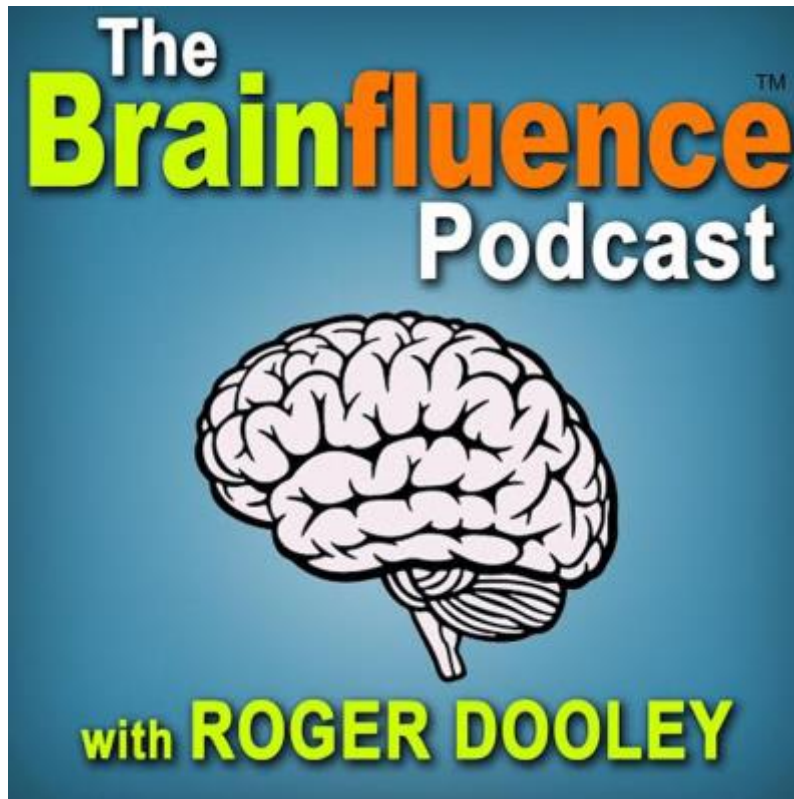


How to Be More Influential and Persuasive with Stacey Hanke



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**Roger Dooley**

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# How to Be More Influential and Persuasive with Stacey Hanke

Welcome to the Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley, author, speaker and educator on neuromarketing and the psychology of persuasion. Every week, we talk with thought leaders that will help you improve your influence with factual evidence and concrete research. Introducing your host, Roger Dooley.

Roger: Welcome to the Brainfluence Podcast. I'm Roger Dooley. Our guest this week is Stacey Hanke. Stacey is co-author of the book *Yes You Can!: Everything You Need From A to Z to Influence Others to Take Action*. She's the founder of Stacey Hanke, Inc. and has trained and presented to thousands of business leaders, teaching them how to avoid bad body language habits and to choose words wisely. Her clients include companies like Coca Cola, FedEx, GE, and the US Army and many more. Stacey's new book is *Influence Redefined: By the Leader You Were Meant to Be, Monday to Monday*. Welcome to the show, Stacey.

Stacey: Thank you, Roger. I appreciate the opportunity.

Roger: Stacey, influence is a term that gets used a lot, especially around here, I guess. Many of our listeners are fans or students of Robert Cialdini with his classic book *Influence*, but then we've also got different uses of influence. We've got social media influence, celebrity influencers, and it's really used in many different context. For starters, why don't you explain what you mean by influence?

Stacey: I think there is, there's an outdated definition. Most of us believe that influence is something that we use by turning it on when we need it. As I define it in the book, it's break down into two concepts. To me, influence is that your body language, your messaging, it is consistent, Monday to Monday. Influence also means that you've got the ability to move people to action long after the interaction occurs.

Roger: I use the 95% rule in a lot of my presentations, and in my case, I'm referring to an estimate of how much of the brain's thinking and decision

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making is non-conscious versus conscious. You have a different 95% rule in your book, which I found kind of amusing. Why don't you explain what that is?

Stacey: Are you referring to, I believe, that 95% of leaders think they're more influential than they really are?

Roger: Right, yes. What's up with that? Why do people have such a high opinion of themselves?

Stacey: I'm laughing, Roger.

Roger: Or inaccurate, high opinion.

