



The Better Way to Influence

Outfluence[®]
for Job-Seekers

Al Betz

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Outfluence[®] for Job Seekers

by Al Betz

Author of *Outfluence: The Better Way to Influence*[®]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AL BETZ



Al Betz is a successful entrepreneur who has developed several ongoing businesses and enterprises, including Al Betz & Associates, Inc., a court reporting and litigation support services firm with a nationwide reputation, and Outfluence, LLC, a teaching and publishing organization. He is considered a leader in the court reporting profession and a pioneer in the development of information technology that automated courtroom procedures.

Founder and CEO of Outfluence, LLC, Al is a motivational speaker, life skills coach, and the author of books and diverse media that guide others in personal, family and workplace enrichment through the principles of Outfluence. Through almost four decades as a master court reporter, business owner – and employer — Al credits the “practice of Outfluence” with enhancing his business and personal relationships through the power of silent communication, inspired performance, and an “others-focused” way of life.

Part inspirational, part practical skills development, *Outfluence for Job-Seekers* is the first in a new series of books by Al that present situation-specific “real life” applications of Outfluence.

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God Bless America!

INTRODUCTION

Most of us are not aware of the messages we are sending and receiving. When searching for a job, knowing the impact of the messages you send and receive could not be more imperative. My goal in writing this book is to help you give yourself an edge in a competitive job market. Excellent communication can provide the edge, and Outfluence will be the communication vehicle that delivers the edge and helps maintain it. Outfluence can best be described as the constant messages we send to people every day. People outfluence each other continually. This is not something learned. People begin to outfluence the second they are born. Of course, infants do not communicate by words; they communicate by crying, cooing and screaming. These sounds, although decidedly audible, silently communicate feelings. When a baby cries, everyone knows the baby is upset or uncomfortable. If the baby is cooing, mom and dad know the baby is content. And when he or she is screaming, everyone jumps and runs to the baby's side. As we grow into adulthood, silent communicators develop into both intended and unintended communication. Most of us are unaware that we silently communicate. Michelle Singletary¹ of The Washington Post wrote an article entitled Job Candidates Who Made A Strong Impression, But The Wrong Impression that proves the point.

What I want to do in this book is to start a conversation about the way people communicate constantly with or without words, and most importantly how we all make decisions about each other based on silent communicators. We communicate silently as the result of what we read, what we watch, what we purchase, the extent of our education, the organizations to which we belong, the people with whom we associate and in just about every other way imaginable. Everything we do

¹ <http://wapo.st/fFxwhQ>

reveals something about us. Our minds record every aspect continuously and it impacts every interaction we have as people. These are our silent communicators.

If you are in the presence of others, whether you speak or not, your communication is still being received. It doesn't matter whether you are introverted or extroverted, shy or outgoing, you are communicating. Understanding Outfluence will help you enhance your communication regardless of your personality.

Before proceeding, take a minute to listen to Kay Betz, MBA and co-founder of Outfluence, LLC, identify the **Seven Attributes of Contemporary Communication**. This Podcast can be found at: <http://www.outfluence.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Communication-Basics1.mp3>.

If our exposure to the world is limited and our comprehension of the world is inaccurate, it will quickly become evident in our various forms of communication that our view of the world is skewed. An unspoken message has been sent. The ultimate result of this type of silent communication is that others may believe us to be intellectually shallow, without much to offer in the business world, to an organization or simply to a neighborhood book club. What we put into our brains is revealed eventually in various forms of communication – the most important of which is silent communication. The silent communication is contained in words and in behavior, and the silent communication others are interpreting as they see, hear and experience us.

This book assumes that you have already crafted a résumé and that you have targeted desirable opportunities or companies. Although Outfluence can help in all aspects of a job search, I will focus on a few key communication elements to explore. Employers find these communication elements to be important when choosing an employee.

Almost everyone has faced the job search process or knows someone who is facing it. It is a time of incredible stress. It is a time when people are frightened because of the scarcity of job

opportunities in many industries. Job-seekers are looking for something to hold onto, something that will give them an edge. Everyone possesses the ability to use Outfluence well. In many cases, we just need to be conscious of how we relay information about who we are and learn to do that in a beneficial way.

These days, there is almost always a phone (voice) exchange between job candidate and employer or recruiter, particularly if it's a recruiter. More often than not, a pre-screen phone call rules candidates in or out. It's not uncommon for full-blown interviews to be conducted over the phone, with the next step being an in-person interview. This can happen at all levels of employment and in many types of businesses.

