

## Communicating Effectively: Get to the Point!

Women tend to give a lot of information before they get to the point. Some do it because they're unsure of themselves, others because they feel they must share as they know about a subject for the sake of fairness before they express an opinion.

Regardless of whether you are in a strategic meeting or having a 1:1 conversation, **no one wants or needs to know everything that's in your head**. You may feel a need to say it, but inevitably it will diminish your ability to influence effectively.

Conversation is a 2-way street, everyone needs to feel seen, heard, and understood. It's important to be fully present and focused during a conversation, listen to hear, and understand.

### What does good listening look like?

- Be totally present in the conversation.
- Stop doing everything else and face the speaker.
- Make eye contact.
- Listen only to the speaker and not your internal conversation or thoughts – do not judge or evaluate what they are saying.
- Focus to listen at all levels, verbal and non-verbal.
- Wait until the speaker is finished before you speak, do not interrupt or talk-over.
- Avoid jumping in with answers right away, analyze the situation first by asking curious questions to gain further understanding. Look at the situation without judgement, an agenda, or control.
- Pause before speaking. It conveys a message of thoughtfulness and confidence on your part.
- Reflect what you heard in your own words.?
- Remember, whether you agree with what the other person says or not, go by the 90/10 rule which states that at least 10% of what they are saying is right.

Use this acronym as a guide during conversations: W. A. I. T. (**Why Am I Talking?**)



# Keeping Your Response Crisp!

## Plan what you want to say and how you want to say it.

There are a variety of information gathering tools you can use as you decide how to present your point of view; one example is The 5-Why's. Designed to get at the root cause of an issue, it can be used to explore a host of issues ranging from large strategic to smaller personal ones. In the moment to phrase curious questions or as a strategic planning tool.

### 5-Whys (what, where, why, who when):

**What:** is the situation? (If things were as they should be what would they look like?)

**Where:** does the problem lie?

**Why:** is it happening? (Is there something I am doing (or management is doing) to contribute to the problem?)

**Who:** are the people involved? Who can you speak with to get more information or insight?

**When:** does the problem happen? When does it not happen?

## Presenting your information:

Once you have the information you need, use the following principles to *communicate* the information verbally or in writing:

- Present your most important or **key point** in clear, succinct language.
- Follow it up with your supporting information in clear concise points.

