

Cracking the Lawyer Mindset

Psychology, Neuroscience and BD Success
with Dr Amanda Potter CPsychol

We will discuss...

- The Psychology of the Lawyer – Good and Bad
- BD and bridging the gap
- Multi-generational mindsets
- Creating an environment for success

Introducing Dr Amanda Potter

With 30 years of experience in business psychology, Amanda excels at translating complex science into the accessible and the actionable.



The Psychology of a Lawyer

Dr Amanda Potter, CEO, BeTalent by Zircon



A PATH TO HELL
is paved with good intentions

What does it mean to create a Psychologically Safe place at work?



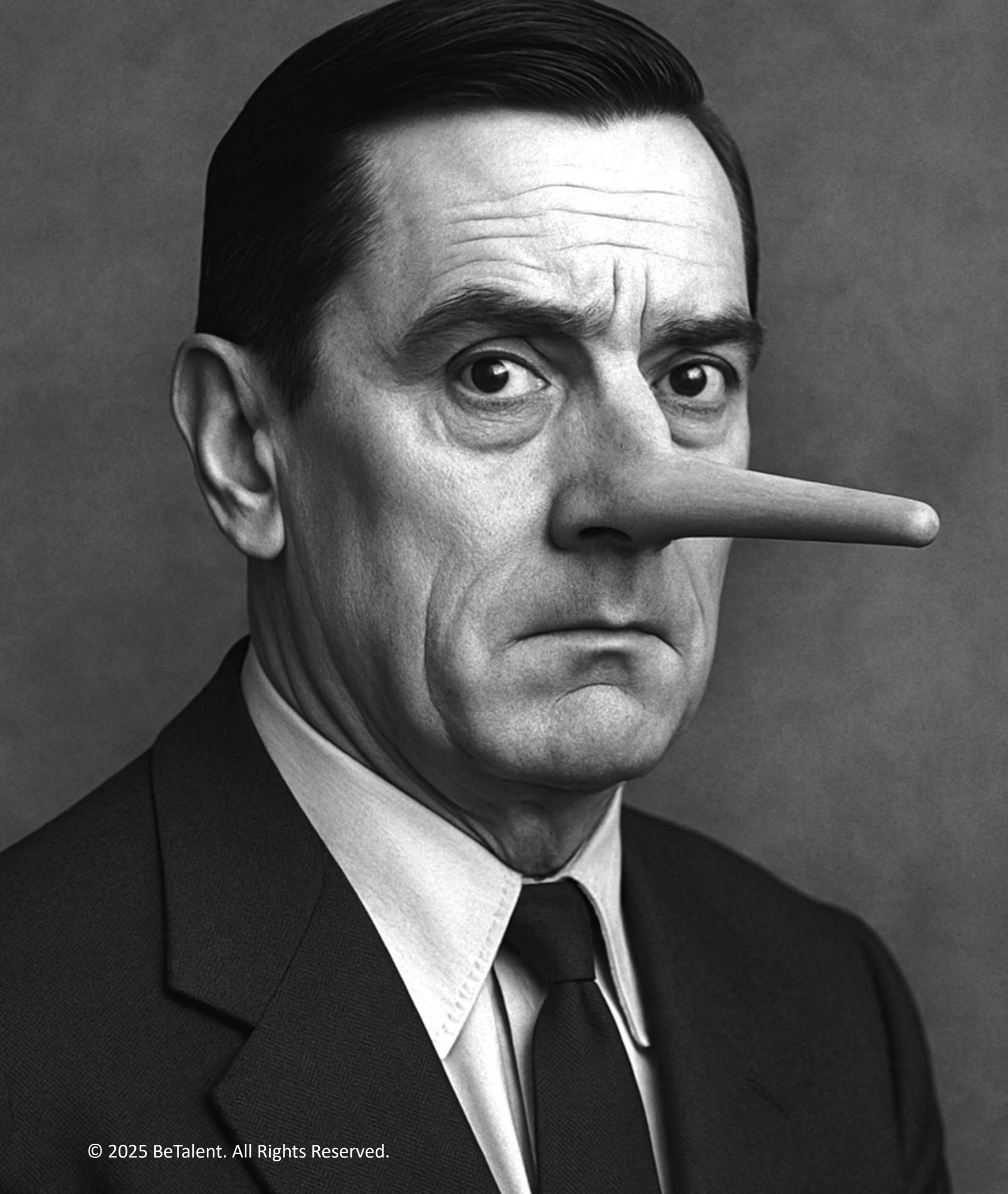
Psychologically UNSAFE Teams

Consensus Driven
Professionally Focused
Want to Please
Seek Consistency
Defer to Leadership
Avoid Failure
Require Purpose
Nice All the Time
Have Relentless Expectations
Cautious to Trust