The dynamics of a telephone interview are different from the in-person dynamics. The obvious difference is that the participants are not visible to one another during the call, unless devices such as video conferencing or Skype® are used. Regardless of the type of technology used, however, there are unspoken rules of conduct to observe during a telephone interview:

- Dress as though interviewing in person. Clothing can affect your mood and thus your conduct, even your confidence level.
- Sit in a comfortable chair, one that will keep you alert. A straight-back chair is preferable to a lounge chair, for example.
- Remove distractions. If making or receiving the call from home, make sure that today isn't the day the landscapers are coming to mow the lawn, or the contractor isn't coming to build the deck, or the children are home from school and likely to be playing nearby. It helps to have a family member or friend nearby to guard your privacy during this important time of your career.
- Avoid using the interview time as an opportunity to review the website of the company you

are interviewing with. Mouse clicks and other background noise penetrate the loudest over the phone, as do obvious pauses in conversation while you search for information on a website. Do your homework before the phone call.

- Take care to listen carefully and observe appropriate quiet space before responding. As opposed to face-to-face conversation where facial expressions and other silent communicators indicate when a response is appropriate, a telephone conversation has no such cues other than silence.
- Exercise patience. Be calm. Remember to breathe. Allow your conversation partner to complete her sentences before you begin your response.
- Have your résumé in front of you before the phone call begins. Your preparation, and ability to anticipate the needs of the interviewer, are *positive* silent communicators. Fumbling to retrieve your résumé and other important documents if you do not have them at hand are *negative* silent communicators.
- Control anxiety. Before the phone call begins, take 10 minutes to relax your mind and body. Listen to soothing music, read a passage out of a favorite book, or reinforce the five specific Outfluence behaviors listed on page 26 of *Outfluence, The Better Way to Influence*. The five behaviors are
 - ◆ Smile
 - ◆ Make your greeting memorable
 - ◆ Listen
 - ◆ Think of others before thinking of yourself
 - ◆ Inspire your performance.

- Place a glass of water in front of you so that you stay hydrated during the interview. Your goal in preparing for a telephone interview is to set the stage as closely as possible to what you would experience in a face-to-face interview. This facilitates professionalism.

Employers form an opinion within 30 seconds as a candidate walks through the door for an interview. The employer is watching everything done, and not done, as well as listening to everything said, or not said. So I am going to begin this book with preparation for an interview. The interview is the first interaction and the first opportunity to communicate silently and make the most of Outfluence. Then we will move into other important components of the hiring process. Let's begin the learning process with preparation.

PREPARATION

Lack of preparation happens every day. It happens because we don't take time to stop and think things through. Information is coming at us from multiple sources, quickly, encouraging us to *act now!* We are almost being programmed to make quick decisions, thoughtless decisions. As a result, we unfortunately make a lot of bad decisions. In a job search preparation is critical.

What does preparation have to do with getting the edge in a job search? Preparation has to do with strategy, and we definitely want a strategy when vying for a job. My friend Dylene learned how to play the game of checkers from her grandfather. He said to her, "I will teach you how to play checkers in 15 minutes, but learning the strategy of the game will take you a lifetime." And so it is with Outfluence. It seems like a pretty simple concept to grasp, but its nuances are many, and a full understanding will evolve with life experiences. The beauty of Outfluence is that results are seen immediately if its principles are thoughtfully, purposefully and sincerely applied.

Words such as planning, homework, ready and go come to mind when we think of preparation. Also, organized and engaged, study and work, experience and pro-active all are components of preparation. These are all words suggested by audience members during our seminars when they think of what preparation means to them.

Interviewing for a job is serious business – for employers as well. We present ourselves at a place of business that someone started and worked hard to build. A loyal customer base counts on this business delivering a consistently high level of service. The employees of the company rely on

each other to perform at a high level in order to meet the quality and service expectations of customers and thus to preserve their jobs. Their livelihoods are at stake. When a job candidate walks in the door, the question of the day is: Will the owner and the employees say ‘Oh, my ... this will never do’; or will they say, ‘Oh, my! This looks like somebody we want as part of our company’?

The determining factor will be in the level of awareness you have of your Constant Messaging®. Constant Messaging is communication derived from life experience. It is delivered in various ways, including by what we read, watch, listen to and by the nature of our relationships. Constant Messaging is detected through sensory perception. People instantly judge us from what they see, hear and feel. As you walk in the door, they “see” what you look like, what you are wearing, the quality of eye contact and the sincerity of your smile. They “hear” your attitude, vocabulary and delivery. They “feel” strength or weakness by your handshake. When you survive this first hurdle of the job interview by making an excellent first impression, you will move into the interview room where your preparation for the interview will be on full display.

