Demonstrating Confidence

Template

Please read the scenario and then respond to the three questions below:

Scenario

You have been invited to join ‘Project Albatross’ which consists of a multi-functional team developing Microsoft’s next hackathon on the topic of ‘Sustainability’. Your manager nominated you as they know you have an interest in the topic and feel it is a good opportunity for you to build your profile in the company. You have not been involved in a hackathon before and are excited, although a little daunted, about the prospect. The kick-off meeting for the project is three days away and will be held face-to-face. The meeting is being led by Fergus Smith the Project Sponsor. Also attending are Erica Wu (Program Manager), Anita Wang (Software Engineer), Eugene Feng (Cloud Solutions Architect) and Sharon Ying (Premier Field Engineer). You believe most of the project team were involved in managing last year’s hackathon. The purpose of the kick-off meeting is to meet everyone on the project team, review what worked well last year, identify what didn’t work well and what needs to change, brainstorm ideas and then allocate responsibilities.

What three things can you do BEFORE the meeting to build your confidence and credibility?

Ans:

* Following my invitation to the meeting, send an email briefly introducing myself to the team and authentically (and briefly) communicate my excitement about being involved in the project team. This will send a warm impression to my new project team members.
* Prepare for the kick-off meeting by being aware of who has been invited and is attending (and who has declined), what is in the agenda and the allocated time. And of course, ensure i know where the meeting room is, so I don’t get late.
* Undertake thorough research about hackathons so I am across critical information and appear knowledgeable. This would include building my knowledge about what a hackathon is, what contributes to their success, what feedback has been provided about previous Microsoft hackathons (source evaluation reports and seek out people who have attended), and what competitors in the marketplace are doing in relation to hackathons.

What three things can you do DURING the meeting to build your confidence and credibility?

Ans:

* Make a positive first impression by taking the initiative to smile and shake hands
* Aim to speak in the first five minutes of the meeting – by getting my voice heard in the room early, i show that i have the confidence to engage in the conversation and i can put my ideas forward whilst everyone is fresh and paying attention.
* Use positive body language to acknowledge contributions. Nod, smile, take notes and engage in appropriate eye contact at all times.

What three things can you do AFTER the meeting to build your confidence and credibility?

Ans:

* Create a lasting impression with Fergus Smith the Project Sponsor, by sending a follow up email to thank them for the meeting and expressing the value i received from the meeting and how excited I am to be part of the project team. They may not always respond to my email but my proactivity and enthusiasm will be noted.
* Send an email to my manager summarising the key points raised and actions. Managing upwards is an important skill to master, particularly in relation to your workload. My manager needs to be aware of what I am working on, what the time estimates are and what exactly I am doing.
* Record any ideas the meeting triggered for me. Determine an appropriate time to raise these and who would be the appropriate person to raise them with. This will build my reputation as someone who adds value and is proactive. This helps build my confidence and credibility with others.