

every  
woman

POWERFUL  
WORKPLACE  
COMMUNICATION

WORKBOOK

[www.everywoman.com](http://www.everywoman.com)

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# About this workbook

**AT EVERYWOMAN, we deliver a range of innovative products and resources that unlock the potential and talent of women in business globally. For those women starting out or looking to progress their professions, or build and develop their own enterprise, the everywomanNetwork provides a wealth of personal development resources, advice and inspiration to address the challenges faced at key stages in business. We produce workbooks on topics that matter most to our members and we're constantly listening to your views to give you the tools you need to propel you through your life's work, at a time and place that suits you.**

In the modern business world, with all its emphasis on agile methodology, digital transformation and innovation, it's reassuring to know that strong communication is still consistently found to be one of the most important qualities a leader or aspiring leader can possess. <sup>i</sup>

"Communication makes the world go round. It facilitates human connections, and allows us to learn, grow, and progress. It's not just about speaking or reading, but understanding what is being said — and in some cases what is not being said," wrote Richard Branson in his Virgin blog. <sup>ii</sup>

We've all been on the receiving end of a strong, powerful communicator whose words resonate, empower and motivate. On the flipside, we all know someone whose use of language has the opposite effect. While some of that comes down to personal preference, much of what makes someone either a powerful or a poor communicator is universal.

In this workbook, you'll explore some of the principles of good workplace communication — the techniques the most inspirational leaders employ to win hearts and minds, how you can strike the right balance between listening to others and ensuring you get your say, and the words and phrases that could be limiting the impact you have.

The good news is that through the workplace meetings, presentations and everyday conversations you participate in, you've already started developing your own authentic voice. By undertaking this workbook, you're taking a step towards consciously homing in on your style and becoming a more powerful communicator. We'd love to know how you get on — get in touch at [editor@everywoman.com](mailto:editor@everywoman.com)

*Maxine & Karen*

**and the everywoman team**

"Your voice is your best tool in the board room, when talking to investors, when finding partners and when pitching to clients. Once you find your voice, hone it and practise."

MELINDA GATES

Ninety percent  
of leadership  
is the ability to  
communicate  
something  
people want.”

DIANNE FEINSTEIN, U.S. SENATOR

# Language Quiz



## QUIZ

**LANGUAGE IS POWERFUL.** Words can influence, offend, inspire and infuriate. Let's get stuck straight into understanding the complexities and opportunities of language in the workplace with this short quiz.

1. A 2017 survey found which of these phrases to be the most annoying office buzzword?

 TOUCH  
BASE

 BLUE-SKY  
THINKING

 LOW-HANGING  
FRUIT

2. What word, according to researchers, is the most influential in the English language?

3. In conversations between leaders and employees, which of the two groups most often use 'I'?

4. Which gender uses 'I' more often in conversations?

5. Which skill did senior executives rate their best, yet their employees rated it their leaders' worst? Choose from 'communicating a vision', 'engaging large audiences', 'listening', 'giving clear direction' or 'storytelling'.

6. What did NSA Executive Richard Ledgett say over 80 times in his TED Talk to earn himself a place on a chart of 'world's worst communicators'?

7. What do 40% of millennials think helps to personalise email messages to the boss?

 KISSES

 EMOJIS

 JOKES

**ANSWERS** (we'll expand on some of these answers throughout the workbook):  
 Q1: Touch base. Q2: Because. Q3: Employees. Q4: Females. Q5: Listening. Q6: Um. Q7: Emojis.

# What makes a powerful communicator?

Winston Churchill. Angela Merkel.  
Steve Jobs. Martin Luther King.  
Sheryl Sandberg. Oprah Winfrey.  
When you think about inspirational communicators, these are some of the names that might spring to mind: powerful leaders standing under the spotlight, sharing their wisdom with audiences around the world.

But good communication extends beyond taking to the stage and speaking out to the masses. It's as much about how you make people feel during your one-to-one conversations, as it is how you deal with the pressures of delivering a PowerPoint before a roomful of your peers.

There is no single way to be a great communicator. Think about that opening list of names. Each of those famous speakers brings something different and unique to the way they speak to their followers. Just like the public figures included on Decker's annual list of the world's best communicators for 2016. <sup>iii</sup>

“Get rid of the notion that you have to be this powerful, charismatic speaker. That’s not what good communication is about.” >

KEVIN MURRAY, AUTHOR OF *COMMUNICATE TO INSPIRE*

## EXERCISE

Try to match the individual with the reason given by the judging panel for their inclusion.

