



TEL EPISODE #049:

Charisma on Command with Charlie Houpert

Show Notes: <http://www.theelpodcast.com/tel-049-charisma-command-charlie-houpert/>

Welcome to The Entrepreneurs Library, the only book-centric podcast that reviews all the top-selling business books and shares author's perspective, firsthand. This is your resource to finding the next great book that will enable you to grow personally and professionally. Welcome your host, Wade Danielson.

WADE: Thank you for joining us on The Entrepreneurs Library. Today we have Charlie Houpert, author of *Charisma on Command*. Welcome, Charlie, and thank you for joining us on The Entrepreneurs Library.

CHARLIE: Thank you so much for having me, Wade. Appreciate it.

WADE: Absolutely. Will you take just a moment to introduce yourself and tell us just a little bit about you personally?

CHARLIE: Sure. This was not in the listed group of questions. (laughs) My name's Charlie Houpert. Grew up East Coast; have lived in a bunch of places – Latin America, right now I'm in Vegas. But what I do with my best friend and co-founder is run a company called *Charisma on Command*. The whole point of that is to teach people to be more charismatic, so to be the personality that tends to draw people to them, and to do it on command.

Because I think that a lot of people struggle with that part of it. They feel like they're very outgoing and can totally captivate an audience when they feel comfortable, but in those times when they're not feeling that way – say in front of an investor, or maybe there's a girl that they're attracted to, or there's all of these situations – it goes out the window. So that's what we work on and have videos and books and clients that we teach about.

WADE: Excellent, thank you for sharing that. Now let's jump right into your book, *Charisma on Command*, which was made available for purchase back on August

20th of 2014. Charlie, we're going to move quick, but here are the top questions that our audience made up of entrepreneurial readers want to get answered.

The first one is, what was the inspiration behind writing *Charisma on Command*?

CHARLIE: The first thing I think that happened is that I grew up incredibly shy. I mean, I could tell you stories and stories and stories, but basically I was voted the shyest kid in my high school class of over 500 people, and lived that way pretty much through college. At some point, I got fed up with it, about 6 or 7 years ago, went abroad, and sort of dedicated myself to reinventing who I was. Because I was an introvert to the max, but I always wanted to connect with people.

I dove into books, I put myself in uncomfortable situations, I took a bunch of improv classes – I threw the entire kitchen sink at it. And after 6 or 7 years, it's become the type of thing where people come up to me and say, "Oh my gosh, you're so outgoing, you're so comfortable here. What's going on?"

And that is sort of the inspiration for the business and the book, in that this has transformed my life more profoundly than anything else I've done. It's the thing that people ask me the most about, and it was something that I really enjoy sharing with other people, because people are everything. When you can help someone connect better, whether that means an investor or a friend, a social circle, or whatever, that is incredibly, incredibly rewarding for me.

WADE: Charlie, there are thousands of books that come out every single month, and even I look at entrepreneurship, I think there's 150+ alone just on that subject per month. So what makes your book different from others regarding the same topic?

CHARLIE: Sure. I think that a lot of these books that are about charisma or leadership, they tend to be written by researchers. And no knock on this, but it comes from a perspective of "we did all these studies on people and found that if you touch someone for 1/40th of a second, you build a connection with them. All of those sorts of things are really cool, really helpful.

Mine comes from one, a perspective of having lived this transformation myself, and then two, roughly a quarter to a third of the book is dedicated to this action guide. This is something that I found was missing in everything else that I read, which is “Okay, here’s all this wonderful theory and these stories of people who have done it; what do I do after I close the book?” So I wanted to make something that people can be like “All right, Day 1, here is my assignment. Day 2, here is my assignment. And then at the end of 30 days, if I do these things, I am going to be more charismatic, no doubt about it.”

So I think that the biggest thing is not so much the theory – which I certainly have my own take on – but it’s what do you do about it so that this isn’t just an intellectual exercise, it actually impacts your life and your relationships?

WADE: What you were just talking about, is it broken down into days? Is that like a chapter is a day?