Stacey: Yeah, everyone picks up on that 95%. Here's what I'm basing it off of. After 15 years of working with some top influencers, supposedly, some top executives, what they have all revealed to me is two things are happening.

You've heard the saying that it gets lonely on the top, and what they share with me is as they climb the corporate ladder, they get a lot of false feedback. Usually it's, "Good, nice job," and people are telling them what the leader, they think the leader wants to hear.

The second piece that leaders will reveal to me is they don't see themselves, they never get a chance to observe themselves through the eyes and ears of their listeners; therefore, they start to lean on how they feel determines how influential they are rather than fact.

Once I and my team start working with them, and we believe in a lot of videotaping and interactive coaching and feedback, they come through that experience saying, "I have some work to do. I didn't realize that ... " something about their body language is getting in their way, Roger, of being influential, or it's their messaging. They're too long-winded. They don't get to the point. That's where that number comes from. It really is my team and my experience over the last 15 years of how many leaders they

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really do believe that they have more influence until they get a chance to experience themselves based on how their listeners experience them.

Roger: Do you think maybe there's an attitude that many folks believe that influence drives from, say, their status in the organization or even maybe their wealth. I mean, they find a CEO of a corporation, I'm making seven or eight figures a year, it seems like I'd exert influence just by walking in the room.

Stacey: That's true, and I've talked about that in the book. There's a couple of misperceptions, that is one of them, Roger, where people believe with the higher up in an organization, I grow, my title determines the level of influence I have. Influence, it's not a badge of honor. You have to earn that.

The other misperception is, when I know what to say, it's easy. When I feel good, I must be good, and easy, comfort, good, none of those have ever equaled influence. The book really breaks apart, when I'm going out there at the very early part of the book and saying 95% of leaders aren't as influential as they think they are, the book really supports the concept of here's what you need to do to be influential Monday to Monday, here are gaps within that misperception that you might have.

Roger: I suppose part of it, too, might just be human nature where there's all these crazy statistics like 85% of the people believe they drive better than other drivers on the road or that 90% of college professors rate themselves as smarter than their peers. That tells you something right there.

Stacey: It does, it does. That's a good analogy about the car. If it's something, how many years have you been driving a car and how many times you just go into motion. You don't think about are you really as good as you think you are when you're driving? That's a quite a different extreme. I think there's a lot that can be applied to as a communicator. We really do undergo mindset that, "Well, I talk all the time, and I've gotten really great feedback. Good, nice job. I must be good."

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Roger: Right. Well, very few people rate themselves as below average under almost any circumstance.

Stacey: That's true.

Roger: You define communication as the most important skill that influencers need to work on. Explain that in a little bit more detail, Stacey.

Stacey: You got it. I really believe, Roger, you can be the smartest person, the most knowledgeable person in your industry, in your position. If you cannot communicate that message or your knowledge in a way that your listeners can understand you to take action, there's a big gap influence won't occur. Keep in mind how I'm defining influence, that it is a body language, the messaging needs to be consistent Monday to Monday. Communication is the core to whether or not someone's influential.

For example, if I'm trying to persuade you to buy into my concepts, my services, yet my message is hard for you to follow, or my body language doesn't match what I'm saying, you're not, you're going to really quickly start questioning, "Do I trust this person?" Trust is a big piece of influence. You start guessing my knowledge and all those components, I think that's a big driver to, are you going to get someone to act on your recommendations.

Roger: How does one start, say, assessing one's skills. I mean, obviously, they could hire your firm, but for our folks around the planet here, how would you start by first assessing your skills and then working on them?

Stacey: You got it. My ... I would start baby steps. I would first start, and this is one of the drivers of the influence model that the book is based on. Get some feedback, but I'm not just talking any feedback. I'm going to give our listeners an example. If I wanted to get feedback from our call today from you, Roger, before we started the call, I would've said to you, "Hey, here's what I'm working on. Here's how I want to come across. Would you listen for that. Then after our interview, would you give me feedback."

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That's a lot different, Roger, than when we end the call and I say to you, "Okay, how did I do?" You've got nothing to determine, well, what does she want me to tell her? What was I supposed to watch for? Feedback is a big piece of it, knowing that you still, as the feedback receiver, you still could determine do you want to ply it, are you going to act on it?

