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Executive Book Summaries®

The Laws of Charisma

How to Captivate, Inspire and Influence for Maximum Success

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

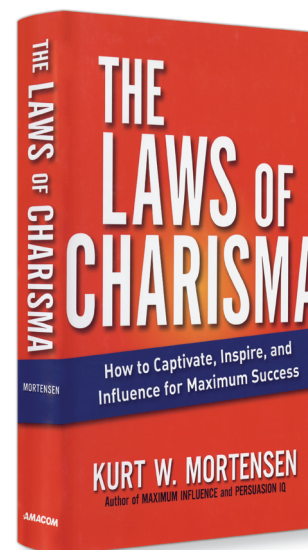
It's breathtaking to watch someone with charisma enter a room. The sound of their voice and their mere presence seem to have a captivating effect on everyone around them. It's as if an invisible field of energy surrounds them, mesmerizing others like a magical spell.

Your career, your relationships and your income are all related to your ability to radiate this mysterious trait. But what is charisma? Is it something with which only a lucky few are born? Or is it something that can be learned?

Much more than simply charm, likability, presence or passion, charisma allows you to build rapport instantly, inspire others and influence them to your way of thinking, all while putting them at ease. In *The Laws of Charisma*, Kurt W. Mortensen, one of America's leading authorities on persuasion and influence, reveals the specific skills, traits and attributes associated with charisma that you can learn, develop and master.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to get others to believe in you, trust you and want to be influenced by you.
- How to energize everyone around you with your enthusiasm, passion and expectations.
- The communication skills that will enable you to communicate effectively without speaking.
- Ways to win contagious cooperation from even the unlikeliest of allies.



by Kurt W. Mortensen

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THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: THE LAWS OF CHARISMA

by Kurt W. Mortensen

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Introduction

Have you ever noticed how some people can captivate, inspire and influence others without effort? Other people instantly like them and want to be around them. How do they command such instant attention and influence everyone they meet?

This is the power of charisma. Charisma is a vital motivational and life skill that can and must be mastered if you are going to influence others.

When we hear the word "charisma," sometimes we are not sure what to think. It can be a mysterious attribute. Here's a definition of charisma: the ability to easily build rapport, effectively influence others to your way of thinking, inspire them to achieve more and, in the process, make an ally for life.

Research on charisma shows that you must learn and master certain skills, traits and attributes. As you read on, you will learn a number of critical skills or traits required to master charisma.

Self-Perception Bias: The Great Blind Spot

What is the greatest roadblock to charisma? We all have blind spots in our lives that impede us from working on the things that can launch us into greater success. The inability to see these blind spots is called self-perception bias. We all tend to rate our skills and traits higher than they actually are. However, to improve, grow and become more successful, we have to know our weaknesses and be able to identify blind spots. If we don't know what they are, then we can never truly improve.

The Solution

The solution is all about true self-assessment. We all have different strengths and weaknesses. Try to honestly assess yourself or have someone you trust give you feedback. Charismatic people are able to take a good,

hard look at themselves and come to grips with the facts, both the good and the bad. When you can do this, you are able to make real progress. ●

PRESENCE: WHAT DO YOU RADIATE?

Passion: The Transfer of Pure Energy

Passion is critical to influencing others and transmitting charisma. Charismatic people radiate heartfelt passion. When your audience can sense your passion and sincere conviction for your cause, they will jump on board emotionally. When you transfer your passion, the people around you start to absorb your energy. They begin to perform better. Being on the job no longer seems like work. They become more proactive, more willing to work as a team and more optimistic.