CHARLIE: Yeah. The way that it is, the first part of the book is sort of the background of what the charismatic things are and explaining them, and then that last chunk of it is Day 1, Day 2, Day 3 – and you can get them emailed to you, if you prefer them in the morning or the evening or anything like that. But those are the major breaks in the book.

WADE: Based on the way that you’ve written this book, is this a book that someone can – or I should ask it this way: how would you personally like someone to engage with your book? Is this a book they should start at the beginning and finish all the way through? Or jump into and use as a resource as needed?

CHARLIE: The chunks of the book basically go like this: there’s the first part of the book, where very quickly I talk about and make the argument that one, charisma, social skills, being better in relationships is not only something that you can learn – because I think unfortunately, people invest a lot of time and they’re like, “Okay, I need to learn how to sell, I need to learn how to market, I need to learn all of these things and these tech skills,” but they have this conception that “If I feel like an introverted person, I’m just always not going to be very good at

connecting with other people or investors.” I try to dismantle that notion completely, because it is absolute BS. You can learn these things.

The first chunk of the book is that, and then in the second I dive into what for me have been the three charismatic principles that are most important. This is not just from my own life, but also a lot of analysis and research of the most charismatic people in the world, like Bill Clinton, Will Smith, Oprah Winfrey, Jennifer Lawrence – people that other people just really like. I spent a lot of time on YouTube, reading their stuff, breaking down what they do.

But the three things that I found are this. The first thing that is probably most foundational to charisma is having conviction. The analogy of if you were to go out and you were to dance with someone – and say that you are a mediocre dancer; if you go out and lead with a strong frame and take steps, that person is going to follow you, and it’s going to look okay. If you don’t, if you go out there and you’ve got a weak frame and you’re wishy-washy about where to go, all of a sudden it becomes unclear who is leading, and you guys just bang toes the entire time.

So conviction in everything that you say and that you do is absolutely critical, and I talk in this part about 12 charismatic convictions that, if you can believe these things, will make every single thing that you do in your conversations more effective. I can dive into these in more detail if you want or move on; what do you think?

WADE: Yeah, absolutely. We’ve already dove into the third question about taking the deep dive, so yeah, I’d allow you, take the next however long you need, 5-10 minutes, and really break down as much as you can.

CHARLIE: Sure. When I think of charisma in terms of this conviction, it’s small bits of leadership. Like when are those moments that you find yourself being like, “Wow, this person has presence”? It’s oftentimes when they lead conversation. Say that somebody makes a rude remark. The charismatic person oftentimes, without being a complete jerk, will say something. They’ll say what everyone else is thinking.

Or on the other side of the spectrum, when they're upset, they don't necessarily have a hard time conveying – not in an offensive way, though – like “Hey man, that upset me. That hurt my feelings.” The charismatic person is going to be the one who leads in all these tiny ways in conversation, but what you need to do this is a conviction that one, leadership is a good thing; two, that everything will be okay.

I think this is the big one that a lot of people lack, is that they say “What if I were to go up and talk to this investor at this networking event and it doesn't go well?” And they just stand there looking at him, twiddling on their phone, going “What if he says X? What if he says Y? What if he says Z?” Part of being charismatic – and when you watch some of the most charismatic people in the world – is that they go into situations for which they are not fully equipped, understanding that “No matter how it goes, I will be okay. I'm not going to come out of this dead, worst case scenario.”

Almost everything to do with conviction is just doing what you want, acting with integrity between what you're thinking and what you're saying and what you're doing. So that is the conviction section, and it could go much deeper.

The second part is energy. I'm sure that you've come across these people in your life that are just absolutely energy sucks. I had a friend, and it was so tough because every time he would get home from work, I would out of reflex say, “Hey man, how are you doing? How was your day?” and he'd say “Ugh, stressful” or “Man, I'm so tired.” I swear, it just sucked the wind right out of me. A lot of people do this without realizing it; they try to one-up one another in being more tired, more stressed, whatever, instead of bringing positive effusive energy to a situation.

