

Essential tips to GET HEARD!

1. WHAT DOES YOUR VALUE WEIGH?

Some people seem to have been born confident, relaxed and happy to speak up to share their views and ideas, but for some of us this has been a little bit or a lot harder.



Do *you* give more weight to the views and needs of other people than you do to your own?

The “see-saw of value” as I call it waivers up and down in relationships but overall it should be pretty even with the naturally occurring give and take of life.

Actions:

Take a moment to notice the “weight” and value you give to the people in your life; (colleagues, friends, family, and children) and how that compares to the weight and value that you give to yourself ... do you give them more “weight”? do you value others time, opinions and ideas more than you do your own?

- If you answer yes to the above question: what one thing can you do this week to get more balance and give yourself more value?
- What difference will this make in your life?

2. BREATHE

In our cave dwelling days we responded to stress of a sabre tooth tiger by running away or staying and fighting; now known as “the fight or flight response”

Of course we have evolved since those days (most of us!) but we still have this same response to stress; our hearts beat faster, blood pressure goes right up, our breathing quickens as the adrenaline rush races through our system - all to get us ready to attack or run for our lives!



This would be quite an appropriate and useful response if we happened to see a mad dog running towards us, but, as is often the case – the chances are that you are simply at work and been asked to give a talk – I think you’d agree that jumping up and running out of the room or attacking your boss maybe wouldn’t be the wisest of options!

When we are anxious the **first change that happens** is our breathing automatically changes to prepare us for “flight or fight” and as this is the

Essential tips to GET HEARD!

first change our bodies make, it makes perfect sense for this to be the first thing to do when we feel anxious.

Actions:

Check your breathing as you are reading this: Is your chest moving up and down as you breathe or is your tummy moving up and down?

You want to be 'belly breathing' by that I mean that your tummy moves up and down and not your chest and shoulders.

TIP If you know you need to speak in a meeting or are going to give a talk; wear clothes with a loose fitting waistband that way you can easily practice the belly breathing on the way to the meeting or talk and during it as well.

3. SELF TALK



No it's not mad to talk to yourself!

There is a link between what we say to ourselves and how we feel. Try it... "I am rubbish at talking in public and it will be a nightmare" – *I didn't even like to type that!* Now try "**I am calm, confident and very capable and every time I speak in public I get better and better**" - how different do you feel when you say positive things about yourself? (You wouldn't say horrible things to a child so stop doing it to yourself!)

Actions:

As there are often reasons for negative thoughts, you may like to start by saying "hello" and welcoming the voice in your head; and asking questions like 'what do you want for me?' – It's probably that part of you that wants to keep you safe.

Yes I know that may sound a little odd to some people - but we are dealing with your unconscious mind here – not the logical conscious part of you!

(Sometimes, also asking yourself 'whose voice is this?' can be a revelation as it may be that your mum and dad used to say these words to you and by acknowledging that it's somebody else's voice you can choose not to accept it from this moment on).

Identify the feeling/s you create associated with your negative thoughts, notice the direction the feeling moves in – (note: you may well be confused at this stage – this is normal and good as confusion is the first step to new learning).

Once you work out which direction the feeling moves (note: there is no right or wrong way it is what it is) simply spin the feeling back the opposite direction and notice in what way the negative feeling changes.

Most people claim it reduces with most saying it disappears all together.

You can choose to do it for every time you have a negative thought consciously until it becomes unconscious.

Essential tips to GET HEARD!

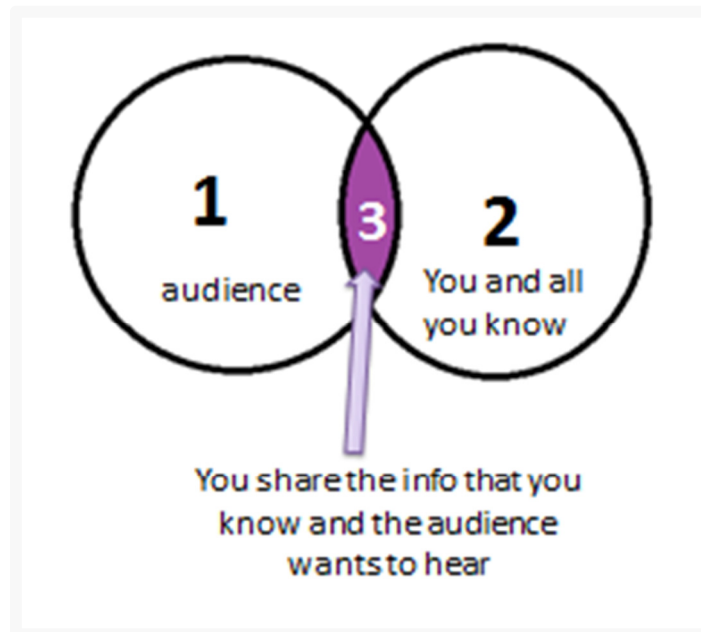
4. THE AUDIENCE IS QUEEN / KING

Show the people you are talking with that you care about them *and* the time they are taking to listen to you.

I know you *do* value them and you need to *demonstrate* this to them.

Take time in your planning to think who will be there, and what might they like to hear / know.

NEVER miss out WIIFM = what's in it for me! (That's your audience not you!)



Actions:

Always research your audience; here are some of the questions I try to get answered:

- Male or female and ages of group?
- Public sector / private sector / self-employed (if self-employed what kind of businesses?)
- What outcomes are they expecting from me (is it the same as I am planning?!)
- Are they choosing to be there or told to attend?
- What type of talk and style has gone down well in the past; and what has bombed!
- What challenges are they facing?
- Get into their shoes as much as possible and deliver from their perspective

Essential tips to GET HEARD!

5. CONNECT, ENGAGE - INFLUENCE / PURSUADE



– join in the dots between you and the audience

Over the last 15 years I have been asked to speak and train staff in areas which have been compulsory to their job i.e. not voluntary) and you can just imagine what deep joy it is when faced with folded arms and tight lipped expressions as quite often they want to be anywhere else than in that room

How do I turn this around to get fabulous feedback from attendees who often come up to me and thank me for an interactive fun and informative session?

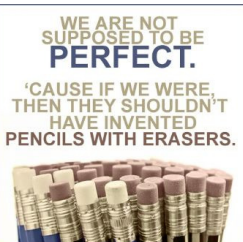
Actions:

Remember it's not personal how the audience feel and act when they arrive; it just means you will have to do all you can (see tips above and below) to build the bridge between you, your talk and your audience:

- Arrive early and mingle; get to know people and then by the time you get to talk you will have a few friendly faces smiling back at you!
- Get interactive as soon as you can; ask questions, do a quiz, have a prize – it's amazing what a box of chocolates can do to warm an aloof audience – work out what is appropriate for *your* talk and *your* audience
- Use open body language, palms open, and smile lots (it's amazing how easy it is to forget to smile when there is so much going on in your head!!)
- Use props: take something with you that can be built into your talk – this not only lets people know that you have taken some time to think about your talk, and them (they will like you for that) it also gets their interest and attention from the word 'go' and keeps people wondering "what's she going to do with that stick" etc!
- Think of an audience as made up of individual people that you like and what would *they* like to hear, what would they enjoy and find valuable etc
- Ensure (where possible) you love the topic of your talk; when you do, you will be far more natural, authentic and enthusiastic and this is contagious and very persuasive if you need it to be.

6. AND FINALLY ...

Be yourself, you have all that you need within you to make a fabulous speaker; yes we can all learn more and up skill ourselves – so allow yourself to be 'enough as you are'



Be yourself and “speak in your voice”