Here are a few important personal attributes to address before arriving for the interview. Scouts working for teams in the National Basketball Association have an interesting method of assessing a potential pro player’s assets. They ask five questions:

1. *Does he have a weapon?* For example, the “sky hook” that Hall-of-Fame basketball star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar had in his day.
2. *Does he have a position?* Can he play either guard, center, or forward so well as to leave no doubt as to what position he should play in the NBA?
3. *Can he get his own look?* In other words, can he work the court in order to get a shot at the basket from his highest-percentage spot on the floor?

4. *Can he defend his position?* A player has to move his feet quickly in order to stay in front of his opponent and keep him from scoring, or at least to make it difficult for him to score. It takes commitment to play good defense.
5. *Does he “get it”?* Can he lead? Does he have a work ethic? Is he responsible? Will he be a team player?

You can make the same assessment about yourself. An employer will want to know the same things about you that the basketball scout wants to know about a player.

When making your personal assessment here are a few basic questions you will want to address:

- *Do you have a weapon?* What makes you nearly impossible to replace?
- *Do you have a position?* What’s your specialty? What are you bringing to the company?
- *Can you get your own look?* Are you self-sufficient? Are you a self-starter?
- *Can you defend your position?* Do you know your stuff? Can you express yourself?
- *Do you “get it”?* Are you a responsible individual? Are you a team player?

These five questions get to the heart of the matter.

To begin your assessment, make an honest determination of your attributes. Next, evaluate the requirements of the position to which you aspire. Finally, formulate a plan to fill in any gaps between current attributes and the requirements of that position. The purpose of personal assessment is to make you a better product to sell.

We all learn things about ourselves and about how life works as we journey down our life's path. At this point I recommend you pause and listen to my podcast entitled **Five Truths About Life**. This Podcast can be found at: <http://www.outfluence.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/5truths.mp3>.

After you have made your assessment, ask more questions, such as, *Why do I want this job? What am I offering to the employer that he needs?* Know the company and the job for which you are applying. Your preparation will provide confidence for the interview.

As you prepare, ask yourself the following:

- *Is this company working in my area of knowledge or experience?*
- *What are their pay standards?*
- *Is the company stable? Don't equate longevity with stability. Old doesn't mean stable any more than new means unstable. You want to know if the company is financially stable.*
- *Can it survive tough times?*
- *Is it competitive enough to challenge its competitors?*
- *Is it a good place to work?*
- *Are there opportunities for me to grow?*
- *What is the company mission?*
- *What is its reason to exist?*
- *What is the work environment?*
- *Will I fit into the company culture?*
- *Will my life be better if I work there?*

- *Does the company value people as its primary resource?*
- *Are the employees happy working there?*

The company website is a good place to start research. Their product or services information will give an idea if the company works in a field that suits your knowledge or interest. You may find its mission statement, benefits, company values statement and locations if there is more than one. Look at photos; is there anything in them that will help in the interview? How about company attire? If there are photos of employees working in the relevant area, how are they dressed? Ask people in your community who work there about the company. If it's nearby take a ride there, park and watch. Look at the faces of the employees as they leave. Are they happy and do they interact with each other in a friendly way?

Take the time and make the effort to learn² about the company to prepare for the interview. Know what you are looking for, and you will know what the company offers. Knowledge of yourself and company – combined with your silent communicators of confidence and knowledge, interest and understanding – will provide an unforgettable personal presentation to the employer.

² A website that I visit often to stay current with business is www.businessinsider.com.

HIRING DECISION POINTS

You can assume that at least one other person will be competing with you for the job opportunity you want. It would be nice to know on what basis a prospective employer is going to make a decision about you, wouldn't it? Most job applicants think the decision will be made on qualifications alone. That's only one of the decision points. The other points include *whether or not you are capable of doing the job and will you fit in*. Decision point number one, qualifications, most likely will be based on documentation. But *will you do the job* and *will you fit in* are decisions based on emotion.

Emotion also plays a critical role in the hiring process. In January of 2011, I watched the first two broadcasts of the “new” “American Idol.” I enjoyed both the contestants and the judges. The contestants have always been emotional; many of them wear their hearts on their sleeves. Past judges would occasionally let their emotions show. Steven Tyler and Jennifer Lopez have given indication that they like the emotional aspect, and they show it. I love to learn the stories of people – how did they get to this point in their careers, what motivated them, how did they deal with failure, who inspires them? I'm a sucker for the story. Real emotion is obvious. Contrived emotion may not always be obvious, but if you wait long enough the truth will appear. The story is what draws us to people. We all have a natural interest to hear the stories of one another because the stories help us all relate to each other. If you listen to enough stories, you find the commonality in all of us.

Why are we attracted to shows such as “American Idol” and the stories of the participants? It has to do with a neurotransmitter produced by the brain called “dopamine.”