When you think of some of the most exciting people – and I think one of the best examples is Will Smith, if you've ever watched an interview with him. He's a guy, I interviewed people, I asked, “Who do you think is the most charismatic?” Both people who have met him and people who have not were like “This guy is incredible.” And if you watch a lot of what he does, he walks everywhere with this

beaming, effusive smile on his face. If you ask him how he's doing, he's never just "good," he is "fantastic," he's "phenomenal."

So conveying not only in your words, but in the way that you speak that there is this positive feeling – and I don't mean energy in any sort of aura way; I just mean the vibe that you put out and how you make other people feel – that is huge.

One of the biggest reasons that this is important is because people have something called mirror neurons in their brain. Without getting into the neuroscience behind it, if you see someone feeling an emotion, you are likely to feel it, too. Someone is positive around you, you are likely to internalize those positive feelings, associate it with them, and then find them someone that you're really drawn to. So that's the energy piece.

The third piece of this is the presentation part. This is all these little things that people love to read about, so the body language, tonality, eye contact. How do you do all of that stuff in a way that is engaging and attractive to other people?

One of the things – I talk about posture, I talk about tonality. Couple of quick things that I'll run through, just so people can take something from this: in terms of eye contact, Bill Clinton, fantastic example. Everybody I spoke to was like "This guy, when he looks at you, he makes you feel like you're the only person in the room."

So one of the biggest things to consider from eye contact is to maintain it while you are speaking. A lot of people find it very easy to listen while maintaining eye contact, but when they're speaking, they break all the time. This is just something to focus on in your life. While you're speaking, try to maintain eye contact.

Secondly, also consider that you don't want bug eyes. This is something that I made a horrible mistake of, and I got called out when I was learning on this. You want to have a narrow eye contact. If you watch any video of Bill Clinton giving a speech, he's got a fantastic example. Also, there's links to that sort of stuff in the book if you do wind up getting it.



In terms of posture, because we sit in front of computers and because for men it's very attractive to have huge chests and not necessarily develop other parts of your body, a lot of people have developed a hunch. This causes a subconscious reaction in people. We are attracted to people with open body language; that means pulled back shoulders, open chest, exposed throat, chin held high, palms and elbows open and available to the world. But we've developed by our habits a closed posture.

So there are exercises that you can do, but for this, what I would say is just be conscious. One of the most common things people say is when you walk into a room, pull your shoulders back, lift your chin up, stand up straight. This can cause, or is at least one factor in what people say when "that guy has presence" or "that woman has presence." They walk into a room and they just have a palpable feel, posture is a lot of what causes that.

Some other things: tonality. This is something that I struggle with. I don't have a super deep voice, but there are actually exercises you can do to deepen your voice. For whatever reason evolutionarily, the deep voice gets associated with leadership. And if you think about a lot of people that just have those voices that command attention, they tend to be deep.

The other thing that they do, again that I struggle with – this is my weakest area by far – is that they have these very pregnant pauses when they speak. I tend to have a lot that I want to say and I go very quickly, but they make you wait. They speak slower in this sort of way, and that commands attention.

And then the last thing that a lot of people struggle with is that their tone doesn't match the words of what they say. Like I spoke about earlier they might say, "So I'm really excited to see you guys. We've had a great fourth quarter, and I think that we're going to see some big changes." When you have that and there's incongruence between what you're saying and how you're saying it, a little switch goes off in people's heads that says "Eh, not so trustworthy."

But if you were to say "So guys, we have had a fantastic fourth quarter. It's been really incredible. I want to give a round to everyone in here who has completely

busted their butts for this” – when you speak from a place where your words and the emotions that you’re conveying match, that makes people want to follow you. So those are some of the things in the presentation section.

And then of course, the last section is putting it all together. This is the 30 Day Action Guide. You asked how would I recommend people read the book; I would say read the top to the end straight through. It’s got really cool anecdotes. It’s going to go into all these things deeper. But then you’re probably wondering, how do I feel conviction? Or how do I improve this energy? How do I work on my eye contact?

The entire point of the 30 Day Action Guide is to give you small, tiny habits, chunkable things that you can do to actually make this normal in your own life, so that you go out and are doing all these things. So then go through each one, one day at a time, until you get to the 30th day. If you are so compelled, you can do them again – because honestly, this stuff is just self-reinforcing. But that is how I would say to go through the entire book.

