

THE 4 C'S OF CREDIBILITY



Denise Starcher, Vice President of Human Resources at Menasha Corporation, describes the key elements of credibility.

I recently had the opportunity to participate as a panelist at an Executive Presence program in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Each panelist was asked to speak about one of the following four C's that a consulting firm had identified as important leadership qualities for Executive Presence: Connectivity, Credibility, Confidence and Communication. Of these four qualities, I spoke about Credibility. As I prepared for the panel, it became clear I have my own four C's which I believe are essential in order for a business professional to build and maintain credibility in the workplace. Whether you are just starting your career, taking on a new job, or are a seasoned professional, you can boost your credibility with these four C's.

Candid

People expect the truth, and they respect objectivity. When someone is truthful and objective, they are being candid. Candid conversations, conducted respectfully, encourages mutual respect and leads to being more effective together. In fact, I recommend the book "Radical Candor" by Kim Scott, for an excellent and insightful approach to interacting with employees with candor.

Competent

Every job requires specific knowledge, technical and soft skills. Knowledge and skills can be learned and developed, and employees who use their competencies to do their job well are respected and sought out by others. A competent person doesn't need to know everything, but they commit to finding answers, developing solutions, and as a result are able to successfully lead others. Competence is a big component of being credible.

Consistent

Credible people are consistent. Their decision-making, delivery, reactions and processes are consistent. To be consistent, you must be mindful. It's easy to make snap judgments and react without thinking, but consistent people remain level-headed and vigilant, and this feeds credibility.

Caring

Caring is a major element outlined in "Radical Candor," and it bears repeating in my list of must-haves. When someone has a vested interest in others or in an outcome, they *care* and it's evident. Truly caring about what's best for people or organizations builds trust, encourages others to be candid with you, and leads to credibility.

Credibility is key to leadership success, and in my experience, the four C's outlined above are important elements that help people build and maintain credibility.