**Sheryl Sandberg**  
(for her University of California - Berkeley commencement speech)

Consistently leaves audiences with a renewed sense of the fact that THEY are part of a bigger story. Used the time in the spotlight to creatively shed light and influence on issues outside of [them]self - without standing on a soap box.

**Lin-Manuel Miranda**  
(for his Tony Awards acceptance speech)

Unscripted, undeniably authentic and just plain real. Their laughter is infectious, they don't hold back emotion and they are unfiltered. What you see is what you get.

**Michelle Obama**  
(for her DNC speech)

They used extremely high emotional connection throughout, bouncing between entertaining, college-specific references of revelry (referencing man buns, dating apps and pizza spots), and inspiring the audience to find gratitude and joy in the hard days while chok[ing] back tears.

**James Corden**  
(for Carpool Karaoke)

They've a life to which most people can't relate, yet, they found common ground with people across the country.

## ANSWERS:

**Michelle Obama:** They've a life...; **James Corden:** Unscripted, undeniably authentic...; **Sheryl Sandberg:** They used extremely...; **Lin-Manuel Miranda:** Consistently leaves audiences...

Decker uses its list of best and worst communicators to produce a master guide of techniques for powerful communication.

## SOME OF THESE INCLUDE:

1

Even in a scripted, teleprompter experience, you can speak from the heart by focusing on how you come across through your voice, your facial expressions, your eye communication and your warmth. Be provocative – and do it with care and thoughtfulness.

2

When you're asked a question, answer it directly for what it is. When you have an opportunity to move the needle, be more listener-focused (that's how you can influence).

3

When we get cornered, it's easy to get defensive and attack. Instead, use transparency to pull people in.

4

You don't have to be serious to be taken seriously. Your audience will connect with your lightness.

5

When you believe something, speak with passion and conviction that are expressed through your vocal variety. It makes a difference as to whether people will believe you and follow you. And telling the truth doesn't hurt, either.

6

At the highest stakes, it's easy to fall into the trap of doing things the way they've always been done. Don't be afraid to take a risk. Be creative and different with your approach, and you will notice a profound impact. The higher the stakes, the more important it is. >



## EXERCISE

**Note down any people you know who you think of as powerful communicators. What techniques do they employ in their communications that makes them so effective?**

*e.g. My mentor - breaks down complicated problems into clear, concise statements.*  
*e.g. First boss - told stories from her own vocation to make strong points.*  
*e.g. Current boss - delivers presentations in engaging manner; makes audience believe in everything he's saying.*

# THE CHARISMA MODEL

POWERFUL COMMUNICATION AND charisma are often spoken about in interchangeable terms. As we have seen, the principles of strong communication are many and varied. Charisma, on the other hand, has been broken down by leading thinkers in this area as containing three core qualities: power, presence and warmth.

## POWER

**OPTIMISM**  
Charismatic people are (or appear to be) optimistic, remaining cheerful and bubbly to infuse others with motivation.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & EMPATHY

Charismatic people are in control of their own emotions and in tune with those of others.

## PRESENCE

*The foundation on which power and warmth are built*

## STRONG BODY LANGUAGE

Charismatic people command their space, helping them appear and feel more present.

## ASSERTIVE

Charismatic people communicate their needs non-confrontationally in a way that respects the other.

## CONFIDENT

Charismatic people are confident in their abilities, ideas and beliefs, and inspire the same in others.

## WARMTH

## GENEROUS & GIVING

Charismatic people focus on the other person, making them feel listened to. By helping others, they lift the mood in their environment.