WADE: There was huge value in everything that you just talked about. I felt myself actually trying to practice some – well, here’s the thing; you kind of called me out. I kind of have the Cro-Magnon look because I think I worked out chest like three days a week in high school.

CHARLIE: Oh God, so did everyone, because that was so cool. (laughs)

WADE: That was the cool thing. You do chest three times a week and then you do biceps twice a week, and you’re good. You’re good to go, basically. (laughs)

CHARLIE: Yeah. Oh my gosh. I go to the gym and I can’t not see it now. We have these guys, these incredibly muscular dudes, whose shoulders point forward. Quick way to find out if this is you, really, really helpful: grab a pen or ruler or anything that’s straight in either hand. Stand up straight, relax your back, and just go to normal standing position.

What you're looking for is as you're gripping them in your fist – how to describe this? – you're making a fist and the pen is sticking out like you were about to, I don't know, punch or stab someone with it. If the pens point in parallel to one another, that actually means you have solid upper body posture. Not completely, but in terms of where your shoulders are aligned.

If they point inward, which is what most people have – they will come to eventually touch if you were to draw the line out extending from either one – that means that your shoulders are pulled forward. You can do stretches, you can lift differently – dead lifts are really, really helpful for this – a lot of things to pull your shoulders back, and you will be shocked by how this minor thing can really change how people who have never spoken to you interpret everything that you do.

WADE: Wow. Yeah, that's huge. Charlie, I'm going to practice one of your techniques on this next question, so follow along with me.

CHARLIE: For sure.

WADE: (deeper voice) If the reader could only take away one concept – (laughs)

CHARLIE: (laughs) I am so attracted right now.

WADE: (laughs) That was charisma. Okay, so you just talked about a ton of information, and that's why I believe this question is tough, but it's so valuable for the listener. If the reader could only take away one concept, principle, or action item out of your entire book, what would you want that to be?

CHARLIE: Yeah, one that I didn't talk about, so I'm glad you asked this question, is a lot of people are like "Okay, I want to be more charismatic with my boss and my investor and this person I'm trying to impress and this beautiful woman or this beautiful guy, and that's where I need to be." What they don't realize is that this is, at its best, a way of living.

So if you can take one principle or action, it would be this: I would ask you to speak to, and particularly mess around with, all of the people in your life that are

like service people. If you're going to go out and you get into a cab and your normal interaction is to treat him like a piece of machinery, like "25th and 5th" and then you sit back there and play on your phone, engage him for longer. And mess around with him. Tell him – this is a joke that I make all the time – just be like, "All right man, if you get me there in faster than 6 minutes, I'm going to give you a \$1,000 tip" or something like that. Ask him where he's from.

If you go to a Chipotle and you're ordering food, instead of just treating the people as automatons who put food into your bowl, mess around with them. You can get more food this way – this is something I love to do. I always ask for "not a double scoop, but the largest single scoop possible," and tell them that I'm a growing boy. All of these sorts of things, they make people laugh, they improve your energy, and they do a lot of the things that you want for everything that I touched on – conviction, presentation. Because you're in the habit of speaking with people.

If you're in an elevator, mess with the people as they push the buttons. This keeps you in this positive mood, so when you do see the investor, the CEO, or whoever, you're not so star-struck because you're used to interacting with human beings on a human level and not treating people as functions of their position.

WADE: That's great advice. I love the fact that you brought that up, because you're also in a position where, again, your server at the restaurant is serving you, so their job is to come up and actually engage with you. So I think for that true introvert, it definitely is easier than going "Hey, go to a Wal-Mart and go walk up to some random person and start talking to them." That's just not normal anyway.

CHARLIE: Yeah, they have to talk to you. And I think that the big thing there is that charismatic people, the reason that they appear unfazed in stressful positions is because they have developed a habit of treating people like people and of seeing them as humans with stories and interests and that like to have fun prior to seeing them as "Oh, this is my waiter, this is my taxi driver, and this is the really important CEO." And that's why they're able to connect with them so quickly.