The second, I think, the biggest, biggest piece is I want you to think in terms of an athlete, a musician, an actor, actress. The athlete doesn't go on a tennis court and play the game without ever practicing. Being influential requires you to put in deliberate practice, to think through your body language, your messaging.

Now, to take those two, take it to the next level, I think the best way for our listeners to really take a close look, is either audio record or video record themselves. Without that, I don't know how we can base how we come across off of fact rather than feeling. Once you get to see yourself in the eyes and ears of your listeners, probably because we're our best in our work's critics, you're going to know. You're going to know what works for your authenticity, your style. You're going to also know, all right, this is what I'm doing, body language, or here's what's not working with my message. No wonder people are multitasking when I'm talking. No wonder people have their heads down in their smartphones or whatever might be the case.

Roger: You raise an interesting question there. If you are in a meeting, whether it's a large group or smaller group, and you notice that some portion of your audience does seem to be playing on their phone. Now, maybe they're just tweeting about how awesome your presentation is. In that case, it's okay, but they might also be making dinner plans or checking their email or something. Do you have any good techniques for recovering the room?

Stacey: I do. I talk a lot about the book. I refer to eye connection rather than eye contact. We've all been taught, contact people with your eyes, scan the room any time you're speaking to more than two people. When I

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work with individuals, I talk a lot about how you stay with someone for a full sentence or a thought with your eyes. I talk a lot about only speak when you see eyes. No eyes, no talk. Those tips are easy to remember.

When you're in front of an audience, the minute you start speaking, you look someone dead in the eye, and keep in mind, it's just a second or thought, so it's not as if you're staring at someone or looking at them for five minutes or more. Everyone else, they immediately going to pick up on that. I'm just talking up a feedbacker. Clients always say to us, "Our leaders have never been off their phones this long. What are you doing?" My response is, "I'm looking at them. I'm connecting with them. I'm engaging with them." You start, the minute you start speaking, connecting with an individual, everyone else in that audience, Roger, they're going to pick up on your behavior. They're going to pick up on, "Whoa, he or she looks right at me. They're going to catch me if I'm spending any time down in my gadget," whatever that is.

Step two, I think there is a piece of, you need to be entrusting, meaning how you deliver, your passion that comes through, your energy, and your message has to really resonate with your listeners. Those three, now it's not a guarantee, you might have that difficult audience member that just walks in that room and says, "No matter what this person does or says, I'm not paying attention to them."

You're going with the majority, though. It's going to be really difficult to influence a large group to take action if they're not paying attention to you. Your ideas, they're worth hearing, but I think we also have to put in the effort to make it easy for our listeners to listen to us, rather than creating a lot of distractions in our body language, in our messaging, causing them to do anything but listen to us.

Roger: It's an interesting point, Stacey. What you're saying is that even though, say you've got a hundred people in the room, if you simply, and obviously you can't connect with each one of them, at least not very frequently, but by establishing a connection with somebody, say, near the



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front, or you can get that good eye contact and connection going, even people in other areas will say, "Okay, this person is actually out here in the audience, so to speak, and next, you might look at me, and so I better pay attention."

Stacey: Correct. Exactly. There's a lot of studies around how we behave is how people respond. I'm talking really from experience, Roger. People will always say to me, "I notice right away that you look right at us."

I had someone, this was a couple of months ago. I'm in a large, large conference room. I don't even know how many people were in that room, and it was dark. You couldn't see all the way back to the back of the room. I get done with my presentation, and a participant comes up to me. I never saw him. He had obviously had been sitting beyond the lights. He comes up to me, Roger, and he says, "I came to your session because I thought I could catch up on email."

Now, I knew exactly where he was going with it. I asked him, "Well, what happened?" His response was, "I thought you could see me." Now, this is powerful because what we do with our eyes, this ability to connect and engage, eye connection is the only skill that conveys trust. To me, trust sits right below the big guy, which is influence, because if people like us, they'll listen to us, but if they trust us, that's where they're buying into our ideas.

Well, let's dissect this. When you're really looking at either an area, if it's a really large group, an area for a sentence or thought, or you're able to see each person in the eyes in front of you, think about the power of that, to be able to build trust with any size of audience because of what you do with your eyes.

You can tell in my voice, I am so passionate about connecting and engage with people because I really think we're losing that skill. We're getting so buried in multitasking, whether that's with the technical gadget or however we're multitasking in our head, and we're not focused in the



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moment to who we're speaking to. We're starting to lose that ability to really connect and engage people.