Dopamine is commonly associated with the reward system of the brain, providing feelings of enjoyment and reinforcement to motivate a person to perform certain activities. In his book, How We Decide, author Jonah Lehrer explains that, “dopamine neurons automatically detect the subtle patterns that we would otherwise fail to notice.” These patterns are translated by us into feelings, and it is feelings, or emotions, that guide many of our decisions.

American humorist and social commentator Will Rogers said the ability to make good decisions comes from the experience of learning from our bad decisions. The secret to making more good decisions rather than bad decisions is to pay attention to our emotions and regulate them. The way an employer does that is by thinking about his decisions. Every decision he makes is accompanied by a moment of silent awareness. Through education and practice, he has learned to be cognizant of silent awareness moments, anticipate them, and pay thoughtful attention to them. When a job candidate responds emotionally but with thoughtful consideration of the consequences, they are applying intelligent emotions to actions. The result is good decision-making in the responses during the interview. The employer is attempting to make a good decision about the candidate as he listens to verbal responses and responds to emotions. Good decisions advance both employer and job-seeker goals.

Another way to explain the impact of emotions on communication is to explore the topic of thoughtful articulation. *Articulation* means speaking or communicating. Someone who displays articulate speech is good at defining terms and clear in their communication. To yourself or out loud, speak the word *articulation*. Do you notice that the very word requires a moment to speak it well? The consonants are like door stops. The word doesn't flow off the tongue in a sloppy manner. It can't! Articulate speech is deliberate and careful.

HOW TO USE SILENCE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Interviewers often ask a question or make a statement on an irrelevant issue to gauge an applicant's ability to think on his feet. This can lead to awkward silence.

How many times have you heard someone answer a question when they really weren't sure of the answer? But they were thinking out loud as they spoke, trying to come up with some answer ... any answer.

We all have done this. The more nervous you are, the faster you talk. The faster you talk, the more nonsense can come from your mouth.

Remember – a thoughtful pause before you answer a question is actually a sign of strength, not weakness.

We can strengthen our thoughtful articulation through preparation and planning. Anticipating some of the interviewer's questions by spending quiet time thinking before you are in the situation is important to a good conversation. Make yourself aware of the day's news headlines and prepare brief responses.

Listening is one of the best ways to improve thoughtful articulation. A Greek philosopher is credited with saying, "you have two ears and one mouth so that you will listen twice as much as you speak."

Active listening is a skill that few of us are born with. It must be cultivated. Pay attention to a tendency to be forming the next statement before someone else has finished speaking. Allow three

seconds of quiet to pass between statement and response. Ask a thoughtful question before answering to help clarify an answer and help the interviewer observe your thought process.

As you walk into an interview room and attempt to secure an offer of employment, remember that the person you are talking to is an emotional human being just like you. At this point he has seen your résumé and is attracted to your story. He is pulling for you to live up to your résumé. Your goal is to thoughtfully, purposefully and genuinely sell your story to him. Carefully use emotion to inspire your interview performance. Don't contrive some emotional experience to use during the interview. Understand that it is important to connect on a personal level with the prospective employer.

One excellent connection technique is to use “gumption.” Show your prospective employer that you have been studying his company and his industry by making a cogent comment about a current event related to either the company or the industry. Better yet, demonstrate confidence and knowledge by suggesting an idea that may help the company overcome a current problem your research uncovered. These may be considered bold advances by some, but if you are able to “read” the silent communication of the prospective employer and determine that he would be receptive to your gumption, take advantage of the opportunity and take the risk.

Other words for gumption are determination, dedication and ambition. I like to think of the word gumption as a memorable term for self-confidence. When someone has gumption, I know they have what it takes to be successful. Ambition, dedication and determination are qualities that employers look for in any candidate, because those qualities go beyond technical expertise and knowledge. The ability to see a task through with a positive attitude and a can-do willingness are all things employers want to see in job seekers.

Another example of gumption would be having your own questions ready for the prospective employer and remembering that the interview is a two-way process.

Although I mentioned earlier that I assume you already have completed your résumé, this is a good place to jot yourself a note. ‘Take a new look at your résumé’. How does it stack up in light of what you are learning about Outfluence? Re-read your résumé to see if there are places to include achievements at work in order to demonstrate special qualities of gumption.

Don’t forget the quiet qualities that you possess that demonstrate this as well. For instance, the ability to stick to a task, research done on your own time to solve a problem or the completion of a goal can be part of that silent talk you give yourself before you enter an interview. Make a list of these things and keep them as a reminder of your excellence.

JOB SEEKER OUTFLUENCE MOMENTS

Awareness of what you are silently communicating by your behavior is paramount if you are to land your dream job or if you are to be selected for a promotion. Here are a few silent communicators to be aware of as you proceed on your journey:

RÉSUMÉ MOMENTS

Energy. Use action words in job application as appropriate.

