



EP#175: HOW TO SPEAK WITH
POWER & BUILD TRUST: THE
GRAVITAS MASTERCLASS

WITH DR LOUISE MAHLER

TRANSCRIPT

Dr Louise Mahler:

If you've got seven things to talk about, how about you don't? You've got three. And if you want all those seven, then subgroup them under three headings. Three, simplicity.

Voice Over:

Welcome to the GovComms Podcast, bringing you the latest insights and innovations from experts and thought leaders around the globe in government communication. Now, here is your host, David Pembroke.

David Pembroke:

Hello everyone, and welcome back to GovComms, a podcast about the function of communication in government and the public sector. My name is David Pembroke. Thanks for joining me as we begin our conversation today, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land from where we are broadcasting today, the Ngunnawal people, and pay my respects to elders past, present, and emerging, and recognise the ongoing contribution they make to the life of our city and this region. May I also pay my respects to all First Nations people of the lands from where anyone listening to the podcast today is joining us from.

Now, listen, before we jump into today's topic, I do want to draw your attention to a blog post that I've written about why now is the time that we need to accelerate the adoption of content creation, distribution and evaluation skills and practice in government and the public sector, and it can be found at the GovInstitute.com blog. So we will put a note in the show notes where you can link up to it, but it's only short but it makes the important point that it's time and we have to agitate for change in government. Now more than ever before, we need to restore trust. We need to build trust. Citizens must understand what government is doing and why it is doing it. What are the problems that you're solving and why?

We have the challenges of miss and disinformation. We also have the productivity impact gains of artificial intelligence, and we just simply must become more effective, agile operators in this modern, transforming information world. So it's a big change that has to happen if we are going to keep hold of people and hold cohesion. We have a trust crisis because we have a deficit of understanding about just exactly what it is that government is doing. There is so much good work that is going on. We must tell those stories, so please read and pass it on.

So what truly makes someone captivating when they speak? And in the world of government communication, the ability to connect, to inspire and to command attention, it's simply critical. Whether you are addressing the public engaging stakeholders in co-design or leading your teams, effective communication can make or break results. But what truly sets the great communicators apart?

Well, in the opinion of our guest today, it boils down to a thing called gravitas, which is presence, its authenticity and its confidence. For government communicators, mastering skills like voice control, body language and gestures help cut through the noise and build trust.

I'm joined today by Dr. Louise Mahler, who is a globally acknowledged expert in the field of leadership communication. With a PhD in business, she has awards including Keynote Speaker of the Year, and her best-selling book, Gravitas. Louise shares with us and will share with us the actionable insights that you can take to improve the control of your voice, what she calls body intelligence, and the art of connection. She is a regular contributor to the Australian newspaper, the Australian Financial Review, and a frequent television guest, and her sharp observations and humour have really helped to transform many leaders across different industries, helping them to be able to communicate with both confidence and purpose. Well, she joins me on the line today. Dr. Louise Mahler, thank you very much for joining us on GovComms.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Hi, David. Thank you for having me.

David Pembroke:

Listen, your story, before we jump into the how and the what and the where of becoming a better communicator, how did you get on this journey of becoming an expert in communications?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yes. Well, wouldn't I have loved to have had one of those careers that went on the one path, but it didn't do that. Instead, I started in business and then went through a music career, and opera in particular, and then back to business where I've done tonnes of qualifications, practical experience, getting out there, doing it myself, helping others, and just became passionate about real life practical skills that are immediately applicable and highly useful for people who communicate with others.

David Pembroke:

So with that, was there a moment as you were sort of moving through your career that you thought, "You know what? This is an area that I can dive into and I can become expert in"? Was there a moment, was there a speech, was there an occasion? What was it that really sharpened your focus?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yes. Well, I actually never intended to get into this field, and I went into business, I thought I'd take over the world in business. And I was speaking to groups and I found that having been a singer, I had a larynx that was tilted, that was where my practice was, and when I was speaking, suddenly I found I was going hoarse and I had asthma and I had puffers, and I'm going, "What's happening to me?" And then I went to some experts and I thought, "This isn't helping me at all. I know what to do. You know what? I'm going to do it," so I did it, and I cured myself, cure myself physician.