Psychologically SAFE Teams



Speak Up and Share Ideas
Personally Connected
Courageous
Embrace Diversity
Inclusive
Learn from Mistakes
Create Purpose
Candid & Honest
Appreciate Each Other
Trust Each Other



NO Trust

NO Credibility

What do people want?...

Warmth: they want to feel *safe, seen, and understood*

People are looking to work with people who make them feel that you and your team:

Genuinely care

Listen deeply

Are approachable and human

Own mistakes and communicate proactively

“ ———
In a world ever more dominated by artificial intelligence, clients are calling out for more human relationships.

- Closing the Gap

What do people want?...

Competence: they want to feel they're *in expert hands*

Even when warmth is strong, clients still need to see competence. Your team need to be:

Reliable and deliver

Confident but not arrogant

Anticipate problems

Communicate clearly

“Clients need to feel their lawyer is competent. Competence increases psychological safety in moments of uncertainty. It tells them they're protected, guided, and can finally exhale. Warmth creates connection and competence helps them to trust”

- Dr Amanda Potter

Creating an environment for success

How do you proactively build human connections?

How do you impact others?

How can you manage your physiology & brain chemistry?

Who are the high performers that give you energy?

What are the great questions you could ask?



Surround yourself with people who are high performers and give you energy



High performers 'infect' performance by up to 15% for those within 25 feet.



How do you impact others? What is your level of charisma?

