

How To Find Your Voice and Communicate Your Value In The Workplace

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As a young woman, you're building your identity every day with a collection of carefully curated skills, beliefs, and behaviors. The way you sign your emails, the words you choose when you leave a voice mail message, and the ritual you follow when introducing yourself are all key components of effectively communicating your value to the world. Developing awareness of your natural communication tendencies, fine-tuning them to present your best self, and continually evolving your messages as you learn and grow can turn raw potential into real power in the workplace and beyond.



Identify Your Natural Communication Tendencies

Everyone has a comfort zone when it comes to communications. This is your natural voice, your starting place. The next time you're in a meeting, observe your own behavior. Do you find yourself using filler words such as "um," "like," and "you know?" Are you talking over others in your eagerness to make a point or never speaking at all because you're politely waiting for your turn? What makes you feel most comfortable? Do you like to be the expert at the table, the observer taking notes, or maybe the hero that swoops in at the last minute with a solution? Identify the role that you take most often. Watch how others react to you. Take the time to note your tendencies and then critically assess the ways in which staying in your comfort zone does or does not support your goals.

Fine Tune Your Communication Style

Once you know how you naturally communicate and how that may support your goals, look for ways to improve your effectiveness. Just start where you are and consciously change up one element of the way you interact with others. If you are always the expert at the table, perhaps asking what others think is a good place for you to start. If you are always the note taker, you may want to use your voice at the next meeting. If you're always the "fixer," invite someone else to contribute an idea or solution. Notice when you fall into a less-effective habit and change course. This can be as simple as stopping when you find yourself using filler words, pausing before offering yet another solution, or pushing yourself to ask just one question or make a single point.

Evolve Your Messages

As you master new skills and manage new experiences, the value you can bring to a particular project or position changes. Make sure the way you present yourself keeps pace. One way to measure your progress is to identify a communications role model. Think of the professional women you most admire. What words would you use to describe them? What do they say or do that gives you that impression? Where does it make sense for you to consciously emulate their behaviors without compromising your own voice? How would your communications role model describe her most recent success or her contribution to a team? Are those phrases you can borrow? Try them on, play with the language until it feels right to you. While you continue to develop your-career-specific skills, make sure you evolve the way you communicate those achievements.

Just as your work world continually changes, so does the communications landscape. Colleagues, context, perspectives, and goals are all constantly shifting. Knowing how to position yourself and your work effectively will help you navigate your career with grace and strength in the ever-fluctuating world of business.

For more, click [here](#) to download the eBook, *Effective Communications for Women In Business*.