

Notes to staff

Unintended Opportunities

- This is designed for assembly or tutor time.
- You can listen to the Pearl episode anywhere you get your podcasts to get the full story.
- You can also download the transcript for your own preparation.
- The assembly has been edited to fit more with students and be relevant to them.
- There are notes at the bottom of each slide for reference.
- We would love to hear how it has gone, email admin@pixl.org.uk



PiXL

Charm

IGNITING LEADERS, CHANGING LIVES

What do we mean by 'charm'?

- Started as 'magic charm' or 'song' or 'enchantment'
- Then, 'to win over by treating pleasingly, delight'
- Then, 'a pleasing quality, irresistible power to please and attract'

**But when is
charm a
problem?**

When charm causes chaos

NEWS

[Home](#) | [UK](#) | [World](#) | [Business](#) | [Culture](#) | [Politics](#) | [Health](#) | [Tech](#) | [InDepth](#) | [BBC Verify](#) | [Climate](#)

[Business](#) | [Economy](#) | [Technology of Business](#) | [AI Business](#)

The collapse of Enron and the dark side of business

3 August 2021



GETTY IMAGES

Washington DC, 2002: Sherron Watkins recounting to Senators how she uncovered the accounting scandal at Enron

- A large energy company
- Declared bankruptcy
- Expanded too fast
- Hidden things from investors
- High-risk accounting
- A big cover-up

We can fall for charm

Can you think of any characters in films who are charming but manipulative?

**Charm is not
always a bad
thing though.**

“Charm will not feed the hungry, end wars, fight evil, yet I happen to believe that the lives of almost all of us are the better for encountering charm...It provides a form of necessary relief—relief from the doldrums and the drab everydayness of life. Charm widens the lens, heightens the colour of life, intensifies and sweetens it. We can, of course, all live without it. What a great pity, though, to do so.”

Joseph Epstein in his book *Charm: The Elusive Enchantment*.

**The 5 'Charming
Techniques' that can
be used to help or
harm.**

1) Performing Authenticity

This is when people adjust the performance to appear ‘real’ and ‘relatable’.

Key question to ask: If there were no cameras here to see this, would they still be doing it or is this a performance to manipulate our opinions?

2) Demasking

This is when we allow people to see our vulnerable selves.

Key question to ask: When people allow us to see their vulnerability, do we then mock it or do we really appreciate seeing the 'real' them?

For example, a celebrity without make-up or a sports player in tears?

3) Breaking from routine

This is when people allow us to see ‘behind the scenes’ so we feel like we really know them.

Key questions to ask:

How do I know this is real and not manufactured to look real?

When has this worked and I have really loved finding out behind the scenes information?

4) Re-staging or un-staging

This is when a famous person appears where there is no stage

Key questions to ask:

If this was a purely natural moment that was not staged, why are there cameras there?

Why is it important that we capture these 'un-staged' moments? What does it help us see?

5) Equalizing

This is when people present diverse audiences as a coherent community and bring them together in unity.

Key questions to ask:

What change is this event trying to bring about?

How do people feel at events where they are together with others who want the same thing?

**These techniques
can be used to help
or to harm.**

How can we avoid the 'charm trap'?

- 1) Don't believe everything you see.
- 2) Check out that what you see is REAL.
- 3) Check that actions and words match.



How can we use charm for good?

- 1) Let people see the real you and connect with others.
- 2) Bring different people together for a purpose.
- 3) Be polite and friendly, people feel good when you are!



“We live in an age where fame and celebrity, stardust and charm are celebrated and prized. And there is a place for charm, life would be dull without it and connection can be formed using it. But let’s also never forget to engage our brains and our discernment so we don’t fall for appearance over reality.”

PiXL

@ The PiXL Club Ltd. 2026. All Rights Reserved.

This resource is strictly for the use of The PiXL Club ("PiXL") subscribing schools and their students for as long as they remain PiXL subscribers. It may NOT be copied, sold, or transferred to or by a third party or used by the school after the school subscription ceases. Until such time it may be freely used with the PiXL subscribing school by their teachers and authorised staff and any other use or sale thereof is strictly prohibited. All opinions and contributions are those of the authors. The contents of this resource are not connected with, or endorsed by, any other company, organisation or institution. This resource may contain third party copyright material not owned by PiXL and as such is protected by law. Any such copyright material used by PiXL is either provided under licence or pending a licence. PiXL endeavour to trace and contact third party copyright owners. If there are any inadvertent omissions or errors in the acknowledgements or usage, this is unintended and PiXL will remedy these on written notification.

PiXL

@ The PiXL Club Ltd. 2026. All Rights Reserved.

This resource is strictly for the use of The PiXL Club ("PiXL") subscribing schools and their students for as long as they remain PiXL subscribers. It may NOT be copied, sold, or transferred to or by a third party or used by the school after the school subscription ceases. Until such time it may be freely used with the PiXL subscribing school by their teachers and authorised staff and any other use or sale thereof is strictly prohibited. All opinions and contributions are those of the authors. The contents of this resource are not connected with, or endorsed by, any other company, organisation or institution. This resource may contain third party copyright material not owned by PiXL and as such is protected by law. Any such copyright material used by PiXL is either provided under licence or pending a licence. PiXL endeavour to trace and contact third party copyright owners. If there are any inadvertent omissions or errors in the acknowledgements or usage, this is unintended and PiXL will remedy these on written notification.