## GENUINE & AUTHENTIC

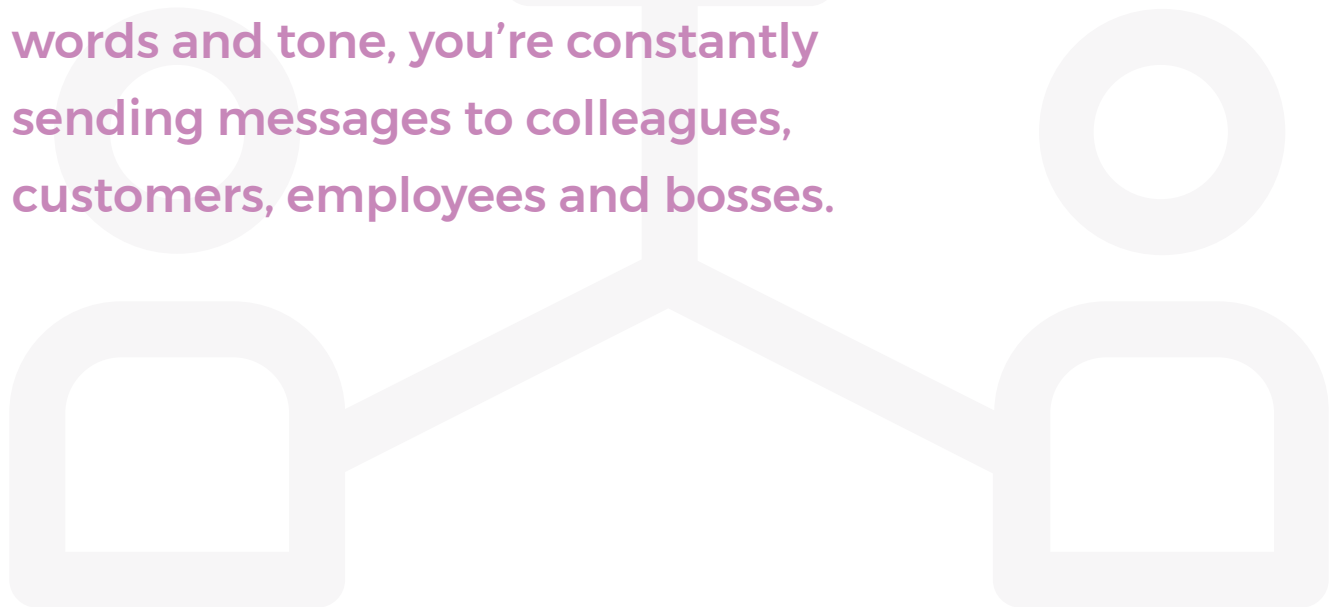
Charismatic people don't just "go through the motions". Their compliments and offers of help are sincere.



Can you identify individuals who possess any of these qualities? In what ways do they communicate them?

# Verbal communication in the workplace

From the moment you enter the building until the moment you leave, you're communicating with those around you. Whether it's through your body language, facial expressions, gestures and posture, words and tone, you're constantly sending messages to colleagues, customers, employees and bosses.