Silent Communicator (“SC”): Action words reinforce who you are as a person.

Spelling. Carefully review résumé, application, other documents or emails before releasing.

SC: Expresses diligence.

Include relevant experience. An employer will appreciate an applicant who provides relevant information, not voluminous information. Communicate what you offer that will respond to the employer’s need.

SC: Demonstrates your ability to focus on what’s important.

INTERVIEW MOMENTS

Early arrival. 20 minutes ahead of schedule is expected; more than 20 minutes ahead of schedule can be awkward for everyone.

SC: Early arrival says, “I’m interested. This is important to me.”

Receptionist. Remember that everyone you see, including the receptionist, may have input into the hiring decision, so be respectful and friendly. Keep your conversation to the point but friendly.

SC: Tells everyone that you respect the time of others, are others-focused, and aware of the value of every individual.

Greeting. Spend time preparing for this. It will set the tone for the interview.

SC: A good greeting communicates your many positive attributes and creates interest in you.

Thoughtful responses. Take time to think before speaking.

SC: Indicates that you do not respond emotionally but, instead, with thought, purpose, and respect.

Ask for the opportunity. Let the prospective employer know you want the position because your special skills or knowledge will benefit the company. Explain briefly why you think that.

SC: Displays your confidence.

Follow-up. Don't ignore this step, which is discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter. The prospective employer may be looking for that indication of tenacity.

SC: Signals that you are a go-getter.

FOLLOW-UP MOMENTS

Ask again for the opportunity.

SC: Most won't ask. This may impress the prospective employer and secure the position for you.

POST-INTERVIEW STRATEGIES

Should you do anything after the interview? Should you simply wait for the call to come informing you that you have been hired? This chapter will guide you through the steps to take to silently reinforce the qualities you displayed during the interview.

After the interview, the prospective employer has one question in mind: “Who is the right candidate for this position?” Maybe he has three candidates that look promising. How can you influence his decision?

Let’s start by going back into the interview room. The interview has just concluded. The prospective employer is about to say goodbye and shake your hand. It is appropriate for you to ask, “Sir, would tomorrow be too soon to call to ask whether you have made your decision?” This phrasing of the question exhibits continued interest in the position while not pressing for a decision.

As you leave the business premises acknowledge the receptionist with a “goodbye,” and “thank you.” Take time to communicate meaningfully.

Make eye contact. Smile. A hurried acknowledgment, almost an after-thought, will silently communicate insincerity.

At the opening of the next business day deliver, or have delivered, a brief handwritten note to the prospective employer with whom you interviewed. Thank him for his time and thank him for his consideration of you. Keep your message short. The importance of the message is not in its content but, rather, in its thoughtfulness and in its timeliness.

A somewhat risky strategy is to follow your interview with a one-page outline of the first steps you will take if the position is offered to you. If during the interview and through research you acquired sufficient information about the company and its needs to reveal your thoughts in writing, this initiative may provide the edge that will win the position for you. I say take the risk and go for it.

INSPIRING YOUR PERFORMANCE

We have gone through the interview process. You have been offered a position at your company of choice and now are entering your probationary period. The company wants to see you perform before a final decision is made on permanent employment.

Now is the time to move to the next phase of the employment process, and that is job security. We are going to focus on your inspired performance. An inspired performance requires a little more emotion, sacrifice, effort and focus on the needs of others.

Inspiration makes the difference between a mediocre act and a stellar performance. When you're in the presence of someone who is inspired, blood moves a little faster and eyes shine a little brighter. The feeling is magnetic, a natural high. The components of an inspired performance are:

- **Desire** – you have to want to perform exceptionally well;
- **Compassion** – you have to be sensitive to the needs of others and care about meeting their needs;
- **Courage** – you have to be willing to step forward and risk failure;
- **Faith** – you have to believe in a positive outcome.

Let's take a look at a famous inspired performance from the 1988 baseball season. First, some background. Kirk Gibson was signed as a free agent by the Dodgers after he was declared a free agent following a lawsuit against Major League owners for collusion. Gibson had been the acknowledged emotional leader of the Detroit Tigers, and now he's been asked to inspire the youthful

and talented Dodgers, who have been sputtering because of a lack of on-field leadership. During this 1988 season, Gibson is leading his young Dodger teammates to the National League pennant and into the World Series through hard work and powerful performances.

Near the end of the season, shortly before the start of the playoffs, Gibson injures both of his legs. He was nursing an injured left hamstring and a swollen right knee. It's doubtful that he'll be able to play in the playoffs or in the World Series due to injuries to both legs. Dodger fans are crushed. Here is the team leader, the guy who carried his team into the World Series, and he isn't going to play!

