People's Princess," she began her public life as
gawky, moon-eyed "Shy Di." Like most of us, she had to dig deep to find the glittering charisma she carried inside herself all along.

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