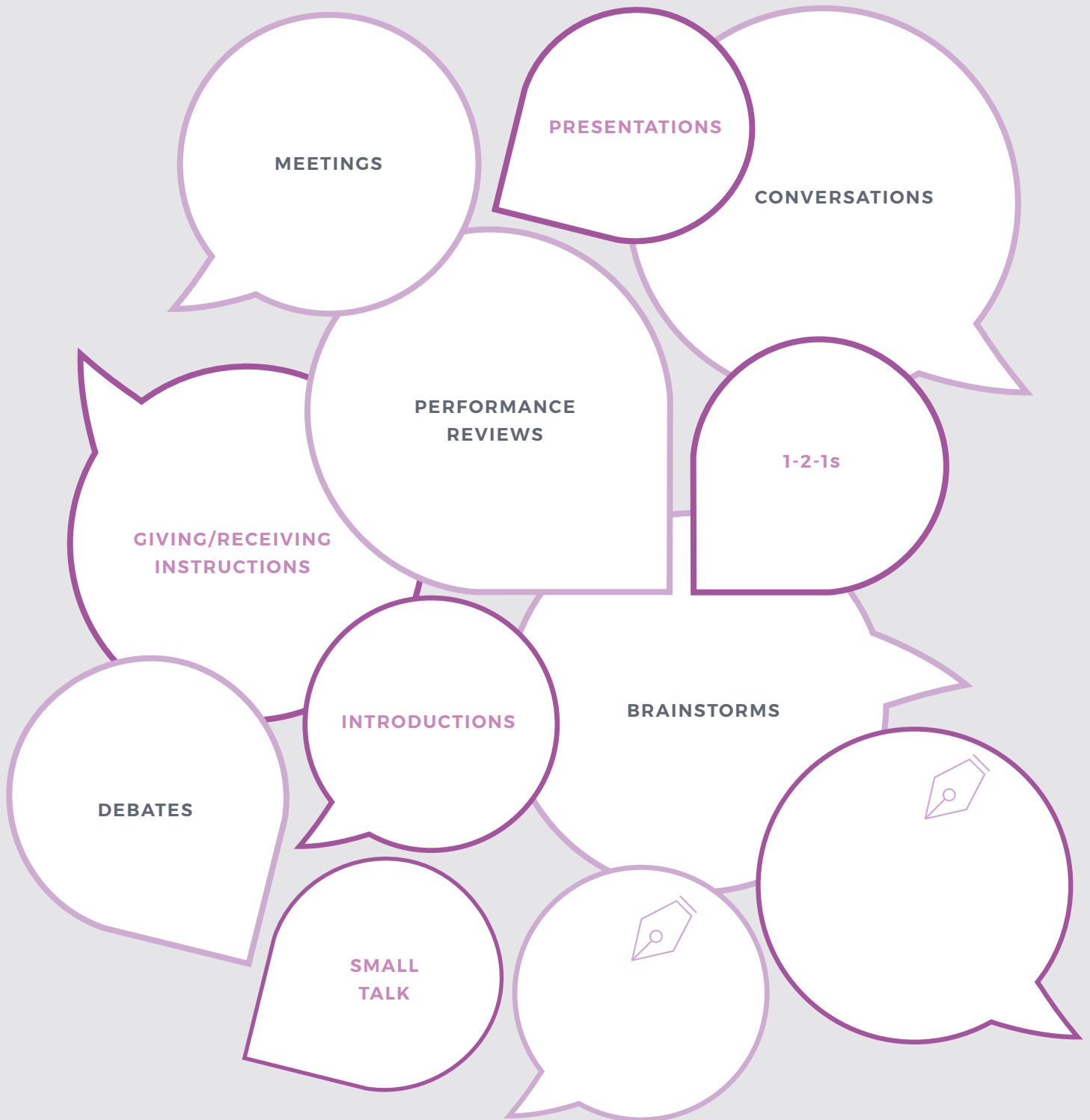


**B**ut what of your words specifically? In what circumstances do they have their greatest potential to influence, persuade, inspire and motivate? Modern workplaces employ technology that enables flexible workers to operate and even attend meetings remotely. In fact, a 2016 study found that 39% of millennials spend more time engaging

with their smartphones than they do with their co-workers. Nevertheless, other research shows that this same generation, who grew up with social media and tablets, also crave the feedback of bosses and mentors more than any before. Face-to-face interaction is far from dead; words, and the human channels through which they're delivered, matter as much as they ever did. >

## COMMUNICATION POWER

The following is a (non-exhaustive) list of all the situations in which verbal communication holds power over your work. Add any others you can think of.





## EXERCISE

Choose three of the previous situations and think about recent instances of where words – your own or those of others – have had a powerful impact (either positive or negative): perhaps you've had to give constructive criticism to someone in a 1-2-1, lead a difficult meeting in order to reach a certain outcome or inspired enthusiasm in a recent project briefing to your team?

SITUATION	IMPACT

# Listening and talking: getting the balance right

While researching his book *The Language of Leaders*, Kevin Murray asked the executives he spoke with to rate themselves against a set of communication skills. They tended to rate themselves least well on speaking on public platforms, and best on listening.

He then spoke to employees and asked them to rate their leaders against the same criteria. They generally put their leaders' listening skills at the bottom of the list. "All the research shows that followers want to be included, respected and listened to. When the leader says they have strong views, the follower says: 'Yes, but we want you to listen to ours'. An audience might be impressed by a charismatic leader, but that will soon

change if they don't feel listened to." <sup>v</sup>

Are you as good a listener as you'd like to be? The average amount of communication time you spend listening is 60%. Yet you only retain around 25% of what you hear. <sup>vi</sup> "We're losing our listening," so began Julian Treasure's hugely influential and much-watched TED Talk. The sound expert puts this down to the availability of recording devices, media demand for sound bites over oratory, and an increasingly noisy world.

"When we're listening — or supposed to be — what we pay close attention to are the things that directly concern us at that moment. The same is true when we're speaking; we believe people automatically understand what we're saying but, unless both speaker and listener share the same message, the words may be meaningless."