And then within my business world, there were a couple of incidents. One was a general manager who, I don't mean to offend anyone, but every time he asked for questions, he would put his hand on his genital area. And I just thought, "No, hang on, this isn't right. Does he know he's doing that?" And then I look at the audience and think, "Do they know he's doing that?" Well, at some level they do. So is this important? Is this effective? And I became absolutely passionate about resolving the problems of changing people's behaviour, being aware of the perception of others and bringing our very best to what we do.

David Pembroke:

Okay, so I'm in the audience now. I'm listening to this and I'm thinking, "Okay, this is good. I'm going to get some advice from an expert about how I can improve my communication." But if we set the table around communication and around people's skills and the importance of communication, how is it that you outline the context of effective communication and how people need to think about the different variables? Whether it's voice, whether it's control, whether it's positioning in a room, how is it that you think about communication and the real core elements that people need to address to start on this journey of becoming a more effective communicator?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Oh, David, it's fascinating. I've spent my life in this area, and then a few years ago, I got involved in this term gravitas. And then went back, I like to think I'm an original thinker. Well, guess what? There's nothing original in the whole world, and when I actually went back to ancient Rome and Ancient Greece and looked at what

they did, they had this thing called gravitas, which actually incorporates the skills of rhetoric and outlines beautifully the areas that you need to work in. So today, I'd very much put my work into the framework of gravitas, which is do you know what you're talking about? Can you arrange your material? Do you have the right language? Can you remember what you're saying? And do you have the skills of delivery? Because delivery is the most important.

David Pembroke:

Okay. Well, let's unpack that framework and let's go to that first element of do you know what you're talking about? Are there risks that you know too much about what you're talking about and you become enthusiastic about the topic and you want to tell people everything that you know because you know it, and therefore you bore people because you're not thinking about your audience? But let's go through each of those four steps and unpack them as we wait. How much do I need to know to know to be effective?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Isn't it fascinating? In America, certainly it's the case. When people want to present their ideas, sometimes they will hire a professional presenter who knows nothing about the topic. You don't have to know about your topic to present. You have to know about your topic if you want to answer questions. That's when you need to know your topic. So often, we think that presentation is about getting information out. When I say so often, I mean almost always, and that is not what we want at all. And it seems to be the case that all the people I work with have all the information they want, but they think that getting more information, giving more information out is the answer, and it's not.

David Pembroke:

What is the answer then in terms of that first phase of knowing? What is it that they need to know in terms of being a better communicator?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Well, it's the second canon, as they call it, of rhetoric. The second canon is how you arrange your information. So do you actually have an arrangement, a framework, a process, whatever you want to call it, for presenting, for answering a simple question, for answering a difficult question, for giving feedback, for asking forgiveness, for anything? There are these frameworks for everything, and we need to put our information into these frameworks, because they psychologically work for the people who are listening to us.

David Pembroke:

And these frameworks have their origins in ancient times, in Greece, and okay, so let's work through that. How people or how should people think about organising their information? Is the beginning the most important part? Is it the middle? Is it the end? How do we start? How do we finish?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Well, the beginning is everything. The ancients would say, "You get the beginning right, you get everything right," and one of the things that I'm finding very effective these days is noticing that what people do is they stand up and they start saying, "I am, I am. I am here to tell you." And I go how about you flatter your audience? Everyone wants to be flattered and love to... Look at Taylor Swift comes out and flatters, and I get that she's a music person and not a business person, but it's the same in business. And we can say things like, "Thank you for being on time. Thank you for all being here in person." There are million things that you can say to flatter your audience. It's about other people. It's not about you.