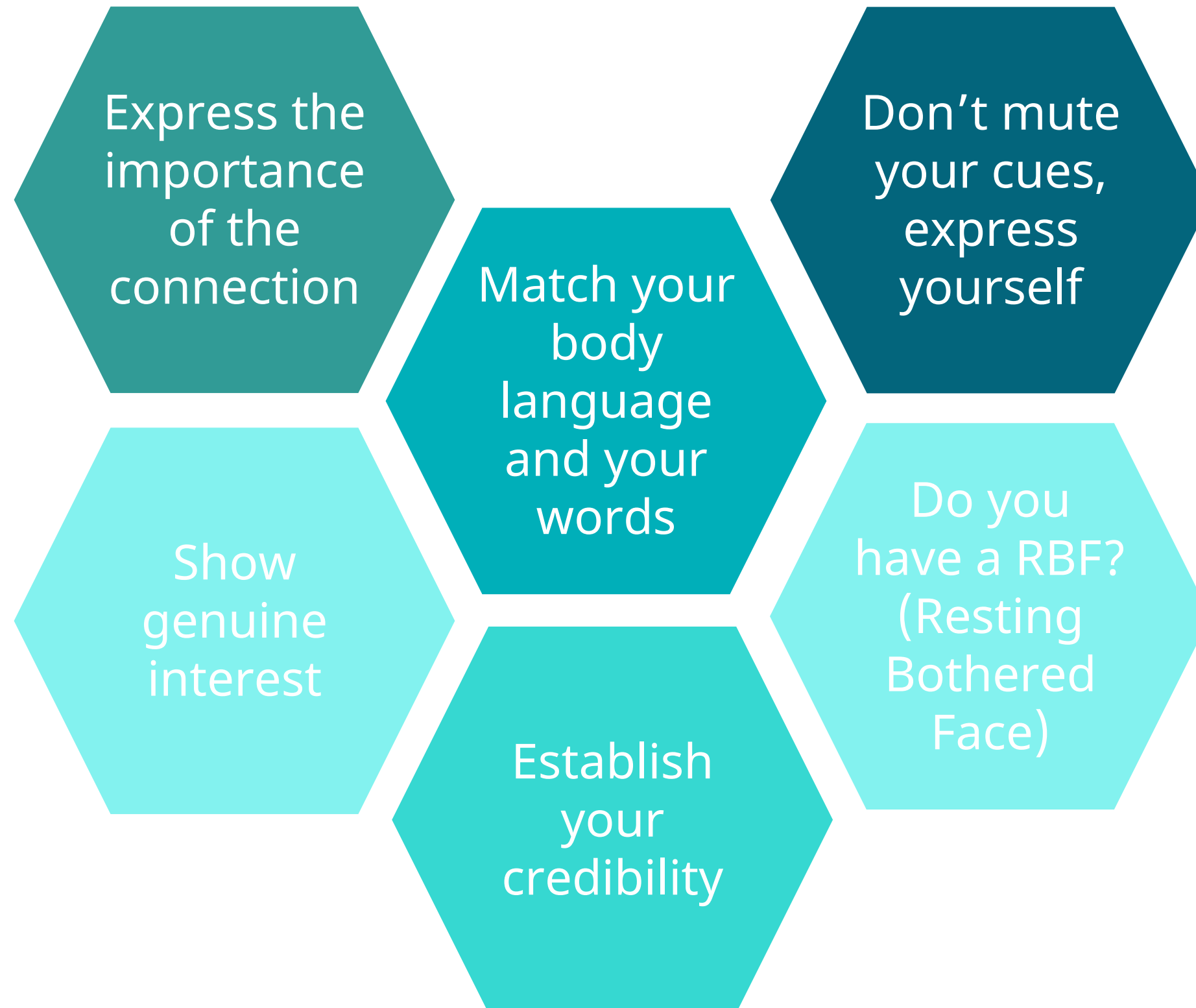
Warmth: empathy cues

- Slow triple nod
- Head tilt, soft eye contact, to signal empathy rather than dominance
- Authentic smile that reaches the eyes, to help people feel comfortable and connected
- Lean in, forward posture, to show interest and engagement
- Subtle mirroring gestures, body, language or words

Competency: power cues

- Expansive posture, shoulders back and down, head held high
- Strong intention eye-contact (60-70% and at the end of sentences)
- Vocal pitch, lower comfortable pitch (sentences going down, not up)
- Concise, decisive language
- Reinforcing hand gestures (steepling, explanatory)

Build human connection



“If you don’t have people skills you cannot be a success”

Manage your physiology & brain chemistry

Amygdala

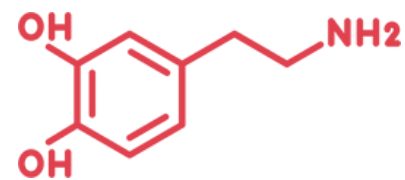
Processing of memory, decision making, and emotional responses, including fear, anxiety, and aggression.



Prefrontal Cortex

Processing of memory, decision making, and emotional responses, including fear, anxiety, and aggression.

Create Habits to Change your Brain Chemistry



- Completing a task
- Doing self-care activities
- Celebrating 'little wins'

- Playing with a pet
- Holding hands
- Hugging your family or close friends
- Giving compliments

- Breathing out in long sighs
- Hot bath with Epsom salts
- Eggs, nuts and seeds

Dopamine
the reward chemical

- Meditating
- A walk in the sun
- Running, swimming and cycling
- Dark chocolate and bananas

Serotonin
the mood stabiliser

- Laughter
- Essential oils
- Watching a comedy
- Dark chocolate
- Exercise

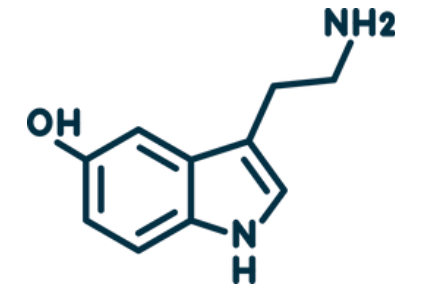
Oxytocin
the love hormone

Endorphin
the pain killer

Acetylcholine
the rebalance

Melatonin
the sleep inducer

- Taking breaks from technology & social media
- Eating melatonin rich foods: cucumber, asparagus and corn



What are the great questions to ask?



“

Working on anything exciting recently?...
(Instead of what do you do?)

Have any fun plans coming up?...

What is your biggest goal for 2026?...

What is the proudest moment of your life?...

What is the something most people don't know about you?...
(Great in a team setting)

”

Three magic phrases



“I was just thinking about you....”
(shows you were thinking about them)



“You are always so....”
(focus on a positive label that they will connect with)



“Last time we talked, you mentioned....”
(shows you were listening)



THANK You

Thank you for joining us today!
We would love your feedback



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