

## Wroten & Associates

### October 2014 Leadership Insight

#### Charisma and Leadership

"Charisma is the transference of enthusiasm." -Ralph Archbold

Charismatic leaders are liked, trusted and admired by almost everyone in an organization. Charisma is defined as a variety of traits and behaviors that are appealing to other people. A person who is charismatic is exceptionally likable, trustworthy, warm, sincere, empathic, self-confident, assertive and engaging. According to John French and Bertram Raven, social psychologists, charisma is a form of "referent power" which is influence that you have because others like and respect you.

Many people believe that charisma is a trait that you are born with. This isn't the case. Developing charismatic traits takes time and effort but it can be done. Here are important characteristics that will help you develop charisma and increase your influence both personally and professionally. **Body language** and **presence** are important aspects of charisma. The right body language, such as standing up straight with your head up and shoulders back, makes you look confident and in control. This can indicate to others strength, warmth and likability. Presence is about the quality of your attention. Having presence is giving your full attention to the person, staying in the moment, and actively listening. Making others feel good (genuinely) by giving sincere praise, becoming a mentor, and creating an environment of positive energy.

**Empathy** is another important characteristic. When you demonstrate an understanding of other people's perspectives, wants, and needs the door is open for greater understanding and connection. **Self-confidence** and **assertiveness** are important aspects of charisma. Self-confidence can be strengthened by setting and achieving small goals and by continued development of knowledge and skills that help you do your job effectively. Assertiveness is the ability to communicate your wants and needs while respecting the wants and needs of other people. Being assertive shows personal power when it is done with kindness, respect, and dignity.

Be aware that charisma can be misused, so be sure not to use it to manipulate others! Sincerity is extraordinarily important in developing charisma. If you are just going through the motions people will know. Make every effort to be genuine and authentic in your actions. Charisma helps you stand out in a crowd. Even if you are not in a leadership role, if you are charismatic, people will be drawn to you, your ideas, trust your opinions and are more likely to be influenced by you.

Wishing you a charismatic and inspired month!

Positively provided to you by: Wroten & Associates and Marilyn W. Allemann, LCSW, CPC

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