Application

Those with charisma increase enthusiasm by gaining insight and knowledge about their subject. They have developed a true belief and conviction in what they do. Believe in yourself and in your message; radiate enthusiasm in all that you do. On the flip side, fake enthusiasm, unrealistic hype and false energy destroy charisma. You can enhance your charisma by doing the following:

- Always maintain your credibility.
- Be sincere in all your interactions.
- Always be connecting with others.
- Always be authentic.
- Maintain constant confidence. ●



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Confidence: Conviction Is Contagious

True confidence is a state of mind. Charismatic people can maintain confidence in all situations even if they have encountered defeats, setbacks or unpredicted outcomes. We all have a tendency to feel insufficient or inferior at times. When you lose faith in yourself or have had failure in your life, you lose confidence through fear, which can be defined simply as magnified doubt.

Fear breeds doubt and doubt destroys confidence. You need to make sure that your confidence is bigger than your doubts. What does your audience really sense in you? Are you afraid to exercise confidence and charisma? The desire to overcome your fear needs to be bigger than the fear itself. Bottom line: no confidence, no charisma.

Application

Here are some additional ways you can avoid the trap of seeming overly confident or arrogant:

- Always take feedback or criticism with an open heart.
- Spend more time listening than talking.
- Be able to admit that you were wrong.
- Don't always attempt to prove you are right.
- Ask questions to demonstrate concern. ●

Congruence: Action Versus Intention

Congruence opens the door to influence and charisma. It increases your believability and likability. You attain congruence when your message is synchronized with your beliefs and values. It occurs when your voice, body language, words and vocal tone are all congruent and aligned. It comes from making sure that your verbal and nonverbal messages are in agreement.

Blind Spot

Even when you feel congruent, you may not look congruent. Whether you are deceiving or not, whether you are insincere or not, you might be coming across as if you are. A little fib? A white lie? No one will know. We think others can't tell. They haven't said anything about not believing you or your message. A little deception has worked before, and no one has called you on it. Most people can sense incongruence and rarely will say anything about it. You will either come across as congruent or incongruent. Do your gestures match your message? ●

Application

Everyone can pick up on nonverbal behavior. We sense something is not quite right. Here are some things that can trigger a sense of deception:

- Forced eye contact.
- Shifting back in chair.
- Scratching your face.
- Rising voice pitch. ●

CORE QUALITIES: THE INSIDE DICTATES THE OUTSIDE

Competence: What You Don't Know Will Hurt You

A critical ingredient to radiating charisma and enhancing your ability to influence others is to have comprehensive competence, knowledge or expertise in the area where others expect you to have it.

Competence consists of your knowledge and capability in your field. Competence comes from lifelong learning and experience. Having more knowledge or expertise than your audience enhances your charisma.

Passion is a great thing to have, but without the perception of competence you cannot radiate charisma or influence anyone. True competence is when you combine your ability, capabilities and skills.

Application

The key to developing competence is patience. Nothing works perfectly the first time we learn or try it. Keep focused and keep learning until you feel you can demonstrate competence in your field. In the short term, you can increase others' perception of your competence in a number of ways:

- Have someone endorse you or explain your qualifications.
- Make sure your office and external surroundings radiate competence.
- Keep your reputation untarnished.
- Get others to refer you.
- Always have a definite opinion about your area of expertise. ●

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Purpose: Tapping into Unlimited Drive

Many people confuse emotion with purpose. Your emotions will constantly change. When you have true purpose, not only do you attract more people and become more influential, but your purpose drives them. Purpose causes you to ooze charisma.

Application

Do you know your purpose? Do you want to know exactly what greatness lies within you? Do you want to get a better feel for the direction you should take in life? Give these questions some continuous thought and meditation. The answers might come right away, or they might take days, weeks or even months to reveal themselves. Answer the following questions:

- If you knew you would succeed — if you knew you could not fail — what would you do if you were guaranteed success? What would you try? What would you become?
- If you could magically and instantly change one thing in the world, what would it be? What would you change?
- Imagine you became financially independent and no longer had to work, no longer had to think about making money and paying bills. What would you do with your time? How would you spend your day? ●

Integrity: Character Counts

The word *integrity* comes from the Latin word *integritas*. It means purity, correctness, soundness and blamelessness. It can also be defined as consistency between your values and actions, between what you believe and what you actually do. When you want to influence others and enhance your charisma, you must radiate integrity. People must know and feel that you believe what you say and will do what you say. Tapping into your integrity requires knowing yourself, knowing your values and knowing exactly what you stand for.