Roger: Right, so you've been talking about devices. These days, a lot of communication occurs via those devices either by email or text or by video. How does that change the whole communication and influence-building process?

Stacey: Roger, how much time do you have?

Roger: Well, we've got some time. Let's hear it.

Stacey: I want to bring in awareness to listeners. I think what we forget, we hide behind email, social media's the classic one, text messages. Something I share in the book that when I'm talking about being influential, I'm not just talking about face-to-face conversations. I'm talking about every post that you make in social media. That is still a reputation of who you are and what you stand for.

I tell individuals with an email, is it a situation where you should hang up the email and pick up the phone or pick up your feet if you're close in an office setting to working with someone to have that conversation. It's making the decision and taking time to think through this based on who I'm trying to communicate this message to and what I'm trying to influence them to do. What is the best medium? Is it a text? Is it a quick voicemail? Is it a quick email? Do I need to provide more data, or I really need to talk to this person live.

Instead, we spring through our day. I'm just as guilty. You get busy, and you're sprinting through your day, and sometimes we just don't think through, will this email truly grab this person's attention because they may be are receiving, I don't know, a hundred, two hundred emails in a day? What kind of medium is going to help me stand out from the noise?

Then, go deeper from that. If it is the email, well, you need to stand out from the noise. What does that email look like? The subject line, how

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do you grab their attention? What are you asking them to do in the email? It's really putting focus into our messages before we communicate just to communicate.

Roger: How about the mass communication variation on that so that if I'm an executive and if I need to communicate with a large team or perhaps I have a large number of customers that I want to communicate with, I suppose the same rules would apply as far as trying to choose the best method, but what about media? Would be better to, say, send people a video link, for example, than simply sending them a text email?

Stacey: I agree. We do a lot in our company. I do a lot of calls via Skype, a lot of calls via Zoom whenever the client is willing to do it. We send out a lot of videos to really capture people's attention. While we're doing it, I'm trying to stand out from the noise. I know that my current and potential clients, they've got a lot of messages. It also helps me, at least in my mind, right, wrong, or indifferent, Roger, if someone can see me communicate, I feel there's that connection, at least can start making a connection, and they can feel more connected to me if they can visually see me.

With an executive, if I was a CEO of a large corporation, I probably would take the same approach. There's just too much risk behind how someone perceives your email versus can they see live. From a leadership perspective, I can't imagine anything but your credibility, your trust with those that you're trying to lead and get to follow you, how could that not build when you toss yourself out there to say, "All right, it's not just about email messaging. I'm really going to mix up my mediums on how I communicate with everyone to try to tap into everyone's different learning styles."

Roger: That makes sense. I think probably the one trade-off is video is more time consuming to consume. I know that sometimes if I have an option of, say, reading three paragraphs or instead of that, somebody sends me a link to a two-minute video or something, I'm much less likely to

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watch that video just because I know I'm going to have to click over there, and it's going to have to fire up and so on. I can't consume it at the same pace that I would text content because you're sort of limited. Even audio content, eBooks, and podcasts and so on, you can crank up to one and a half or two times speed, but video really, you're kind of trapped by the creator.

Stacey: Yeah. I think you're tapping into something really important. It's knowing who you're trying to persuade and that you can use a mix of mediums to get the message out there.

Roger: Right, or even perhaps even offering options to people so that some folks who prefer one kind of content get it that way.

Stacey: Exactly.

Roger: Stacey, you created sort of a hierarchy of six levels of influence. Why don't you run through those quickly?

Stacey: You got it. If our listener could imagine a triangle, that's the visual of the model, and on the left-hand side is feedback. We've talked a little bit about that. On the right-hand side arm of that triangle is practice, so we talked a little bit about the deliberate practice, constantly repetition. Finally, the base of the triangle is accountability. Inside the triangle, the very first element to having, increasing, enhancing your influence, I believe in my soul that it is self-awareness. Without self-awareness, I do think we're sabotaging our influence because we're basing our level of influence on how we feel rather than on fact.

I'd love to share a story. I have a speech coach, his name is Lou Heckler, and there's no pun intended on that one. Lou, Lou and I had a speech coach, or speech lesson, coaching lesson a couple months ago. He was sharing with me how he's on a plane flying to another conference, and his seat mate happens to be a psychologist. There's some small chatter back and forth. Lou asked the psychologist what is the secret, what is the

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key to someone's improvement? The psychologist response was, "Individuals who are willing to embrace their own ignorance."

