

BE TIME WISE – JULY 2016



6 Reasons Employees Must Speak Up to Thrive at Work



In today's workplace, more people are keeping quiet and are just going with the flow – thinking that this is the best way to advance, get noticed and / or win the political gaming that takes place at work. For others, it is survival.

What if I told you that keeping silent hurts you more in the long run? It's true. The less you say, the more you enable others to define your voice and your identity. The opposite of this is also true. If you say too much, you create unnecessary noise, you become vulnerable to criticism – and if you don't have authority you are at risk of ever acquiring it. Therefore, your voice must be balanced and objective. You must learn when to and when not to speak-up. ***But the key is to remain consistent.***

That being said, here are the **six reasons** employees must voice their opinions consistently at work:

1. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE



Your performance at work begins to wane when your voice is not heard. Speaking-up fuels discussion, ideation and group-think. It's important to discuss issues openly in order to get input, feedback and invite perspective. As you voice your opinion, those around you provide inputs that you can then evaluate as you decipher your final decisions that may influence your plan of action.

Voicing your opinion can create and convert those same conversations into meaningful research to help you drive more sustainable performance outcomes.

2. COMMAND RESPECT

When you voice your opinion consistently, you set a tone for yourself.

You begin to command respect from those who are not courageous enough to express themselves. But with expectation, comes responsibility. Therefore, be careful with the tone your voice creates and manage it. I have found that most people who speak-up, aren't strategic. Many are "loose cannons" that just want attention and end up losing any momentum they have acquired along the way.



A consistent voice will command respect only when it is responsibly managed.

3. STRENGTHEN YOUR INFLUENCE



A strong voice in the workplace can strengthen your influence. Many times the one with a consistent voice is the individual that is asked to lead a meeting, start a new project or is the one that is asked to speak with those who have influence to move an initiative forward. Once your voice is discovered, it can help mobilize your influence in ways that connect you with the other prominent voices in the organization.

4. UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES

A consistent voice creates unexpected opportunities. For example, someone heard you speak-up in a meeting and found your opinion to be valuable enough to share with the President of your company. Sounds far-fetched but I have seen this happen many times. A consistent voice allows your talent to be discovered and creates opportunities previously unseen. Happenstance becomes your best friend.


Think of it this way: the internet is a field of opportunities. If you're browsing or searching activities are focused and consistent, the likelihood of you finding new opportunities that you didn't expect increases. Make sure your voice is heard and you are strategic in how you ask questions and share your points of view. Every week, your ability to speak-up consistently should create a new set of opportunities. If not, your voice weakens. Begin to measure your effectiveness. At the very least, be certain that your voice is invited to participate in important conversations at work.



5. SOLIDIFY YOUR BRAND



You know that you have a consistent voice at work once you have solidified your brand; perhaps a nickname that people can rely upon. For example, early in my career – they used to call me “spark-plug” because I was known for making things happen! In other words, I was always called upon when a project wasn’t building enough momentum and needed a spark.

 If you are deliberate in how you enjoy expressing yourself at work – others will take notice and people will appreciate your consistency and utilize the predictability of your voice. Your colleagues will grow to trust you faster as your brand defines your competencies and the value you bring to the table and represent as an individual.

5. ACCELERATES YOUR CAREER

There is a reason that certain people advance more quickly than others in their careers. They have mastered the art of speaking-up by having a balanced voice that their colleagues respect and admire. Their voice,

- i. enables the organization,
- ii. challenges the status quo and cultivates innovation,
- iii. inspires those that don't have a voice,
- iv. increases their market relevancy & value,
- v. provides leadership and earns trust from the industry they serve, etc.

As you mature in your career, so should your voice. For some people, they never find their voice because they didn't have the courage to create one (they just kept borrowing the voices of others). It takes time and only you can create the voice that truly defines you. Be more vocal, test your ideas and take note about how people react to them.



Work is not about winning popularity contests, it's about winning the respect of your peers because you are able to lead people and help grow the organization's value with your voice.



8 SECRETS OF GREAT COMMUNICATORS



When it comes to communication, we all tend to think we're pretty good at it. Truth is, even those of us who are good communicators aren't nearly as good as we think we are. This overestimation of our ability to communicate is magnified when interacting with people we know well.

When communicating with people we know well, we make presumptions about what they understand—presumptions that we don't dare make with strangers. This tendency to overestimate how well we communicate (and how well we're understood) is so prevalent that psychologists even have a name for it: closeness-communication bias.