JANE GUNN, INTERCULTURAL MEDIATOR

The most  
inspirational  
thing you  
can do is  
give people  
a good  
listening to.”

KEVIN MURRAY

## SIX SKILLS OF MASTERFUL LISTENERS

1	<b>Pay attention</b>	Focus exclusively on what the person is saying. Do not fall into the trap of thinking about what you'll say next. Smile. Nod. Encourage with questions or short comments. Watch their body language – and your own.
2	<b>Empathise</b>	Pick up on any emotions you spot in the other person, telling them you can see they're frustrated, tired, excited, confused. Just be careful you're not letting your own emotions confuse things.
3	<b>Clarify and interpret</b>	Use open-ended questions to discover more about the story you're being told. Ask, if you're not sure what is meant. When you clarify, don't simply repeat back what you've been told – use your own language.
4	<b>Don't be aggressive</b>	Beware of "why?" It can be seen as overly challenging. "Tell me more about that option?" will elicit a much more insightful response. Avoid judgemental questions that are actually statements: "Should you do it this way instead?"
5	<b>Summarise and thank</b>	Summarising what you've heard is a great way to show the other person that you've been listening to them. Wherever you can, do so in a way that demonstrates you haven't just listened to – but also understood – their point of view.
6	<b>Commit to action</b>	Suggesting what should be done next is a powerful way to end a conversation. Making a note of these in sight of the other person will instil trust and confidence that you're going to follow through. If you later decide not to act, you must explain why. >





## EXERCISE

**1.** Of the previous six skills, indicate with examples which you're currently able to demonstrate well, and which you can challenge yourself with in your next meaningful workplace conversation.

SKILLS I DEMONSTRATE WELL	SKILLS TO CHALLENGE

**2.** Find a place where you're surrounded by noise. Spend a few minutes noting down every individual sound you can discern, noticing how your hearing becomes sharper as you focus more and more. This is a great exercise to repeat in different situations in order to consciously tap into your listening skills.

**3.** Highlight any upcoming conversations or situations where you have the opportunity to put your listening skills into practice in order to positively impact the outcome. What specific listening skills will you employ?

THE SKILLS I WILL EMPLOY ARE:

## THE LISTENING CONTRACT

While listening is important, so too is the expression of your own thoughts and opinions and just how you give voice to them. “First you have to listen if you want to be heard,” says Kevin Murray. “[But] when you listen to [others] first, they are bound to listen to you.” This is the basic premise of what he calls, ‘the listening contract’.<sup>vii</sup> everywomanClub member and Chief Leadership Officer at Gap International, Mitzie Almquist attributes her success in public speaking to her ability to listen to others.

“I’m at my most effective when I’m studying my audience, whether that’s a thousand people at a conference or one person over a breakfast meeting. I really think out their world. What’s their scorecard? What are they counting in life? Revenue and profit? Happiness and love? It’s easy to go on automatic when you’re nervous, surviving on ‘hello’ and ‘how are you?’ Pay attention to make true, lasting connections.”<sup>viii</sup> >

MITZIE ALMQUIST



**EXERCISE**

**Which of your workplace relationships would most benefit from a listening contract? What commitments will you make to listening to the other person and in which situations will you put these strategies to work?**

WHO	LISTENING SKILLS I'LL USE	WHAT/WHEN SITUATIONS

The listening contract, by its nature, works two ways and you must of course seize your opportunities to be heard by others. One 2017 study found that male judges are three times more likely to interrupt female judges than they are one another. <sup>ix</sup> And, whether or not there's a gender bias at play, we know from our conversations with members of the everywomanNetwork, that 'speaking up' without being 'talked over' is a challenge for many, particularly those who find themselves the most junior person in the room.

If you can speak during a lull, that's great, but sometimes waiting for that lull means the conversation or meeting ends and you've said nothing. On those occasions, it's crucial you interrupt appropriately and respectfully.

Learn the art of interrupting. You must interrupt if you're going to get anywhere. Life is going on, the meeting is moving on, the clock is ticking. To be heard, you have to appropriately and respectfully interrupt.

