



# What's the Story?

MARCH 2016

## ARE YOU POWERFUL OR POWERLESS?

If someone came into the room unexpectedly, what would be their first impression of you? Are you adopting a big and open pose or are you small and closed?

How you look right now will impact on how people judge you - so are you powerful or powerless?

How you come across has the biggest impact on how you feel about yourself. If you look powerless, you'll feel powerless and that will hold you back.

In her book [“Presence – bringing your boldest self to your biggest challenges”](#) Amy Cuddy tells us all about this phenomenon.

She believes our body changes our minds, our minds change our behaviour and our behaviour changes our outcomes. So before you face any challenge, adopt the ‘power pose’. Standing in a posture of confidence can help your body to change your opinion of yourself.

She advocates: **“Fake it till you become it.”**

Amy tells a story of how as a very reluctant public speaker from her early days at college, her mentor advised her to go out and fake it. Over the years she continued with this approach, but always felt she was a fraud and imposter. Until one day one of her students came to her.

As bright as her classmates, but not participating in class, the student felt she was an impostor and a fraud and did not feel her views were worthy of the group. She so admired Amy's ability to stand up and talk.

Amy immediately realised she herself was no longer an impostor. She was no longer faking it till you make it” ...but “faking it till you become it”.

Her incredible [Ted talk](#) is the second highest viewed talk ever with over 35 million views.

So next time you have a big challenge – it could be an interview or a pitch – spend a couple of minutes beforehand adopting the right power pose and see your confidence and positivity increase.

**Tiny tweaks can make big changes.**



## **THE POWER OF SILENCE (OR WHEN TO SHUT UP)**

Have you ever considered just how powerful silence can be?

Talking with colleague and friend [Paul Allen](#), we recently got onto the subject of when to shut up!

Paul is a social media consultant and trainer working in marketing communications. He started life as a radio presenter and recalls his early presentation training which urged him to concentrate just as much on what he didn't say ...as what he did say!

Our first tip to presenters is always to stop before starting to speak so their audience can get the feeling of them and get comfortable. The longer you can hold that silence the more you build up your gravitas.

Radio is a one-to-one medium. Although you are talking to thousands of people on air, the key is to make each listener feel you are talking to them individually. Therefore it is vital that you pause occasionally to allow your audience to digest your content and reflect on what you have said.

So to become a great presenter you need to learn to say nothing.

**Less really is so much more....**

## **THE EMPTY CHAIR**

Like most large companies, Amazon has lots of meetings. It's become legendary that in

the most important ones, founder Jeff Bezos introduces an additional chair which remains empty. It's there to remind attendees that the most important person in the room is ...the customer.

Seeing it encourages attendees to take on the perspective of the invisible but essential person. What would customers think of the ideas being put forward? Would they understand and see the benefit?

Try this in your own world. **Who's sitting on your empty chair?**

### **“I WOULD RATHER LOSE A FINAL THAN LOSE MY WORD”**

We were impressed by the words of the Manchester City football club manager Manuel Pellegrini about his goalie selection for the League Cup Final at Wembley. He chose their Number 2 even though their Number 1 was available.

Pellegrini said: “I don't know about you, but my word is more important than football. I promised our No 2 goalkeeper Caballero that he would play all Capital One games including the Final. It went to a penalty shoot-out and he saved three of the penalties, so we beat Liverpool 3-1.”

**When you give your word magical things can happen.**

**Good luck with your stories, presentations and pitches in 2016**

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*Barry Graham & Sally Clare*