Taking Action

Communication is the real work of leadership; you simply can't become a great leader until you are a great communicator. Great communicators inspire people. They create a connection that is real, emotional, and personal. And great communicators forge this connection through an understanding of people and an ability to speak directly to their needs in a manner that they are ready to hear.

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." - George Bernard Shaw

The eight strategies that follow will help you to overcome the communication bias that tends to hold us back with everyone we encounter, especially those we know well. Apply these strategies and watch your communication skills reach new heights.



1. SPEAK TO GROUPS AS INDIVIDUALS



As a leader, you often have to speak to groups of people. Whether a small team meeting or a company-wide gathering, you need to develop a level of intimacy in your approach that makes each individual in the room feel as if you're speaking directly to him or her. The trick is to eliminate the distraction of the crowd so that you can deliver your message just as you would if you were talking to a single person. You want to be emotionally genuine and exude the same feelings, energy, and attention you would one-on-one (as opposed to the anxiety that comes with being in front of people). The ability to pull this off is the hallmark of great leadership communication.

2. TALK SO PEOPLE WILL LISTEN

Great communicators read their audience (groups and individuals) carefully to ensure they aren't wasting their breath on a message that people aren't ready to hear. Talking, so people will listen means you adjust your message on the fly to stay with your audience (what they're ready to hear and how they're ready to hear it). Droning on to ensure you've said what you wanted to say does not have the same effect on people as engaging them in a meaningful dialogue in which there is an exchange of ideas. Resist the urge to drive your point home at all costs. When your talking leads to people asking good questions, you know you're on the right track.



3. LISTEN SO PEOPLE WILL TALK

One of the most disastrous temptations for a leader is to treat communication as a one-way street. When you communicate, you must give people ample opportunity to speak their minds. If you find that you're often having the last word in conversations, then this is likely something you need to work on.



Listening isn't just about hearing words; it's also about listening to the tone, speed, and volume of the voice. What is being said? Anything not being said? What hidden messages below the surface exist? When someone is talking to you, stop everything else and listen fully until the other person has finished speaking. When you are on a phone call, don't type an email. When you're meeting with someone, close the door and sit near the person so you can focus and listen. Simple behaviors like these will help you stay in the present moment, pick up on the cues the other person sends, and make it clear that you will really hear what he or she is saying.

4. Connect emotionally

Maya Angelou said it best: “People will forget what you said and did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.” As a leader, your communication is impotent if people don’t connect with it on an emotional level. This is hard for many leaders to pull off because they feel they need to project a certain persona. Let that go. To connect with your people emotionally, you need to be transparent. Be human. Show them what drives you, what you care about, what makes you get out of bed in the morning. Express these feelings openly, and you’ll forge an emotional connection with your people.



EXCELLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE – MATURITY IS AN EXPECTED ELEMENT

How do you create excellence in the workplace?

You would be surprised the number of immature people we have in the workplace nowadays - the tantrums, the yelling, the throwing of things and outright expression of emotions that is detrimental to work and the office environment.

Emotional maturity is an expected trait in the workplace, especially when excellence is expected at work. To be mature at work is a way of bringing excellence in the workplace. To be mature means you are very self-aware of the how you feel about yourself.

This self-awareness makes you conscious about your feelings and why you feel the way you feel. You put it under control or you do not feel the need to show it so openly that it affects your colleagues in the workplace. You must know the demonstration of these emotions can affect the morale of people around you.

You need to learn to be sincere with yourself before you can have a certain amount of maturity; i.e. the maturity you bring to work everyday. Learn to be sincere with yourself with the kind of sincerity that disarms the dramas that feels compelled to come out and yells to the rest, “Look at me, look at me.” There is no place for this sort of immaturity at work. You need to do better if this sounds like you.

If you want to bring excellence in the workplace, learn to adjust, modulate and direct your emotions. Think before acting and understand that your actions can affect the rest,

especially team member who works closely with you. How can someone approach you if they feel you are in a foul mood and days on ends? How effective and efficient can you be then? How will people around you achieve excellence in the workplace?



Maturity allows you to understand that passion and persistence to pursue goals at work beyond monetary returns gives you a purpose of service in life. With passion, persistence and patience, excellence can be achieved in the workplace. You as an individual can inspire the rest to show their best at work without even trying too hard because you would have already created the environment to do so.

