

Executive Presence: 5 Steps to Get You Started

Step 1: Identify Your Trusted Advisors

A trusted advisor is in a position to “notice” your behaviors in real-life situations. Look for a business person or close associate who cares about you, and is willing and adept at sharing candid, constructive feedback. You may have a mentor, peer mentors, HR business partner, advisor, or supervisor who plays an important role in your life. If not, cultivate these relationships by asking them to share their views.

Step 2: Ask for Their Feedback

Ask your trusted advisor(s) to review the 15 qualities of executive presence and weigh in on two questions: 1. What would you say are my strengths, based on these definitions? 2. What are my areas of development?

Step 3: Compare These Views to Your Intentions

Consider the “face value” of the advice you’ve been given and ask yourself, “How does this differ from what I intend to project?” Our intentions aren’t always in sync with others’ perceptions.

Step 4: Look for Role Models

Executive presence is not something you’re born with. Look around for role models who are strong in these areas, watch what they do, and adapt it to your own situation.

Step 5: Be Willing to Try Something New

Executive presence is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon. As you try new approaches, you will feel uncomfortable. It’s like trying on a beautiful new pair of shoes that fit but need to be broken in — well worth the investment and a little pain. Small changes often can make a big difference.