WADE: That's great. That's very helpful. This next question, Charlie, it might be somewhat awkward for you, but you can answer it however you want. It's really do you have a favorite quote from your book? When we first came up with this question, it was more meant to be for you, the author; was there something you wrote that you were proud of yourself a little bit?

But if you don't have one of those, then maybe a quote that people who have already read your book have pulled out, maybe they've been tweeting it or whatever. It's resonated with people in your audience. Either way, you choose, but do you have a favorite quote from your book?

CHARLIE: Sure. In terms of cute turns of phrase or anything like that, I can't think of any; this is not one you're going to want to put on a fortune cookie because it's not that impressive, but I think that charisma is learned. Charisma is a skill. I'm sure I wrote that somewhere. (laughs)

This is the crux of it. And if you don't do anything or take anything from this other than the fact that like you might focus on – like you're not expected to be born knowing how to do trigonometry, and you're not expected to be born understanding the concepts of lean startup, the idea that you're supposed to be born either being charismatic or not needs to get thrown out. Some kids pick it up at a young age from their fathers or from their mothers or from friends or family and they exhibit it, but it is absolutely something that is learned.

And if you miss the boat, like I did, on years 0 through 20, you can still get on it, because it is something that is absolutely transformative to every relationship, both in terms of work and private, in your life.

WADE: I think that your book is going to help a ton of people. I think that it really has some paradigm-shifting content that will really help out, whether you're an introvert or not. I don't care, I think you can still pull something away from what you just talked about.

That leads me to my last question for you, and that's what's a book that created a paradigm shift for you, that really left you and created a huge impact on your life?

CHARLIE: Sure. I was thinking about this; the biggest one, and I can't not say it, is *4-Hour Workweek*. I don't want to talk about that one, because I imagine, Entrepreneurs Library, everybody has read this one. If you haven't, it'll blow you – away. It'll blow you. (laughs) It will blow your mind.

But the book that I would like to talk about is called *Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*. It's less read; it's by this guy Nathaniel Branden. He's a psychology. I didn't even go into it thinking "I need help with my self-esteem." It was recommended to me by a friend, and I felt that I had to read it. And it changed the way I behave.

The biggest thing that I took from it is that everything that I do, including if I keep my word, if I'm honest, that affects my reputation with myself. So the biggest thing that I personally took is I really made a concerted attempt, and have done very well, to just not lie anymore. No white lies, none of this "Oh my God, I'm going to try to make it to your party" or "Sorry I couldn't come in, I was sick." That stuff destroys your self-esteem, because you start to view yourself as a dishonest person, and you feel that you can't be trusted.

So there's six pillars; that's one of them. It's a really, really, really good book. Even if you don't identify with having self-esteem problems, I would really recommend checking it out.

WADE: Excellent. Charlie, before we depart, can you recommend the best way for our listeners to not only get more information on you but also your book, *Charisma on Command*?

CHARLIE: For sure. I would say you can Google "Charisma on Command" and right there we've got a "Start here." We have tried to identify the most interesting articles to new people that are going to be coming to the site, so you can do that. And the other thing is, obviously we've been talking about it; if you want to check out the book, *Charisma on Command*, just Amazon Google it, Amazon search it, and check that out. It's got a lot of my story, and it's got all of the things that we spoke about today.



WADE: Charlie, thank you so much for coming on. I can't wait to dive into your book myself.

CHARLIE: Absolutely. Thank you so much for having me.

WADE: Thanks again for listening in today. If you would like to get your hands on *Charisma on Command* or any of the other resources mentioned by Charlie, just look at the show notes at TheELPodcast.com.

Looking for your next book idea? Head over to TheELPodcast.com, where Wade shares his amazing resource, "The Top 10 Business Books Recommended by Over 500 Entrepreneurs," with you for free. That's TheELPodcast.com. Till the next time, keep it on the EL.

LINKS AND RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THIS EPISODE:

Check out [4-Hour Workweek](#) by Tim Ferriss on Amazon

Check out [Six Pillars of Self-Esteem](#) by Nathaniel Branden on Amazon

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