Having great integrity is also part of your character. Character is made up of such qualities as honesty, sincerity and predictability. Solid character and integrity are the very foundation of one's ability to succeed. No success is going to be great or lasting if it stems from questionable ethics, motives or behaviors.

Application

Tapping into your values will increase your passion, your integrity and your ability to influence others. You cannot

influence or inspire others if you do not know your own values and are therefore unable to share them with others. Here are some tips to help you tap into and discover your values and how to live by those values:

- Write down your definition of a value.
- Take time to ponder and reflect on your true beliefs.
- Find people you respect, and define their values.
- Find people in history you admire, and determine whether their values are your values.
- Live up to everything you say you are going to do.
- Tell the truth even though it hurts. ●

DELIVERY AND COMMUNICATION: SPEAK WITH CONVICTION

Presentation Skills: Educate, Inspire and Entertain

Charismatic people have excellent communication skills that captivate, inspire and rivet their audience. Whether on the phone, in face-to-face interactions, during group presentations, amid negotiations and even when texting and emailing, they can articulate their message and make it come alive in your mind. They make you feel as though you're watching a movie; they have created a mental picture so strong that it feels real. These kinds of presentation skills have been described as energetic, enthusiastic and emotional.

Blind Spot

Being able to talk or create a PowerPoint does not mean you know how to communicate, inspire and present. Most people feel that they have above-average communication skills and average presentation skills. That's the blind spot. The reality is that they are lucky to have average communication skills and below-average presentation skills. Sure, you can give a presentation and no one leaves the room or says anything negative, but did you really have charisma? Charismatic people have mastered their presentation skills, yet they are constantly working on them. There is always something to fine-tune, to learn and to improve.

Application

How would you describe your presentation skills? Take a look at this checklist to see whether you are making any of these common communication blunders:

- Speaking in a monotone.
- Avoiding eye contact.
- Fidgeting and displaying other annoying mannerisms.

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- Using vocal fillers (“uhm,” “uh,” “er”).
- Lacking emotion or conviction.
- Sounding mechanical or rehearsed.
- Rushing through the presentation.
- Overloading the audience with too much information.
- Displaying nervousness or fear. ●

Influence: Help Others Persuade Themselves

Charisma and influence go hand in hand. In other words, charisma is getting others to do what you want them to do and like doing it. People get uneasy when you talk about influence, but, just like power, influence is neutral.

Most people misunderstand the concept of persuasion and influence. Influence is usually undervalued and underutilized. True influence is not forceful, devious or manipulative. Make no mistake: Influence can be learned. Understanding the theories of persuasion, motivation and influence will create charisma.

Blind Spot

The blind spot is that most people exert influence in the wrong way. They tend to influence others as they like to be influenced, and that is completely wrong. You need to adapt your approach to the person and to the situation. As you master charisma, you must influence others in the way they want. Just because you are getting short-term compliance does not mean you have influence over others. Charismatic people don't seek short-term compliance; they are after long-term influence. Short-term is easier, but it works only when you are around, as opposed to long-term influence, which works no matter where you are.

Application

When people attempt to persuade and influence, they tend to use techniques that are old-school and that no longer work. Make sure you remove these common blunders from your persuasion and influence techniques:

- Getting too friendly too fast.
- The data dump — too much information.
- Persuading people in the way you like to be persuaded.
- Using force or coercion.
- Tired old-school closing tactics.
- Winning the argument but losing the ability to influence. ●

EMPOWERING OTHERS: CONTAGIOUS COOPERATION

Inspiration: Strengthen and Energize

If you are uninspired, you will not be inspiring. Charismatic people have the ability to inspire others, to instantly lift their moods, to adjust their emotions and to increase the energy in the room. When you have the ability to inspire others, people rise to your expectations. They want to grow and improve themselves; they thrive on your high expectations.