When you behave maturely at work, you become discerning. You know small acts can carry big meanings. Just like a mother who pats and encourages a child. A small act but it helps the child build confidence. Maturity brings excellence in the workplace because it allows you to respect and appreciate the work others do, and not look at it as an action to gain favors. More importantly ego is parked aside because of the level of maturity as a professional.

Maturity must exist if you want to have excellence in the workplace. A work place that is filled with people who are mature, ask how things can be done better. They do not ask why it is not done my way. Parking ego aside, more work can be done better and more efficiently. That can only come when maturity is an element everyone expects to carry to the workplace.

POSITIVE THINKING IN THE WORKPLACE: 3 SIMPLE STEPS

Positive thinking in the workplace is extremely important for career builder newbies in order to turn in work that goes beyond expectations. Positive thinking is a mental attitude. What we think affects how we behave. It is therefore important for us to begin with our thoughts.

It is a mental attitude that expects good and constructive results. However, it does not deny the existence of negative results or things beyond one's control. It is a way of looking at things from a different perspective - One that concentrates on solutions rather than problems.



When our thinking is positive, our attitude is positive and we transfer a feeling of success to our colleagues. In other words – we transfer energy and enthusiasm to those around us. People feel good towards us and are more willing to help us.

Positive thinkers know that when things go bad or unexpected result occurs, it is only momentary. That positive result is achievable.

If you are new to applying positive thinking, here are 3 simple steps I suggest:

Practicing Positive Thinking in the Workplace #1

One cannot pay lip service to positive thinking. You need to practice and make positive thinking your prevailing attitude towards life. This will transfer towards positive thinking in the workplace. So, how do you make it a prevailing attitude? Entertain positive thoughts. It takes as much effort to think about the negative as it is for the positive. Concentrate on the positive and expect a positive result. Associate with colleagues with a positive attitude. Read inspiring quotes. These are simple ways to create a habit of positive thinking in the workplace.

Practicing Positive Thinking in the Workplace #2

Positive thinking in the workplace is solutions thinking. When a project goes bad and not in the desired direction, a positive thinking person concentrates on solutions instead of the problem. Ever noticed some colleagues have a natural tendency to point fingers when things do not go right? They tend to whine and complain instead of starting to work on a solution immediately? Positive thinkers live up to the challenge of the problem and commit themselves to seeking a solution to the problem. They do not dwell in unproductive activities.

Practicing Positive Thinking in the Workplace #3

***The Positive Thinker**
sees the invisible
Feels the intangible
And achieves the
Impossible!*

As a career builder newbie, you will probably get new assignments that you may not be familiar with. How many times have you thought – “Oh no, I am never ever able to do this.” When that happens, you end up dwelling on it and wasting precious time. Positive thinking in the work place involves thinking in these words – “I can”, “I will”, “I am able”, “I am ready”. It also involves taking the initiative to seek answers and solutions. And to be proactive in learning about the information needed to complete the assignment at hand. A positive thinker in the workplace concentrates on the assignment and is not distracted by negative thoughts.

Is positive thinking in the workplace easy? Well, it is as easy as you want it to be. It is also as difficult as you expect it to be. There will be times when you cannot help but feel negative. When such feelings arise, remind yourself it is as easy to look for a positive angle to things as it is for a negative angle.



5 EFFECTIVE WORK HABITS FOR FRESH GRADUATES

Discover the 5 most effective work habits for freshies starting out in the working world.

Being new in the working world, I am sure you are eager to show off your newfound skills and knowledge. However, out there in the working world some basic work effective habits can increase your productivity. By being consistently effective at your work increases your chances of success in your career.

THE 5 EFFECTIVE WORK HABITS ARE:

1. Volunteer for Assignments

One of the best ways to signal that you are a keen learner and are not afraid of hard work is to volunteer for assignments, especially assignments that no one seems interested to do.

However, before that do assess your own skills and knowledge to see if you can confidently accomplish it. If you are confident in completing the task in full and perfection, go ahead and volunteer for it.

However, do remember one thing. Under promise and over deliver on the assignment you volunteered. Do not be too confident that you turn a perfect opportunity into mess. Once you start the project, see it till the end. You would be seen as someone who is courageous enough to take on additional assignments. You would also be seen as someone who follows through in your work. This is the first habit you need to internalize.

