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## Brookings Executive Education

A Partnership of The Brookings Institution and  
Washington University in St. Louis

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### Regulating Emotional “Blips”



**Hillary Anger Elfenbein**, the John Wallace, Jr. and Ellen Wallace Distinguished Professor at the Olin Business School, teaches an Executive MBA class.  
*Photo by: James Byard/WUSTL Photos*

Hillary Anger Elfenbein has a message for public- and private-sector professionals: “When it comes to career advancement, technical skills get you in the door. But emotional and social skills help you get ahead.”

Elfenbein, a professor of organizational behavior at Washington University in St. Louis’ Olin Business School, studies the effect of feelings in the workplace, including cultural differences that create challenges for global leaders. Her work recently was featured in *The Atlantic* in an article titled “The Personality Trait That Makes People Feel Comfortable Around You.”

Elfenbein also teaches Brookings Executive Education’s [Interpersonal Savvy for Leaders](#) course. The two-day class focuses on various aspects of resonant leadership.

Participants complete comprehensive self-assessments, examine the different types of emotional and social intelligence, and engage in small-group exercises designed to build more-productive work and personal relationships.

“Like math or any other form of intelligence, some people are born with natural talent,” Elfenbein said. “Yet, with motivation and practice, everyone can develop greater self-awareness. Everyone can learn to look on the bright side. And everyone can better regulate his or her behavior.”

The upcoming [Interpersonal Savvy for Leaders](#) course will be held April 17-18, 2019, at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. For more information, email [registrar@brookings.edu](mailto:registrar@brookings.edu).

[Read Elfenbein’s article here.](#)

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## Solving the Right Problems



Why do “solutions” to thorny challenges unravel weeks or months after they are implemented? Because the decision makers involved in the process never identified the right problems to solve.

Brookings Executive Education’s [Problem Solving Through Critical Thinking](#) teaches public-sector leaders how to find, frame and formulate problems and eliminate biases. Class concepts are based on *Critical Thinking@Olin*, curriculum that won the inaugural MBA Roundtable Innovator Award. The MBA Roundtable is a global association of business schools that advances graduate management education.

Critical thinking also is the subject of Brookings Executive Education’s next “Think. Learn. Lead.” paper, authored by Jackson Nickerson, professor of organization and strategy at Washington University in Louis’ Olin Business School. A synopsis of — and link to — the piece will appear in the April newsletter.

The upcoming [Problem Solving Through Critical Thinking](#) course will be held April 23-24, 2019, at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

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## Master Communications



Almost two decades ago, former opera singer Allison Shapira turned her stage presence into executive presence.

She realized that techniques she had learned as a classically trained soprano — like proper breathing, projection, expression and delivery — were also important public speaking tools. So she started her own training and coaching firm to help leaders around the world “find their authentic voice.”

In 2016, the founder and chief executive officer of Global Public Speaking and adjunct lecturer in public policy at Harvard University joined the Brookings Executive Education faculty. Shapira teaches the [Communicating for Success](#) course. She also is the author of a new book, *Speak with Impact: How to Command the Room and Influence Others* published in October 2018 with HarperCollins Leadership.

Both the class and the book promote an oral-communication approach that “blends musical principles with adult-learning methods.” Content centers on the development of a clear, concise, persuasive message; ability to adapt the message to different audiences; and skill to tell a genuine, relatable story.

“People everywhere are afraid of public speaking,” she said. “And it’s OK to get nervous; getting nervous is natural and normal. One of the ways we can reduce the impact of that nervousness is through practice and routines that build our confidence.”

Do government leaders have an advantage when it comes to public speaking? “Yes, they do. Because they represent something larger than themselves, government leaders often have an easier time connecting with a sense of purpose — which makes it easier to find their authentic voice.”

See Allison Shapira’s thought paper [Communicating for Success](#).

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## Upcoming Courses

- [Maximizing Human Capital](#), April 10-11, 2019
  - [Creating High-Performance Teams](#), April 15-16, 2019
  - [Interpersonal Savvy](#), April 17-18, 2019
  - [Problem Solving Through Critical Thinking](#), April 23-24, 2019
  - [Inside Congress](#), May 6-9, 2019
  - [Leading Innovation and Creating Value](#), May 7-8, 2019
  - [Visioning and Leading Change](#), May 13-14, 2019
  - [Art and Science of Negotiation](#), May 14-15, 2019
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## Let us hear from you.

We welcome comments about our newsletter and would like to know what additional information the BEE community would like to receive. Please send your input to Katie Hood at [registrar@brookings.edu](mailto:registrar@brookings.edu).

Thank you!

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