

'I'D LIKE TO THANK...'

It's not only celebrities who are picking up awards this season – businesses across the country are also celebrating the recognition of their achievements at a regional and national level. Presence coach **Elizabeth Kuhnke** advises on the best way to act when all eyes are on you

It may be hard to believe when they seem so naturally gifted at public speaking, but even the stars need a little bit of guidance when it comes to self control. In the case of the Oscars, all 191 nominees this year have received a tutorial DVD to help with their acceptance speeches.

Spring is traditionally awards season and while celebrities are picking up their Grammys, Baftas, Iftas, and Oscars, businesses across the country are also celebrating the recognition of their achievements at a regional and national level. Whether you are a winner or a loser, it is important to remain controlled to ensure the emotions you display reflect the image you want to project.

So how best to act when all eyes are on you?

TOP TIPS FOR WINNERS

- When your name is announced, show gratitude by smiling and giving an appreciative look at your partner, date or audience. Keep your arms loosely placed by your sides to show you're relaxed and in control.
- Let your emotions show. Feel free to express joy and surprise, ensuring you do so with grace and goodwill.
- There is nothing wrong with a few tears of joy and gratitude. When you cry you're expressing emotion, which lets people see what matters to you.
- When giving your speech, make sure your voice is upbeat and by keeping your words short, snappy and sincere you'll avoid boring your audience.
- Thank the people who helped you get where you are today; demonstrating your appreciation is the most successful way to remain graceful.

- When coming face to face with others nominees, reach out to them and let them know what you respect about their work. Ensure you speak with sincerity to avoid coming across as condescending. By acting with grace and enthusiasm you'll demonstrate the characteristics of a winner, award or not.

TOP TIPS FOR LOSERS

- If luck hasn't been on your side, act with poise and decorum and save your tears, pouts and screams of frustration for behind closed doors.
- Demonstrate a calm expression, and be happy for the winner. Negative emotions will make you look like a bad sport.
- A genuine smile and eye contact with your audience will make you appear gracious.
- Paying compliments to the winner and commending the people you worked with is the most successful way to remain graceful.

Treat everyone with respect, and they in turn will respect you.

- When you speak to the winner, lean forward in their direction to show affinity and alignment with them. Sincerely compliment them on their work and congratulate their win.
- Finally, behave like a winner and you'll look like one!

Elizabeth Kuhnke, is managing director and founder of Kuhnke Communication and has over 20 years experience working with FTSE 100 companies in key areas relating to public speaking and image projection. Her international best-selling book **Body Language for Dummies** is out now, €19, Kuhnkecommunication.com