2. Be Nice To People

I am sure we have all heard this often enough. Be nice to people regardless of their rank and designation. It sounds philosophical but when you are nice to people they go out of their way to help you. And being new in an organization you would never know what sort of help you would need. Colleagues often like to work with nice talented people. When you have this effective work habit you increase the chances of people wanting you to work on their team.

Being nice to people is just common courtesy. There is nothing extra ordinary about this particular habit that you need special skills. A smile in the morning and a “Good Morning” is a good start. In this day and age, people working in pressurized environments often use stress as an excuse when they blow up. Is this necessary? Nice is often reciprocated by nice. In fact, it can lower your stress level.



3. Prioritize Your Work

We all love to start work on things that are close to our hearts. However, often these may not be the most urgent and important in our list of tasks in the workplace. When you select things you are more interested in rather than work that is more important or urgent, you lower your chances of success.

Have a list of things to do according to its strategic importance to your company. Know your role in completing the tasks at hand in order to achieve that corporate goal. When you prioritize your work, you are more productive and that increases your chances of career success.

4. Stay Positive



As someone new in the working world it is very easy to feel down because you are new. You are not used to the work system. You have new people to deal with and people in the working world who behave very differently from school. It takes a lot of getting used to. There will be office politics to deal with regardless of how little.

Be above all these and stay positive in the face of challenges. When you are positive you remain focused on your goals. You make better decisions and therefore become more productive.

5. Highlight a Problem but Bring Solutions

The last effective work habit of the five effective work habits is to bring solutions each time you highlight a problem to your boss or management. You need to remember that when you bring problems and not solutions, it is often construed as complaining.

To avoid that label, offer solutions. A range of possible solutions also indicates to your boss that you have thought this through before approaching him/her with a problem. Have in mind a recommended solution amongst those you suggested.

These are the 5 effective work habits I constantly drill into new employees who are fresh graduates in our company. At first glance, these may seem like common sense. However, in actual working environment people tend to sometimes forget these very basic effective work habits. And don't practice them often enough. Internalize these and consistently practice them to increase your chances of success.



SELF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

The TOPIC for August, 2016

Behaviour Change Going Back To Basics –Small Change Big Impact

Date

3rd August, 2016

VENUE (MALAYSIA)

Banker's Club Kuala Lumpur

(Amoda Building)

Jalan Imbi

(Opposite Berjaya Times Square)



Time

6pm - 8pm

Timely Inspiration

“Self Management with Dr. Venga”

You must realise that once you acquire mechanical behaviour, you will face an uphill task to dispel it. This is because the behaviour is programmed into your subconscious mind and you would need a lot of effort to change it. Many people are also addicted to adrenaline at work. They claim that they cannot function without pressure because pressure drives their adrenaline. This is an unhealthy work habit. Adrenaline addiction is a physiological change that people experience during a crisis at work. Many people create pressure for themselves because it makes them feel important and gives them excitement and challenge. There are people who always start fires and later extinguish them themselves. They enjoy the attention and praise they receive. Sadly, they fail to realise that an accumulation of adrenaline can lead to high blood pressure, ulcers and other ailments. Often, sitting behind a desk allows you no opportunity to burn off excess adrenaline. Adrenaline addiction also reflects unwise time management.

(Extracts from “How long can you wait for results”)



TIREDFNESS

COMING TO WORK WELL RESTED IS VITAL TO HAVING A PRODUCTIVE DAY.

GET ENOUGH SLEEP



Many People Don't Get Enough Sleep ☹ At Night. When You're Tired, It's Very Easy To Become Distracted.

STAY HYDRATED

When You Don't Drink Enough Water And You Become Dehydrated, You May Not Think Clearly. Dehydration Can Also Make You Feel Tired And Less Alert. Keep A Water Bottle On Your Desk, And Drink Regularly During The Day.



GO FOR A WALK



If You're Tired at Work, Go outside for a Walk. Getting Some Fresh Air And Moving Your Body Can Give You More Energy And Can Make You Feel More Alert.

WATCH YOUR DIET

Your Diet May Also Influence How Tired You Feel. For Example, Avoid Heavy Lunches – And Instead Eat Smaller, Healthy Snacks Throughout The Day.



reflections

Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough.

The World As We Have Created It Is A Process Of Our Thinking. It Cannot Be Changed Without Changing Our Thinking

-Albert Einstein