If you want your charisma to last, you need to rely on the inspiration that is rooted in your emotions and your vision. When you radiate inspiration, you move people away from despair, inaction and blame. You give them hope in themselves and in the future. You will be able to lead and inspire with charisma and the future in mind.

Application

So how do you know whether you inspire others? How do you know whether you can promote teamwork? Here are a few questions to think about in order to understand whether people are inspired or stuck in desperation:

- Do others feel better about themselves after interacting with you, or do they feel worse?
- Do they know you are pleased or grateful for their work, or do they think you don't care?
- Do they know you truly care and would go to bat for them, or do they feel they are just another member of the team?
- Do you listen and care about their suggestions and their feedback, or do they get defensive when you critique them? ●

Motivation: Light Their Fire

Charismatic people get others to motivate themselves for the long term. They are able to help others visualize goals and make them feel they can attain those goals. Such motivation allows them to set their own goals, solve their own challenges, make their own decisions but still feel they are on the team. The journey to achieve goals can get long, hard, tiring and frustrating. Your charisma is what carries them, motivates them and lifts their spirits when they are feeling down.

You can enhance motivation and empower people in two ways. The first is personal development. When you help others use their minds, increase their knowledge

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and enhance their skills, you will find untapped drive and motivation. They will develop a sense of urgency and direction that will propel them faster and higher than before.

The second way to motivate and empower others is to get them to set goals. We live in a world where we want everything now. Moreover, we want it all with minimal effort. How do you motivate this type of person? One way is to understand the power of goal setting. Very few really know how to do it. The key is not only helping others to set and achieve goals, but also being able to communicate exactly what each goal is. People should welcome the new challenge and believe they can meet it. They also should know you are committed to them and believe they can achieve their goal.

Application

We already know that true motivation does not involve manipulation, force or demeaning people. In the workplace, what can we apply right now to enhance and increase employee motivation?

- Clear and concise expectations.
- Increased training and personal development.
- Jointly setting realistic and exciting goals.
- Limiting negative reinforcement and pessimistic coworkers.
- Recognizing and rewarding improvement.
- Making sure workers have the tools and resources they need. ●

Respect: Give It to Get It

Long-term charisma is all about valuing people. It is about the respect you give to others, which breeds more charisma and influence. Respect is viral and highly contagious. When respect is high between two people or within a group, people have more trust, they are more open about feelings and they are able to stay focused on the objective. Learn to build respect in others. The more respect you give, the more influential you become.

The respect you are earning is a combination of how you conduct yourself in all your affairs. When you show respect and character in all your dealings, people will see how you work with others and will talk about it. They also will be able to instantly sense the respect in you. Another word that applies is honorable. Be honorable, and other people will trust, respect and follow you.

If you are finding that people are not taking you, your message or your company seriously, you could be looking at a red flag indicating a lack of respect. Because no

respect means no influence and definitely no charisma. The more respect you can earn, the more successful you will be in your communications.

Application

Respect needs to be mutual. Once you show it, you can get it. And you can show it in many ways. Here are a few things you can start implementing when you are interacting with people:

- Always have integrity.
- Be dependable.
- Show long-term stability.
- Constantly practice your good manners.
- Be grateful to others. ●

SUBCONSCIOUS TRIGGERS: IT JUST FEELS RIGHT — OR WRONG

Most people think if we give people all the logic, facts and figures, things will work in our favor. *Wrong!* We do have a logical side, but studies show that we are extremely emotional. Our subconscious mind and emotions are huge factors in our decisions and in how we feel and treat other people.

A subconscious trigger is a feeling that says “I like/don’t like this person.” Everything you do or say can trigger a response (good or bad) in others. It could be your word choice, your tone of voice, your gestures or your appearance; it could also be the atmosphere, the effect of music or the mood of the audience.