I think that applies, Roger, to everything in life, even outside of influence. The first step is just being aware how do people perceive you, what reputation have you created? Now, once that awareness is there, another element to influence is being consistent. I talk a lot in the book about successful companies like Nike, Starbucks, I'm sure our listeners have a couple of favorite brands that they rely on. Those companies, they're successful because they understand brand loyalty.

The big question for our listeners is, is your brand consistent, or do your listeners, employees, leaders around you, do they ever have to guess who's going to show up every day? I've got some clients like that where I don't know what they're going to show up on a phone call because when I meet them in person, they're completely different.

When you start messing with your brand loyalty, I'm talking your personal brand, people start questioning it, and you start having them question their trust in you.

Moving up, moving up that triangle. To me, it's all about reputation management. Let's face it. Our reputation enters a room before we ever get there.

Roger: Especially today.

Stacey: Doesn't it? It's human behavior, Roger. We are constantly evaluating each other on how we look, how we sound, how we walk, how we talk. It gets even down to the, not the face-to-face communication, think about in email, that your reputation is created before your listeners, your reader even receives your email. I talk a lot about how you can enhance your reputation, how can you just examine it and make sure that it's one you're proud of every day of the week, Monday to Monday.

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As we climb the elements of this triangle, inside the triangle, it gets a little more difficult because I think once those three elements are there, adaptability is key. When we talk about adaptability, we get caught up in our own stuff. We get caught up in our own dialogue, especially you of a presentation. You've got the agenda, you've got the speech down, A to Z.

A true influential, someone who's influential is able to adapt their message on the fly without skipping a beat. What they're doing is they're paying close attention to the nonverbal behavior of their listeners. What is their listener saying but not telling them? I call it pulling out someone's known unspoken. You know that there is a different issue there, there's different interest there, but they're not telling you. I talk a lot about-

Roger: What's an example of that, Stacey?

Stacey: Here's a misperception. "Well, they have their arms crossed, they must be in denial or they have an objection to me." The type of adaptability is when people start really asking you inquisitive questions, questions that go beyond your content. You may have said something to them that is completely misleading that you're leading them a down a path that you don't want them to go.

The energy in the room completely shifts. Everyone gets really quiet. You can't get people to interact with you. You get someone, I think that the smartphones are a big one, when the majority or enough individuals are down in their smartphone prayer, as I like to call it, that's a sign. That's a sign that whatever they're doing on their smartphone is a lot more interesting than you are. Just even the questions. I really pay attention to the questions my listeners ask me. Those are true signs of, "Well, I wanted to go this direction, but they're leading in a different direction of what's important to them that I didn't realize."

Roger: Yeah, and I mentioned it takes a lot of conscious effort to do that observation because usually, in that kind of situation, you're focused on what am I going to say next? Did I say the right thing just now? Did I

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make the important point I wanted to make? It's really not necessarily while paying attention to the listeners.

Stacey: That's exactly it. It does take focus. I was working with a group yesterday, and someone at the end of the session came up to me and said, "Are you asking us to think before we speak? This sounds like a lot of hard work." I said, "Yes, it should be because your name is on everything that you do, and you get to choose what reputation you want people to have of you."

Speaking of influence, moving up that element, there's two more. Right above adaptability is impact, and that, to me, is how can you be memorable? How can you have this impact on individuals that they remember you throughout the noise that if you lose their partnership due to, they move to another company, for example. Three years later, they go to another company, and now they call you, and they say, "Yes, now we can partner with you."

That happens to us a lot. We get a lot of calls from companies that say, "I saw you speak five, ten years ago. At the time, I wasn't in a position to bring you in. I am now." That's just one example of impact. Once all those elements are in line, and know that this is a constant, it's not as, "Oh, I've accomplished the reputation I wanted to. I'd never have to touch it again."

Finally, on the very top of that model is where influence is.

Roger: You use the term, phrase, which you've actually got trademark, Monday to Monday, in both the title of the book and about a million times in the body of the book, what are you trying to convey with that?

