

Be Heard—a Non-Fail Recipe

By Judith Filek—President
Impact Communications, Inc.

We all know that a speaker needs to be heard, whether it is in giving an update on a project, advising a client on an investment opportunity or explaining the functionality of a new product. Yet so often, business professionals are not heard. They do not connect with their listeners. They bury their points by over-talking an issue or by going into too much detail. If you really want someone to get your message follow these tips.

Speak louder. Louder voices are taking more seriously. A louder voice automatically signals “This is important. Please listen.” On the other hand, when a speaker has a soft voice, listeners may assume the person is insecure, nervous and lacks confidence in his or her beliefs. Additionally, if listeners strain to hear you, they will eventually tune out or look at their phones. They may also try to take advantage of someone who has a soft voice.

Speak slowly. If something is important, it can’t be misunderstood. Speaking slowly insures that people will have time to process the message and stay with you. If you speak quickly, people can’t sort and understand your ideas fast enough; they can’t ask their questions. Inevitably, they will miss some points, especially if this is new information. Additionally, when you speak quickly, there is a chance accents will not be understood or articulation will be sloppy. The lips, teeth and tongue can’t get into the right position to say the words clearly.

Intensify the eye contact. People judge honesty or credibility by the strength of your eye contact. Look at your listeners, one at a time, with sustained eye contact. Show them you have nothing to hide and that you want and expect them to take your ideas seriously. A fleeting glance will not establish the connection you need to win them over.

Move closer. If you have the opportunity to move towards your listeners, do it. Do not stay behind a podium or tethered to your laptop. When you move towards your listeners to deliver key points, they see that you are trying to connect with them. They become more attentive.

Net it out. Do not over-talk or go into too many details. Decisions are made easier when your ideas are simply expressed. Short, pithy sentences with strong adjectives or adverbs are just the thing to gain and hold people’s attention. They make your points stand out.

Show value. To be won over, listeners have to see value. What’s in it for them? If you can answer that question with clear benefits, it is likely your message will be heard. Anytime you can support your message with numbers or statistics, rather than generalizations, people take notice.

Being heard is not automatic. It takes paying attention to what you say and how you say it. Utilizing these seven tips will help you to be taken more seriously and eliminate the risk of people wondering what they should do.

Question: *What have you found helps you to be heard? We’re interested in your reaction to this article. Click here – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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