David Pembroke:

Okay. Well, actually, I might challenge you there on Taylor Swift. I reckon she's a fairly handy business person the way that she goes about her business, and she's very deliberate, and I think she's very intentional. And I think there's a lot that we can probably all learn from Taylor Swift, the way that she is able to build connection. Because when you as a professional look at the way that she presents herself and the way that she communicates, there's the flattery piece, but clearly, she's very thoughtful, very deliberate and very able to be able to create that authentic connection that you mentioned in Gravitas as well that is so important.

Dr Louise Mahler:

David, I couldn't agree more. People who perform know the skills, and don't we see this also at the moment in Trump? Trump knows all about delivery. We've got eagles flying, we've got bands, we've got his placement as he walks, the way he makes an entrance, these things are hugely... Now, do not misunderstand that any comment I make means that I support somebody's politics or any nation. No, I make comment about what they do, and it is incredible the way that it works to have the techniques like Tapper Swift.

David Pembroke:

Well, and it's interesting you mentioned Donald Trump, and again, I don't want to get into the politics of it, but his theme song that he plays when he walks on, I think the song's called Proud to Be An American, and leading up to the election, I could not have watched more and listened to more American politics. I just consumed it, and that song I found enormously catchy. And if you listen to the words of it, it spoke to the audience, so it set the table in a way that by the time he got up to speak, he had moved his audiences to the point where they were engaged, they were moved, they were ready for what came next. And as you say, this importance of delivery, of how you speak and how you get that message and how you control it. But yeah, it's an interesting point you raised because I can think about it now, I can hear the song in my head. And consistency. Every time he goes to speak, he plays that song.

Dr Louise Mahler:

This is all hypnotic. He plays the song so now we've got a jingle that you can remember. It really sticks on my mind at the game, suddenly the eagle let's fly across, so we've got music, we've got visual, we've got his use of space, we've got his gestures that are open, we've got eyes, we've got who's where, we've got the lighting. Every aspect is considered and it's effective.

David Pembroke:

Now, that obviously, well, everybody listening to this podcast today does not have the resources nor the need really for a flying eagle and a theme song nor Taylor Swift's adoration of her fans, but how do we take those lessons or what can we learn from those big macro environments that we can then bring into our everyday life? So when we are running teams or we're making a presentation, what are the core things that we need to remember and to learn from those environments, such that we can be more effective in our communication and engagement?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Well, he definitely has arrangements, so it is having arrangements. Trump uses all the time the rule of three, three words. It's make America great, as we know, stop the votes. All of those phrases, catchy phrases and catchy structuring with beginning and an end, three points, 3, 3, 3. In terms of our eye contact, you won't ever see Trump looking off like this. It's eye contact. It's eye contact, it's gestures. It's making an entrance. Even when we are on a virtual environment, we can still make an entrance, and it's positioning. So if you can see me now, if I put my head down the bottom of the screen, this is how many people are presenting. This is not the right space to be presenting. It needs to be just below the top of the screen, and people don't know that and

they diminish themselves by getting it wrong. So there's so much that we can do, volume, actually having an energy flow of an engagement.

David Pembroke:

Yeah, it makes great sense, and what is it about this rule of three? Because you see it in lots of places and you read about it. Why is it three and not five and not one?

Dr Louise Mahler:

The ancients would say omne trium perfectum. That's everything in threes is perfect. Why? The good, the bad, the ugly, the past, the present, the future, everything. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. It seems that people can't remember past three. If I say God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, people who follow him and then friends of God, and then... And we get lost after three, the rhythm of three. And this works exactly the same in music as well.

David Pembroke:

Really? So explain that to me in music. How does that work in music?

Dr Louise Mahler:

A da capo aria, you'll have the beginning, then you'll have a middle section, then you'll go back and do the beginning again. There's structures that psychologically work for people. Everyone knows this one. (singing) That the time, it varies.