When you become charismatic, you will be able to read people, find patterns in their behavior and know which emotions you are creating. Human behavior is usually predictable; we all have certain triggers or knee-jerk reactions. Long-term charisma depends on knowing these triggers and how they work. ●

Verbal Presentation: It Is How You Say It

If you sound either uncertain and timid or arrogant and demanding, your ability to gain charisma will falter. Your voice is your calling card: It must exude confidence, courage and conviction. Charismatic voices have a soothing volume, varied emphases, good articulation and a pleasing pitch.

To create an effective verbal presentation, you need to understand the following critical aspects of verbal packaging:

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1. Word choice. Words help people form thoughts, feelings and attitudes toward a person or subject. One size does not fit all. Word choice can also be essential to defuse emotional situations and get people to accept your point of view and enhance your charisma.

2. Rate of speech. Speeches delivered at a fast rate are rated more influential and charismatic than those presented at slow or even moderate speeds, because people who speak faster appear more competent and knowledgeable.

3. Vocal fillers. You are probably using these and don't know it. "Um," "er," "us" or even "ya know." These types of fillers can destroy your presentation, annoy people, hurt your credibility and make listeners tense. Work to eliminate all vocal fillers from your verbal presentations.

4. Pitch and inflection. Pitch is the level of your voice frequency. A low pitch tends to show more strength, confidence and assurance. Inflection is when you alter the pitch or tone of your voice. You will notice that influential people use inflection in their voices to show confidence and authority. At the end of their sentences, they will usually inflect downward.

5. Volume. This aspect of speaking is easy to understand but often abused. You only have three options: too soft, too loud or just right. Plant someone in the back of the room to rate your volume, or ask a friend on the phone whether your volume sounds good.

6. Articulation. When you are talking to someone or delivering a speech, clearly articulate every phrase and word. A clear and coherent presentation radiates congruence. People are more likely to be won over by your message and feel your charisma when you are easy to understand.

7. Silence. A well-placed pause can grab attention at any time and with any audience. Pauses let the audience mentally prepare for what you are about to say and allow you to emphasize your point. As you come to the pause, be sure to keep your pitch a little high.

Takeaway

Does your voice work for you or against you? Do you sound compelling or convincing? Effective use of vocal variety catches and holds other people's attention. If you don't like how you sound, take a deep breath and find a solution. Many people do not like their own voices. Make sure that you listen for specific aspects that you don't like, instead of the blanket reaction of not liking anything about your voice. Focus on the exact aspects of your voice that you'd like to change; then make one improvement at a time. ●

Nonverbal Communication: Gestures Trump Words

To captivate and mesmerize their audiences, charismatic people express themselves in positive, nonverbal ways. Their gestures look spontaneous, but they are well planned and practiced. Think of your body as a prop. You are telling a story and keeping the attention of your audience. Make sure your gestures are positive and come across as natural and purposeful.

Not only do charismatic people use nonverbal gestures in the right way, they also have the ability to read and interpret the nonverbal gestures of others. When you are able to read people in this way, you can obtain the knowledge you need to adjust yourself and your presentation based on what you are reading.

Let's look at the different parts of the body and how different gestures can be perceived as either positive, negative or deceptive. Remember you are looking for clusters, that is, two or three of these nonverbals going on at the same time. A single nonverbal does not exactly define what is going on.

Eyes. Make sure there is plenty of light for your audience to see your eyes. When someone is attempting deception, look for decreased or forced eye contact, increased blinking, pupils dilating.

Hands. Clenching your hands in a fist detracts from your presence and your message and indicates anger, aggression or tension. When someone is attempting deception, look for decreased hand movements, hiding parts of the face with the hands or palms becoming sweaty.

Legs. A person's legs pointing in your direction often indicates interest. Tapping a foot means the person is either wishing you would shut up or a sign of boredom. When someone is attempting deception, look for crossing and uncrossing of legs, wiggling or tapping of feet or feet underneath the chair.