- 1.** Recognise why you're interrupting. Ensure it's legitimate. The conversation is a soup. Everyone's throwing in their carrots and potatoes. Will the soup be richer with your ingredient in there, too?
- 2.** Own your interruption. Acknowledge you're doing it. "I'm going to interrupt here if I can because I'd like to say something." "I know I'm cutting you off but I have something that fits perfectly here."
- 3.** To do this as a junior person gains you respect. It's not on the agenda of the senior person to shut out the junior. There's a reason you're at the table.

MITZIE ALMQUIST, INTERVIEW WITH EVERYWOMAN

INTERRUPTING POLITELY <sup>x</sup>

1

**TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING**

You have been invited to the meeting because you have knowledge, insight or ideas to contribute. Don't wait for permission to speak – permission has already been granted.

2

**PLAN THE MAIN POINTS YOU WANT TO RAISE**

**Know them inside out and seize opportunities where they fit well into the conversation.**

3

**GET HEARD EARLY**

The longer you wait to contribute, the harder it can be to speak up. Making a comment early in the conversation can break that barrier, and ensure your subsequent interruption lands better.

4

**DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY**

**If you speak up and are discounted, don't take it personally. Bad ideas help move the conversation along and inspire better ones. If someone disagrees with you, you're 'in the game'. You're not being ignored.**

5

**PUT A TIME LIMIT ON YOUR INTERRUPTION**

"I'd like to quickly say here..."

6

**SIGNAL TO THE MEETING'S CHAIR THAT YOU WANT TO SPEAK**

**They may invite you to, once the current speaker has finished.**

7

**BODY LANGUAGE IS ESSENTIAL**

Sit up, sit forward, be physically part of the conversation. Make it easy to swiftly turn to the person you're interrupting.

8

**BE SINCERE**

**Prove that you genuinely have a point to make, or you genuinely want to ask the question. It's not about speaking up to be seen or heard; it's about contributing something useful.**

9

**KNOW WHEN NOT TO INTERRUPT**

Reverse the tables and think how you'd feel if you were the speaker. Often this is intuitive. Look around the table, watch how people react to one another. You'll be able to get a sense of when it's better to listen and not interrupt.

On the flipside, you must learn to handle interruptions when you need to finish making your point, or when others are not being respectful or appropriate.

TIPS FOR

## MANAGING INTERRUPTIONS <sup>xi</sup>

1

### LET EVERYONE KNOW YOU INTEND TO FINISH

**“There are a lot of different pieces to this explanation, so please bear with me. I want to tell you the entire story.”**  
**That may stop the interrupter before he or she starts.**

2

### KEEP RIGHT ON TALKING

Keep an even pace, and confidently continue to make your statement. You can also put your hand up to indicate you're not done, or simply say “I'm not finished”.

3

### ASK FOR INPUT FROM OTHERS

If someone keeps interrupting in a group setting, ask others to weigh in. “Joe has contributed some great ideas so far; who wants to throw something into the mix?”

4

### TALK TO THE WHOLE GROUP

**If you're the manager, raise awareness within your team of how each member communicates with others. Organise a brainstorm around communication and what might be improved.**

“Don't start talking until every single person is listening. The chatter will die down but people are still saying hello to each other. Wait until you really have the room. If you don't, nobody will be really listening. That's a bad way to start. So, you stand there, you wait, it's uncomfortable because you'll have eyes on you, there's pressure to talk, but just wait. It's empowering and it's worth the investment.” >

EVERYWOMANCLUB MEMBER, MITZIE ALMQUIST



EXERCISE

Think about an impending workplace dialogue that you want to be more powerful in.

1. What do you want to be the outcome of your conversation?

2. How can you start the conversation in a way that demonstrates your objective?

3. How do you want the other person to feel about you and the conversation?

4. What questions do you want to ask? What is their purpose?

5. What communication issues have you encountered in similar conversations?  
What strategies can you employ for overcoming these?

6. How does the listening contract fit into your approach to the conversation?

# Storytelling

Whether it's the corporate leader sharing his vision at the town hall, or the entrepreneur telling her Facebook followers what inspired her latest product, storytelling has crossed generations, cultures and millenniums to become something of a business buzzword.<sup>xii</sup> The reason is that stories have the power to communicate, inform, inspire and engage – and who doesn't want their communication to do all of those things?<sup>xiii</sup>

**T**he good news is that you probably tell stories every day without even realising it. It might be in response to a colleague asking what you did at the weekend, the boss wanting a progress report on your current project, or someone at a networking event enquiring how you fell into your line of work.