David Pembroke:

What's your advice for opening and for grabbing people? Because I find increasingly that the best way to do it is to almost straight away, not messing around, bang, straight into a story of some sort that immediately grabs people's attention, that you are taking them with you on a journey. That you are immediately... Forget the preliminaries of, "Oh, I'm who I am and this is what I'm going to speak about today and these are the things that I want to do." It's like, just leave that because that will emerge as it happens, but the key thing is really to grab people's attention and you really do have to get it early, because if you don't get it early, you'll lose people.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yeah, great. It depends. So that's very much the Ted Talk approach where you come in. People want to have three areas ticked, there's that three again. They want to know who the hell are you and who is here? Who are the people in the room? They want to know how long you're there and they want to know the topic. Now, it may be that you have had someone facilitating who has introduced you, and they know who you are, who's here, the time and the topic. Then you don't have to do it. But if they don't, I can guarantee you that people will be asked, "Who is he again?" How long is this? Because I've got a bus. Was this about that?

So who, time, topic, it's very, very quick, and then like you said, bang, we're into the catchy. So it comes down to the Kurt Vonnegut speech, "Wear sunscreen," where he starts with that, "Wear sunscreen." And you want to hit people with something that relates to where they are. I talk about the funnel effect, perhaps using a story that is a metaphor or joke that leads to your message, and then your message needs to be tight. So it's getting that message out. After the administrative part, message out with something creative around it, and then your agenda.

David Pembroke:

Then away you go. Okay. So about that and understanding audiences, what's your advice to people, again, about how they prepare and how they're putting their framework together and how they're thinking about it? How do they get insights into what is it that is actually in people's heads and in their hearts that they want to know from me in a way that is going to create value for that audience? How do I unlock those insights? How do I understand my audience?

Dr Louise Mahler:

As a briefing for any engagement, I would always ask, how many people? What's their gender? I don't ask what their politics are, but what are their ages? Also, how will they be seated? How is the stage set up? Is there a stage? How high is it? How far is it from the people? Is there a possibility of getting into them? And then knowing as much about what their objective is, what they want from you, what they want to take away. I'm known for delivering deliverables, and that's what people want now, is they want something to take away. So asking, what do they want? What are their problems? What do they want?

And I'll often speak to people beforehand and say, "What brings you here today? What would you love to walk away with?" The most common answer I get to that question is confidence.

David Pembroke:

Confidence? What do you mean by that?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Well, exactly. What do you mean by that? Confidence is such a nebulous term. So often we give people the feeling or the feedback, "You know, you need confidence." That is just abuse, because you can't buy confidence. You can't go out and get it. I believe confidence is competence. So what are the frameworks? What are the skills of delivery? What are the skills of memory? These are the things that you need to know specifically to build that confidence.

David Pembroke:

So when people say, "What I want to take from this is confidence," as in, as you say, I can acquire some more tools for my toolkit which is going to help me to be a better communicator. But more broadly, what else do you think people want when they engage with a speaker on a variety of topics? Is it always that they want to take something away or is it they want to be entertained or they want to be given unique insights, or they want to be given more information about something they care about? What are the most common things that people are looking for?

Dr Louise Mahler:

All of those things. They want their mind changed, they want their habits changed, and they want to laugh, and I believe that laughing creates learning. It's really critical to laugh. Of course, and the ancients knew how to do this, how to incorporate humour. It always has to have a purpose and lead to a message. That's a key thing. Break the ice, break the pattern in some way. So humour is something, it's not just a joke for a joke's sake. So people want to laugh, they want to be entertained, and they want to take something away, a change of mind or a change of body.

David Pembroke:

So what is your advice around humour then? Because I've seen a couple of occasions people try, and you're just like, "Oh my God, that didn't work. That was really not quite right," because it can be, if not pitched correctly, quite a dangerous rhetorical device to use, in my experience anyway. I've seen it go wrong a couple of times.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yeah, isn't that funny though? We see it go wrong a couple of times in our life, or you may not, David, but others do. They say, "Oh, when I was 21, I was in a meeting and something went wrong, therefore I can never do it."

