

# Growing your leadership presence: Using leadership skills to host an effective meeting

*As we aim to strengthen our leadership skills and synchronise our efforts, creating an environment that promotes engagement and connectedness is essential. Active meeting contributions is an important element of this.*

Temps de lecture : minute

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By being fully present in the room and utilising our senses to participate actively in meetings and business conversations, we cultivate a sense of calmness and awareness that will positively impact our teams. Our colleagues will notice our engagement and feel more connected, even without us saying a word, leading to a more productive and collaborative work environment. Therefore, investing in constant training to improve our emotional stability and leadership abilities will benefit us and the entire team. By staying grounded and mindful of our intentions and contributions, we naturally train and strengthen our emotional stability and leadership skills, just like we train in the gym to strengthen our muscles.

A good analogy showing the positive effects of presence is a choir singing inside a church. One of many exercises the choir practises to enhance the sound they make is to imagine their voices reaching the people outside the church, perhaps those sitting in the ice cream parlour next door on a late summer's evening. With this image in mind, the singers' bodies move from relaxed to firm, with the right amount of tension needed to fill the room with their presence. The sound will follow. This is lovely to watch

and enjoyable to hear. Being surrounded by great music is similar to you being fully present as a leader, filling your team's space with your attention.

Now let's look at the other side of the coin where you are constantly distracted. To illustrate this, let's use the analogy of looking at your smartphone while walking through a park in the dark. Your safety level reduces as you could walk into obstacles or other people, and you might attract thieves and put yourself into a truly dangerous situation.

Despite many of us having guidelines for effective meetings, similar situations can easily occur in our daily work lives. The solution is to practise leadership presence skills and regularly reflect on our decision-making process. By stepping back from prioritising requests, however urgent, or informing the team about the incoming issue if we do decide to focus on it, we can positively impact the effectiveness of the meeting and contribute more value to the company. Reflecting on the wisest decision from the overall customer and company perspective can guide our actions in these scenarios.

Inspect both of these cartoons. What are your first impressions?

Observing the first cartoon, we see a distracted and disconnected group. One team member focuses on checking emails. A colleague gazes out the window, wondering what they are doing here. Isn't this just another of too many meetings? They wish they could escape; they would be better off working on their projects. Another person dreams of going on holiday. All the team members' thoughts seem to be wandering elsewhere, outside the room. It's as if they are still awaiting the arrival of a crucial attendee - the leader.



***Missing leadership presence causing distraction***

In the second cartoon, we see a team fully present in the room with their feet on the ground. They maintain eye contact, demonstrating their awareness of each other. They want to contribute with a clear intention and willingness to support each other. What they have in common that establishes their connection is their commitment to achieving the desired outcome of the meeting. It is crystal clear to everyone why they're here today, either physically in a meeting room or remotely in a virtual setup. All of them are aware of their strengths and know what they can contribute and add.



*Leadership presence adding value*

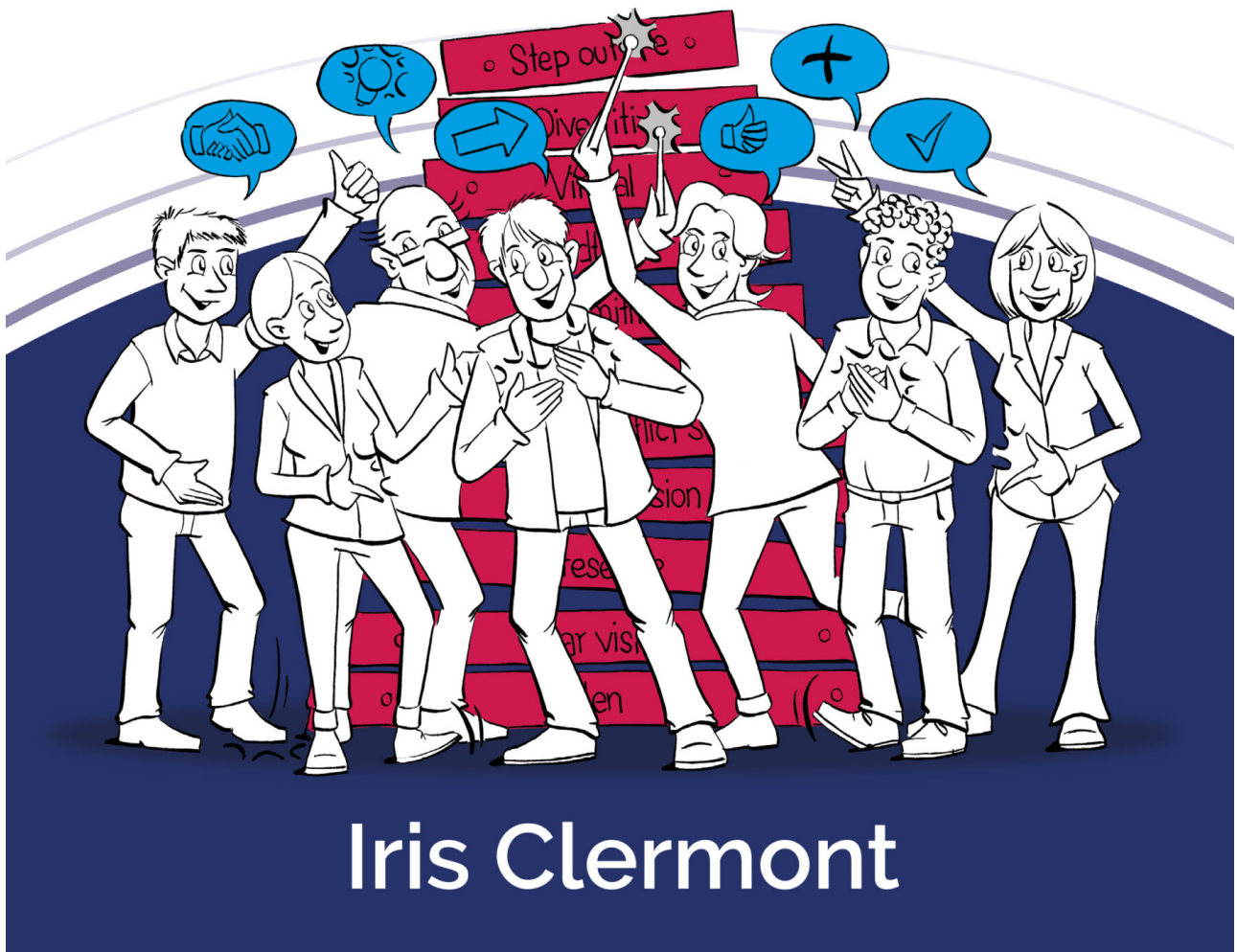
These cartoons show the scenarios in black and white. Our reality is usually somewhere in between, a shade of grey.

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Iris Clermont is an Executive Coach, professional mathematician and the author of *Team Rhythm*.

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