Stacey: You got it. I'll give an example because I bet everyone can relate. You can't be one person one day based on how you show up, think body language and how you communicate, and then the next day, you're completely different. You can't be using "ums" and "ahs" over the weekend, and then suddenly you have a meeting on Monday, and you're going to

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stop. You're suddenly going to have more brevity, and you're going to have clarity.

It goes back to the sports analogy. However, let's take a professional golfer, however a professional golfer practices before the U.S. Open is a pretty good sign of how they're going to perform at that U.S. Open. Professional athletes don't just show up for the big game, and they haven't done anything with it.

That, to me, is where authenticity, trust comes through, that how you hear me during this interview is how you would hear me if we had lunch together. It goes back to that idea of consistency of not allowing individuals to even have a second of a chance to guess, "Well, I wonder what he's going to be like today."

Roger: Well, that's kind of an interesting point, Stacey, because I think that, no doubt, many of us think of, say, giving a presentation as sort of a performance, much like a Broadway actor might do where you're in character for the performance, and then after the performance, you shed your costume and can slouch back in the chair and relax, but really, what you're saying is, to at least to some degree, you need an element of consistency all the time.

Stacey: Yes. Yes. I call it adaptability. I always share with my clients who are prepping for a presentation is that a presentation is an extension of a conversation, that there is definitely some adaptability, that's why adaptability is in the influence model of the book, because there are certain skills that you need to adapt when you're on a stage. Now you have a hundred people or more to influence versus when you're one on one in your office or in a meeting of 10. There's definitely items that you would need to adapt.

What I'm talking about, exactly what you just shared, we have this perception of, "All right. I'm on stage, and I'm going to perform." To me, I really have a differencing opinion of that. I want individuals, when they see me up on a stage, that they just feel like, "Wow. She's really natural. She's



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having a conversation with us. She's one of us," and then I come off stage, and people come to say hello, and I would never want them to say to me, "Oh. You're kind of different now."

Roger: Talking about reputation and so on and also the consistency all the time, how much would you suggest executives or entrepreneurs or whoever share from, say, their personal lives because I know that I follow quite a few people who are influencers. Some are pretty much all business all the time. Others will share quite a bit from their personal lives, so whether it's their hobbies or their weekend trips or their family and dogs and so on. What do you think is the best strategy there or is there a best strategy?

Stacey: I think there has to be an element of sharing some of your personal time, your personal life, I should say, especially if there's a learning from it. There's gotta be an objective, a purposeful objective to still hold that leadership role to be able to share something personal about you.

I'm going to give you an example. We had received a call from a large accounting firm to mentor, one on one, one of their potential leaders. One of the biggest objectives they want us to accomplish with this individual is that they want to make him a partner. What's holding him back is he's too serious. People cannot create relationships with him and get to know him because it's work all the time.

I find that that's really interesting because as a partner with this firm, they want their partners to be seen as, "Hey, we're one of you. We've learned from some personal mistakes," and to be able to talk some personal stuff. Then there's that fine line of, you don't want to give it all away. You don't want to give away what's going to jeopardize your reputation.

Personally, with my team and my clients, I share the personal elements of my life that I think makes me who I am, and with my audience, I always share the mistakes I've made as I've learned and continued to learn how to enhance my influence. I had someone yesterday after my

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presentation come up and say, "One of the things I really felt connected with you is you're telling us, you're sharing with us the mistakes that you've made, how you've learned from them, and how you're still human. You're not perfect, and you're still learning."

Roger: I think whatever you can show too, things that you have in common with the people you're trying to influence, going all the way back to Cialdini, that will make you more likable and more influential.

Stacey: That's a really good point, yes.

Roger: That's probably a good point to break here. Let me remind our listeners that we're speaking with Stacey Hanke, author of the new book *Influence Redefined: Be the Leader You Were Meant to be*, Monday to Monday. Stacey, how can our listeners find you and your ideas online?

Stacey: Thanks, Roger. It's really easy. The website is Stacey with an E-Y, H-A-N-K-E I-N-C dot com.

Roger: Great. Well, we will link there and to any other resources we talked about on the show notes page at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](http://rogerdooley.com/podcast), and we have a text version of our conversation there, too.

Stacey, thanks for being on the show.

Stacey: Thank you, Roger. I appreciate the opportunity. Good luck to you.

Thank you for joining me for this episode of the Brainfluence Podcast. To continue the discussion and to find your own path to brainy success, please visit us at [RogerDooley.com](http://RogerDooley.com).