David Pembroke:

Right.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Of course we've got to take risks and we've got to get things wrong to get them right, and then we follow the rules. I like to follow the rule that says we always have a point to humour. So if people tell me that they say a joke, I go, "Right. Well, why? What was your point? What was your message?" So that joke leads to a message. Now, I work with people all the time with different stories or funny stories or jokes that lead to a very tight message about change or transformation.

David Pembroke:

So again, part of *Gravitas*, part of the very good book that you have produced around this topic of confidence in communication is around authenticity. Let's unpack authenticity in a way that's valuable to the audience so that they can, again, acquire a bit of knowledge or a skill that they can then incorporate into their practice.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Boy, is this misunderstood. We use the authenticity word for a million excuses for all sorts of rubbish. So people come to me and they'll say, "Now, I want to bring my authentic self to the engagement." And I think, "All right, okay. Well, who's that? Because that's not your authentic self." And people do upwards inflexion all the time at the end of sentences, and, "That's who I am. That's my authentic self." Well, actually, that's not the way you were born. Authentic self is about your best self, bringing your best self, and how do we find... We were created with an open tube from our lung coming out of our mouth with your voice? Ah, that's your authentic voice. Not, eh, aw... None of those are the authentic voice, so it's about getting back to your best.

David Pembroke:

But that's in terms of that presentation of the quality of your verbal and your physical communication, but what about you as the person to be centred in who you are around your confidence self perhaps such that people will listen to you? So how do you not only do it authentically in the best possible way of presenting the information, education, entertainment, whatever it might be? But how do I discover me so that people know, "Yep, that person, that is them, and I'll listen to them because they're authoritative and I feel that that I'm engaging with someone who is authentic, who's not trying to be somebody else"?

Dr Louise Mahler:

David, I guess that there's a million ways of exploring yourself, all of the leadership profiles that you can do, the psychological profiles that you can do. I know I'm extreme extrovert, so I know that and I know that there's an opposite with introvert and then work within that. I know I like humour. So knowing yourself, and isn't that a lifetime journey? Knowing who you are and what's important to you, what your values are, what describes you, and then having boundaries to that. So when it comes to boundaries, obviously you can't speak about politics, religion. When you're speaking, you can't offend people. It's very difficult to swear, especially if you're a woman on stage. There are boundaries, so knowing within the boundaries how you bring your humour, your personality, and include that in everything you do.

David Pembroke:

How do people then... And again, that's great. So people are reflecting and understanding and where they are. How do you advise people once they've acquired these skills, and it's great that they can go and read Gravititas and go through and understand the ancients and understand all the advice and the practice, and whether it's physical gestures, voice control, how do they build confidence to be able to bring that together, to be able to know that they can communicate more effectively, and so they'll be more comfortable taking that on because they feel more comfortable that they are able to communicate effectively?

Dr Louise Mahler:

David, I see it on a daily basis. There is an almost immediate large leap improvement, and the most common feedback that I get is people say, "Why didn't I know this earlier? Why didn't somebody tell me this?" So we're working through a change plan of understanding what you're doing now. So for some people, they might be standing with their arms very tight, and-

David Pembroke:

Sorry just to interrupt you, but you're making me very nervous as I look up on the screen. I better sit up straight, top of their head. Hang on. Anyway, go on, sorry.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Well, they might have their arms very tight and they're not aware that they do that, so bringing that to awareness and showing how the elbows get off the body. "Oh, okay, I do that. In fact, I can open my whole arms and spread them wide. Oh, I can do that." Now, then it becomes practice, practice, practice. We've forgotten about practice. People do it once and they have four barriers to success. They say, "I feel stupid." Really? Well get over it. "Oh, no, other people will think I look stupid." No, they don't. They don't even notice. Or they'll say, "Oh, that'll take too long to learn." How long would you like it to take? Because it doesn't take too long. "It's too hard." What? Opening your arms like that, too hard for you, is it? Don't think so. So this is the unconscious mind speaking and trying to hold us back in that pattern that we've had, because there's a whole lot of psychology around defence. We've got to get rid of that, so once people realise what they're doing, what the new skills are, wham, huge leap improvement very quickly.