Game One begins. Gibson is in the clubhouse undergoing physical therapy on his injured legs. The game is close all the way, a real nail-biter. They get into the late innings, and in the bottom of the eighth, the Dodgers score to come within one run of the lead. Going into the ninth inning at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, the Dodgers trail by one run. While the Dodgers are at bat, down in a little passageway between the dugout and the Dodgers' clubhouse Gibson starts swinging a bat ... trying to get loose in case he is needed as a pinch-hitter. He can barely stand! But Kirk Gibson knows what his presence on the field means to his teammates.

Orel Hershiser, the ace of the Dodgers' pitching staff, happens to catch a glimpse of Gibson swinging the bat.

Hershiser tells his manager that one of the best clutch hitters in the major leagues is ready to play!

Assured that the chance of further injury is minimal, Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda decides to send Gibson to the plate with the tying run on base and two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning of the first game of the World Series. The first game ... the game that sets the tone for the entire series.

Statistics show that the winner of the first game wins the series more than 60 percent of the time. *The fans go crazy!* Gibson limps to the plate, bat resting on his shoulder. No one had expected to see this. Facing Gibson is the best relief pitcher in all of baseball, future Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley. The fans roar and stand, waving Dodger caps in anticipation of something great from their team leader.

Gibby works the count full at three balls and two strikes. Eckersley winds and challenges the injured Gibson with a fastball down the middle of the plate. Gibson uses his powerful arms and wrists to flick at the ball. He gets all of it. Gibson limps around the bases, pumping his fist in victory as the umpire signals a game-winning home run! Gibson never plays again in the series because of his injured legs, but the Dodgers go on to take the series from the heavily favored Oakland Athletics.

That is the power of an inspired performance.

Gibson showed his team that he had the *desire* to perform in the most stressful game situations. He demonstrated by his willingness to play hurt that he *cared* for the team. In the face of painful injuries, he stepped forward *courageously*. And he had *faith* that his God-given ability and the preparation he had done would enable him to perform. Every time you walk on stage and prepare to perform your job, the manner in which you inspire your performance will determine your success that day and for days to come.

In your desire to inspire your own performance look for guidance in the performance of others. Anxiety, fear, self-doubt are felt by many people who embark on new experiences. It won't be hard to find their stories and learn from them.

The "Oprah Winfrey Show" is well known for its inspirational programming. Often, audience members participate by sharing heartfelt experiences. Oprah has created a community of like-minded people who are focused on overcoming life's challenges. A woman identified as Joni was an audience

member at one of Oprah's shows when she revealed that she purchased a pair of Oprah's shoes at an auction. Joni said that every time she felt depressed and unable to stand on her own, she slipped into Oprah's shoes and stood in them while imagining she had the strength of Oprah. Joni's inspired performance carried her from a life of poverty to a college education and a career as an educator.

Joni's story touched the life of Sandra Josephs, who was a shy girl with big dreams but little self-confidence. When her parents took her to see a stage performance of "Annie," Sandra instantly knew why she was put on this earth. Sandra was meant to perform, but her lack of confidence was holding her back until she was inspired by Joni's comments on Oprah's show. Sandra was struck by Oprah's confidence, the fact that Oprah knew what she wanted and how she went after it, and that Oprah's confidence inspired another young girl to succeed. "Whenever I needed courage that I couldn't muster on my own," Sandra said, "I would always find my 'inner Oprah,' the place that was strong, confident, courageous and successful."

Sandra Josephs eventually moved to New York to seek her destiny. She performed in local theatre while also auditioning for opportunities on the larger stage. After enduring many rejections, her inspired performance landed Sandra the Broadway role of a lifetime, starring as Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera*. Both Joni and Sandra were inspired by the strength of Oprah Winfrey. They used Oprah's strength to inspire their own performances until they were able to inspire themselves. Now *they* inspire others. So, the first step in inspiring your performance is to find mentors and learn from their inspired performances.

In your new position as a probationary employee, and going forward in your career, an inspired performance requires a little more emotion, sacrifice, effort and focus on the needs of others. Establishing good performance habits during the probationary period will serve as the foundation for your future success.

Good performance habits include:

Emotion. Controlled emotion is good. Uncontrolled emotion can be unsettling to others. A new employee wants to display keen interest in every aspect of the job, a strong desire to learn, a helpful attitude and a suppressed ego.

Sacrifice. Entertainers say, “The show must go on.” Athletes say, “Play with pain.” Business leaders say, “Stay until the job gets done.” Your mantra needs to be, “Whatever it takes.” Your new job may demand skills and knowledge you do not yet possess and will have to acquire. The time needed to complete tasks may be longer than expected. Unforeseen circumstances may cause frequent changes in schedule. Whatever it takes to inspire your performance and succeed is the sacrifice you will commit to make.