Head. This is the one body part that most people attempt to control during a conversation because they are the most aware of it. When people get nervous, more blood flows to the head, and you will see increased touching to any part of the head. When someone is attempting deception, look for people biting their lips, dry mouth or ears or nose that turns red.

Body. When two people are connected, the movement increases; when there is a disconnect, physical movement will be minimal. When someone is attempting deception, look for an increase in perspiration, more mechanical movements and physically moving back.

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Practice learning to read people in every situation throughout the day. Turn the audio off on a movie or sitcom to get a better read on how to interpret body language. Be more aware of your own body movements and nonverbal behavior. ●

Emotional States: Understanding Feelings and Moods

Charismatic people know there is a fine line between logic and emotion. To influence someone, you have to have both, but be aware that people's emotions will override logic every time. Logic tends to be temporary, whereas emotion will carry your message into the future. Emotion inspires us to take action, whereas logic justifies those actions. You may be able to form a logical argument, but you must understand emotions if you want to become more charismatic. Your goal is either to change the emotional state of others if it's running against you or to maintain it if it is working for you.

Your ability to change people's moods and handle emotions is a critical factor in your ability to maintain charisma. Let's look at some common emotions and what they mean to you when you try to influence others.

Emotions that Detract from Your Charisma and Decrease Your Ability to Influence

Anger. Anger is a sign that something is out of line. Anger is also known as a secondary emotion. In other words, what people say they are angry about and what they are really upset about are usually two different things. You can help decrease a person's anger by finding out the real reason for the anger.

Worry. Worry causes people to feel nervous, uneasy or anxious. Worry can be referred to as a negative vision of the future. You can therefore help your audience by bringing them back to reality, back to the now. Worry will subside when you can substitute positive images for their negative ones.

Fear. Fear motivates us and moves us away from perceived unpleasant circumstances or certain danger. Logic rarely helps in reducing fear. The key to understanding fear is to realize that it has been learned from a past experience. Make sure when they are afraid that you can provide a solution. Then your job as a great influencer is to help them feel capable of overcoming their fear.

External Factors that Affect Emotions

External factors can change perceptions, moods and emotions. This phenomenon is not something your audience can quantify. Let's learn how we can change other people's state of mind and how they are feeling.

Music. Understand that music can trigger good or bad feelings and good or bad memories. We know music can lull you to sleep, give you more energy, make you feel more romantic or even make you want to smack the person next to you.

Smell. The right smell can make you comfortable or like you have been friends with someone forever. The wrong smell will do the opposite. A strange smell can put someone in the wrong state of mind for you to be able to influence them.

Colors. Colors can trigger a mood, a feeling or an attitude. They do so at a subconscious level. Color impacts our thinking and our reactions. Learn to choose the right colors for the right experience and the right state of mind. ●

What's Next?

Charisma is a lifetime pursuit. Be careful you don't confuse popularity or the number of friends you have with charisma. Even if you can influence people to do things, you do not necessarily have long-term influence over them. Keep working on your charisma. The more tools you learn, the more successful you are going to be.

The challenge is not finishing; the challenge is starting. Make up your mind to start the race, and then you will know that you are moving toward your goal of finishing. You can come up with all the excuses you want, but none of them will bring you success or happiness. Practice these techniques everyday. The first time you try anything, it might feel a little awkward or might not even work. Stick to the plan, stick to the race and you will see success. ●

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *The Laws of Charisma*, you'll also like:

1. **Persuasion Equation** by Mark Rodgers. This insightful guide reveals what drives decisions and introduces the persuasion equation — a powerful combination of factors proven to speed agreement.
2. **Executive Presence** by Harrison Monarth. People reach highly influential positions because they deeply understand the power of perception and know how to leverage it in their favor.
3. **Pitch Perfect** by Bill McGowan and Alisa Bowman. Renowned media coach Bill McGowan shows how to communicate with confidence during the pivotal moments of life.