David Pembroke:

Yeah, interesting. Now, excuse my French, but the shit talk in people's heads which they worry about, like as you say, the voice that's saying, "You can't do that," all of those things, how do you address that? How do you teach people to... Oh, okay, here we go. Take me through this.

Dr Louise Mahler:

This is my puppet. So the puppet is the unconscious mind.

David Pembroke:

Okay, right.

Dr Louise Mahler:

We want to say, "Thank you, puppet," because it's only trying to protect you really. It's trying to get you out of danger, but it is speaking rubbish and those four phrases and about how useless you are. Now, funnily enough, when it comes to dealing with this, there are different strategies at different stages. So there's the stage well before an engagement, and then you can look at visualisation, meditation, all of those things, relaxation

techniques. But when you are in panic and this is kicking in in a big way, we actually have to use a much stronger technique which is to just block it out, and the key way to block that out is mantras. So mantras, and of course mantras can't be debatable. So they're usually often three words or a quote from the Bible, so, "I love you, I love you, I love you. Great opportunity, great opportunity, great opportunity."

People make the mistake that they will say, "Oh, this is going to be great," and the unconscious mind, because that's a debatable statement, comes back in and says, "Oh, it wasn't last time. I don't think it will be." So don't do a debatable. I have my favourite. When people ask questions that I don't like, I have a mantra that I've trained to come straight into my mind and I say, "Forgive them, Lord. They know not what they say. Forgive them, Lord. They know not what they say. Forgive them, Lord. They know not what they say," which makes me laugh and is much better than going, "Oh, you bastard you." It's just a waste of time.

David Pembroke:

Yeah. Oh, that's good advice. Now listen, we're coming up close to time, but presence, you talk about presence as well, so just unpack that for me in terms of how people need to think about presence.

Dr Louise Mahler:

David, I would love to make the difference between perception and reality. So body language, and I just got voted 13th in the world in body language.

David Pembroke:

13th?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yeah, thank you. Yes.

David Pembroke:

Well done.

Dr Louise Mahler:

The only Australian.

David Pembroke:

Good on you.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yeah. So the thing is that body language is about the perception of others, and therefore, people think that what we're saying here is you need to do certain things with your presence to have the right perception of others, but that's a small part of it. The other part is what is healthy for you? What is bringing your best? Having presence is about not being buckled over in your posture, not having your head off your body, not having your arms tight. These are all defensive mechanisms. How do you hold yourself straight? Put your head back on your body, get your arms free to gesture, get your body so it's free to move. This is what presence is. It's about feeling comfortable in your body, which is great for your health. It's your very best. It also is perceived in the right way, but that's not our motivation.

David Pembroke:

So a final question in terms of advice, again, to people. Our audience are largely people who work in government communication, so communication is an important part of their roles. Give them three top tips. What are your three top pieces of advice that they should, after they've listened to this podcast, think about in terms of improving the effectiveness of their communication?

Dr Louise Mahler:

Breathe, breathe.

David Pembroke:

Breathe? Okay.

Dr Louise Mahler:

So many people have stopped breathing, are breathing high and don't have the technique to get that breath back down low, and funnily enough, it's not about relaxation. It's actually about kicking the diaphragm free. Saying to the body, "I will not hold my breath in this way."

David Pembroke:

But is that nerves? Is that nerves that capture... Yeah. Okay. It's nerves that captures the breath.

Dr Louise Mahler:

It is, yeah.

David Pembroke:

So breathe through that to get yourself into a space where-

Dr Louise Mahler:

Yeah.

David Pembroke:

Good to go.