Effort. Every employer prizes a self-starter. When you arrive at work, display effort by knowing the day’s schedule and beginning on time and without further direction from your employer. An employer notices the employee who anticipates the company’s needs and prepares to meet them. Satisfied customers drive company growth; so work hard to let customers know they are valued.

Others-Focus. Remember that many silent communication opportunities occur in a moment. Be aware of the fact that things happen quickly, and be prepared to respond positively. As an example, perhaps a receptionist assigns you erroneously to a conference room, then after you spend 20 minutes arranging the room you are informed that a room change must be made. The receptionist is upset at her mistake. How do you respond? If you respond with displeasure, even for a second, you have lost the moment. In that one second of displeasure, the bearer of the bad news about the room change has detected displeasure and you have lost the opportunity to lift her spirits. The way to manage those moments is simply by reminding yourself before you enter the workplace that today is going to be a great day.

Whatever happens today is going to be great. Then proceed believing that message, and act accordingly. Your goal in maintaining an others-focus is to encourage, motivate, inspire, forgive and bring comfort to everyone with whom you come into contact.

Outfluence coaches can help you identify the unique aspects of your job and design a plan of inspired performance.

THE BUSINESS OF CONNECTING

Your new employer asks you to attend a networking event at the Chamber of Commerce. She wants you to meet people, put forth a positive attitude and let people know about your place of employment and what your company does. Connecting with other people and with other businesses is what lays the foundation for future opportunities, and it secures employment for many people including yours. This chapter explores how it's done.

The first thing you do in preparation for the event is to retrieve your copy of *Outfluence, The Better Way to Influence*, *To purchase your copy and download it now, click [here](#)*³ and turn to Chapter 20, which focuses on Your Personal Presentation. There you will be reminded about silent communicators.

Before you enter the event, reinforce five specific Outfluence behaviors:

- Smile
- Make your greeting memorable
- Listen
- Think of others before thinking of yourself
- Inspire your performance

³ Or visit www.outfluence.com to purchase it from the store

LET'S EXAMINE EACH OF THE BEHAVIORS IN DEPTH:

SMILE.

One of the cornerstones of Outfluence is something you already do every day that tells everyone you come in contact with more about you than any other single thing, and it's completely *soundless*. It's your smile.

There is no better silent communication tool than a smile. A smile causes your eyes to sparkle. A smile makes you approachable, puts you in control, and provides a platform to take a conversation in a direction that you desire. When dealing with people, a smile indicates a warm heart, a caring person, someone who is easy to work with and eager to please. All of these are personal attributes that an employer will appreciate.

MAKE YOUR GREETING MEMORABLE.

Take time to focus on your greeting. Often we rush through a handshake to get to the substance of our contact, not realizing that an opportunity to make a firm connection resides in the three seconds it takes to offer a quality greeting. An abundance of silent communication resides in a handshake. Don't miss it by rushing through it.

LISTEN.

Listening is a silent conversation tool that tells a new dialogue partner that if you control words and emotions, you are most likely circumspect in other areas of business and personal life. It is always fun to talk, and people love to talk about themselves. But listening to other people helps you grow, and it shows you are not overly self-absorbed. Listening shows you have self-control and will not betray someone's trust. Listening is at the core of friendship.

THINK OF OTHERS BEFORE THINKING OF YOURSELF.

Outfluence is delivered verbally, in writing, and it is often delivered silently. We have previously learned how to use Outfluence verbally and in writing with an others-focus. When a person tells a story that you have heard many times and you allow her to complete the story rather than interrupting her to tell her that you are familiar with the story, you have created a silent Outfluence moment. You have enabled her to express herself and to take joy from sharing with you. You thought of her needs before yours. There are more examples of Outfluence silent communicators found in a pamphlet entitled *Silent Communication Fundamentals*, available at www.Outfluence.com.

The impact of Outfluence is enduring. It costs nothing. It is natural, and it builds relationships. It identifies the social and business pretenders quickly, because insincerity is difficult to hide in Outfluence. Silent action focused on others, delivered thoughtfully, purposefully and sincerely, is a key component of Outfluence.

INSPIRE YOUR PERFORMANCE.

In the words of the great artist, performer, author, actor and communicator Steve Martin, “Be so good that they can’t ignore you.” That’s what Martin says to people who ask him how to be successful in Hollywood. He doesn’t tell them to select a great agent or to carefully select your next script. What he advises them to do is to work hard, study hard and become skilled at whatever it is you do.

Now we’re coming to the application of all your preparation: contact with the people you want to Outfluence. How do you begin to use the knowledge you’ve gained? Vince Clews, a respected writer, producer and director, says he employs Outfluence by “simply being honest about who I am, what I do and what the person I’m working with, selling to or working for can expect me to deliver. In the final analysis, it comes down to honest, personal interaction. It’s the same whether it’s work-related or in personal situations.”

In the charming movie, *Phenomenon*, John Travolta played the role of a small-business owner. One star-filled evening he was walking along the sidewalk when a searing burst of light struck his head. It left him with a whopper of a headache, but also with the intellect of a genius and the memory of a supercomputer. Certain activities in which he engaged caused the FBI to test his intellect. During the test, he found himself telekinetically moving a pencil across a tabletop. The examiner asked him how he was doing that, and the Travolta character replied, “*I just tell it to move with my mind.*”

This analogy describes perfectly how Outfluence is implemented. An Outfluencer attempts over time to persuade a person to respond in a desired way. An Outfluencer “moves” other people honestly, sincerely and strategically with integrity and good intentions. Travolta’s *Phenomenon* character was a good person whose only desire was to share his astonishing gift with his neighbors. His neighbors were suspicious of his motives for a while, but when his actions revealed his intention to use his gifts to benefit them and his community, the neighbors were moved to support him.

Outfluence does just that and thereby is a phenomenon of its own. Everyone uses telekinetic energy every day. Instead of using it to move pencils, we use it to move people. We either attract or repel them. Energy can be physical; you see it and it touches you. Sometimes energy translates into sound and you hear it. It can also touch other senses without being seen or heard, such as warmth. Sometimes energy touches us emotionally and evokes human feelings. This is the energy of Outfluence. *Outfluence touches emotion and moves people.* Accomplish that at the chamber event and your employer will take notice, and she might even put you on the fast track to advancement in her company.

BUILDING MOMENTUM

Congratulations! You made it through your probationary period and have been hired as a permanent staff member in the job of your choice in the company of your choice. Nice going. Now what? How are you going to make certain that your position is secure and that you can earn advancement opportunities?

Now is the time to establish your brand. What is it that you want everyone with whom you come into contact, both within the company and external to the company, to remember about you?

In my job as a court reporter serving the judicial system and the community, what was most important to them was my responsiveness. That's what I wanted them to know about me every time they saw me. I wanted my employer and I wanted the community to know that whatever the job required I would deliver. I would deliver it because I had prepared myself to deliver it.

Two things will differentiate you in the workplace, your reputation and your brand. Reputation emanates from your performance, but someone else attaches the reputation label. Your brand is established and promoted by you and you alone. These are important concepts to understand. When you differentiate yourself by branding your performance, you have added a value to your performance that your employer will respect.

The key here is to decide if differentiating yourself is important to you. If it is, then you must decide how you will do it. *What will you do that you know your employer needs and that you know is not being provided or not being provided very well?* When you decide what that differentiator is

going to be, you must sleep, eat and breathe it. You must promote yourself by actions, not words, so that you will stand apart.

Acquiring a job, starting a business or establishing a career are serious undertakings. I hope the Outfluence for Job Seekers e-book proves to be a valuable asset to your planning process.

IN CONCLUSION

You now have the basic silent communication tools for an edge in the competitive workplace. As you begin your job search and engage prospective employers, you may find it necessary to seek further information about the complex communication process. *Outfluence, The Better Way to Influence* is an excellent resource to add to your personal development library. It contains stories of communication lessons learned by numerous people. It also contains a workbook covering 52 examples of communication situations and how best to manage them.

Outfluence, LLC offers coaching services as well as workshops, speakers, e-books and training materials, and all are available by calling 888-881-1660 or emailing info@outfluence.com, as well as at www.outfluence.com. If you would like an Outfluence coach to contact you, send your request by email to al.betz@outfluence.com for personal attention.

Finally, I invite you to visit www.outfluence.com to read our weekly column entitled The Pearl of the Week. Our coaches freely share their “Pearls” of wisdom with you. Don’t worry – if you miss some, they are always available in the archives.

Best wishes for success in your new job!

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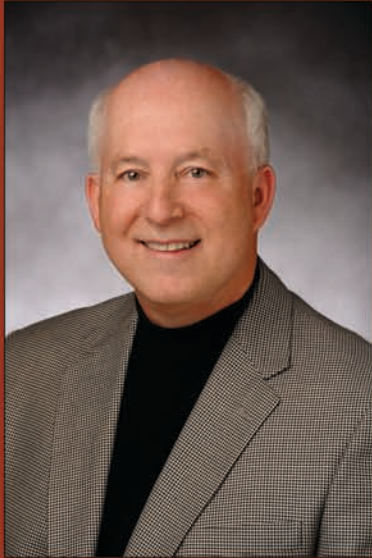
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~ Al Betz