Dr Louise Mahler:

How to get rid of nerves? Well, nerves is again, a nebulous term. We release the breath, so release the breath. The second thing is have a neutrality. Have a neutrality of people get their faces doing all sorts of action and response. We need a neutral face, not a dead face, but a neutral face, and the technique for that is to have movement in the head, which is nodding, to have movement in the eyes, which is blinking, and to have them now slightly loose. It's all about the jaw. So this is saying I'm flexible in my neck, which is flexibility of mind. I'm not jammed. I'm flexible in my thinking, the eyes are loose, and my jaw is not tight, which is anger. So having that neutral face, I call it nod, blink, smile like an idiot, nod, blink, smile like an idiot, nod, blink, smile like an idiot.

And then to make things simple, to put everything into threes, omne trium perfectum. Your framework is in threes. Your sentences have three key words, your messages are three words. Three, three, three, everything in three. If you've got seven things to talk about, how about you don't? You've got three. And if you want all those seven, then subgroup them under three headings. Three, simplicity.

David Pembroke:

Dr. Louise Mahler, that was a masterclass, and so thank you so much for sharing your insights. And the book, Gravitas, obviously available in all sorts of places, but how best can people connect with you to speak more and to learn more and to engage with you so as that they can acquire... I'm not sure that there's a more important skill, particularly for people who work in the function of government communication, to become more effective communicators, so how best can they stay engaged with you?

Dr Louise Mahler:

It's been ignored, David, and the way to get better is to ask for help, and to get help, Louise Mahler, I'm so easy to find, and it's Dr. Louise Mahler or Louise Mahler. I'm on the internet, louisemahler.com.au, very simple.

David Pembroke:

13th in the world, heading up. We're going to get you higher than that. Hopefully, this podcast... Who voted on the positioning?

Dr Louise Mahler:

I don't know. The other people are all from America and the USA. You don't enter, you just get a notification to say-

David Pembroke:

You finished 13th.

Dr Louise Mahler:

Mm-hmm.

David Pembroke:

Did you think, who finished first?

Dr Louise Mahler:

In the body language field, they're were always detectives in the United States that win.

David Pembroke:

So I suppose that's it. You've got to spend more time in the states to rocket up those charts, but listen, thank you for... See, the thing is what we try to do with this podcast, this podcast is about practical skills, learning from others, and today, that was a great master class. And the people watching the podcast maybe on YouTube would've noticed me scribbling all the way to be able to take away, I've got lots of things for me for my presentation and I know the audience would've got a lot from you as well, so thank you so much for being so generous with your time and your expertise with us today. So Dr. Louise Mahler, thank you very much for joining us on GovComms, and for you, the audience, thank you for coming back again. So there you go, continuing to deliver value for you people wherever you are in the world, that big diverse audience that we have. You've got so much to work on, and I think buying that book and really starting to think about it and connecting with Louise and her content.

If you just think maybe over this next 12 months, maybe 2025 is the year that you are going to improve your communication. You've thought about it before, no doubt. You've talked about it before, no doubt. Do it,

make it. There are so much action, so much value there that you can take, and the book *Gravitas* has it all. Very grateful that you have come back once again and a rating or a review of the program, please, on your favourite pod catcher. It does help us to be found by more people, and the audience continues to grow as people in government continue to work and improve their communication skills, because as I said at the beginning of the program, it is time, people.

We have to motivate, we have to agitate. We really have to mobilise to be able to build communication capability, because now more than ever, it is so critical that if we are to maintain social cohesion, if we are to restore trust, that will happen when people know and understand, and that only comes through effective communication, of the type that Louise was talking about, but in your writing, in production of your animations, in your podcasting, in whatever it is that you're doing. So anyway, maybe 2025, as I said, the other day, is the year of government communications, but let's see.

Anyway, so many episodes, we've been going since 2015. Go to the GovComms Institute. Also, as I say, read that blog, because I really think we've got to keep agitating about this change. But a joy to speak to Dr. Louise Mahler today, and we look forward to bringing you another great story from the world of government communications in the next fortnight, but for the moment, my name is David Pembroke and it's bye for now.

Voice Over:

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