Workplace stories have the potential to elevate your communication, to garner buy-in from those you want

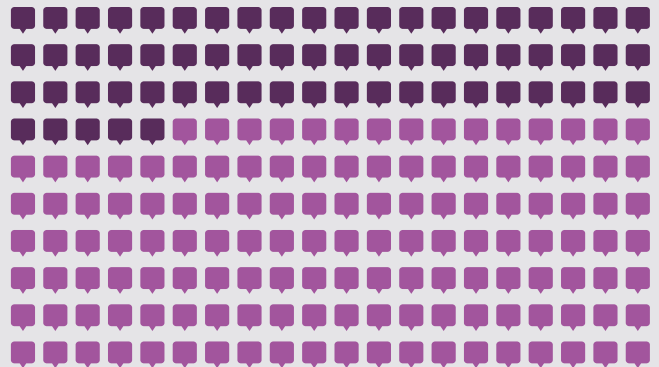
to inspire and influence, to make you more memorable to your audiences, and to help you connect and build relationships. That audience might be a roomful of peers being walked through a presentation, or it could be the leader you bump into in the lift – that classic elevator pitch moment. In both scenarios, you have the option to rattle off a bullet list of interesting stats and facts, or you've the possibility to leave a lasting impression by employing some of the classic elements of storytelling.<sup>xiv</sup>



## STORYTELLING: QUICK FACTS

"There are three sides of a story: Mine, Yours and the Truth. And no one is lying." <sup>xv</sup>

ROBERT EVANS,  
HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER



FACT

Personal stories and gossip make up 65% of our conversations.



FACT

Our brain learns to ignore certain overused words and phrases that are being overworked in an attempt to make a story more engaging – a good reminder to avoid cliché and the commonplace.

"Stories delight, enchant, touch, teach, recall, inspire, motivate, challenge. Want to make a point or raise an issue? Tell a story."

JANET LITHERLAND,  
AUTHOR

Storytelling  
is the most  
powerful  
way to put  
ideas into the  
world today.”

ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN

## 6 ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING

1

### KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Before you begin to tell your story, ask yourself what your goal is. How do you want your audience to come away feeling? Is the goal to convince, inspire, to reinforce some aspect of your personal brand, or something else?

2

### FOCUS ON CHARACTERS

Stories are made up of descriptions, dialogue and plot. But characters are what bring all that to life. If you're relaying a story about a project, focus on the people steering the ideas, rather than the ideas themselves.

3

### CREATE SUSPENSE

There's a reason cliffhangers come at the end of chapters - if you give the end away too early, your audience has no reason to hang on your every word. Hinting that there's something interesting worth staying tuned-in for is a powerful technique.

4

### WHERE'S THE EMOTION?

Workplace stories need to engage, and to do that your audience needs to understand how your characters feel about whatever you're sharing.

5

### SHOW, DON'T TELL

Construct the story in a way that lets the audience build their own picture. Consider the difference between: "The motivational away day was a huge success" and "You could really feel the energy levels as we left the room, and in the pub afterwards people were still talking about some of the ideas that had been shared".

6

### A 'STAR' MOMENT

Give your audience Something To Always Remember. They won't remember your story verbatim. They might forget the colour and detail, the characters' names or even the punch line. But if you can leave them with one clear takeaway - an Aha! moment - your story has served its purpose.



## EXERCISE

For each of the following scenarios, write a short story using the six storytelling techniques:

AUDIENCE CHARACTER SUSPENSE EMOTION SHOWING STAR

1. Meeting someone at a networking event and being asked: "What do you do?"



AUDIENCE CHARACTER SUSPENSE EMOTION SHOWING STAR

2. Sharing in a meeting the biggest thing you/your team is currently working on.



AUDIENCE CHARACTER SUSPENSE EMOTION SHOWING STAR

3. Bumping into your boss's boss and being asked: "How's it going?"



AUDIENCE CHARACTER SUSPENSE EMOTION SHOWING STAR

4. Being asked by a candidate in an interview: "What do you like about working here?"



AUDIENCE CHARACTER SUSPENSE EMOTION SHOWING STAR

5. Pitching to your manager for some additional resource.

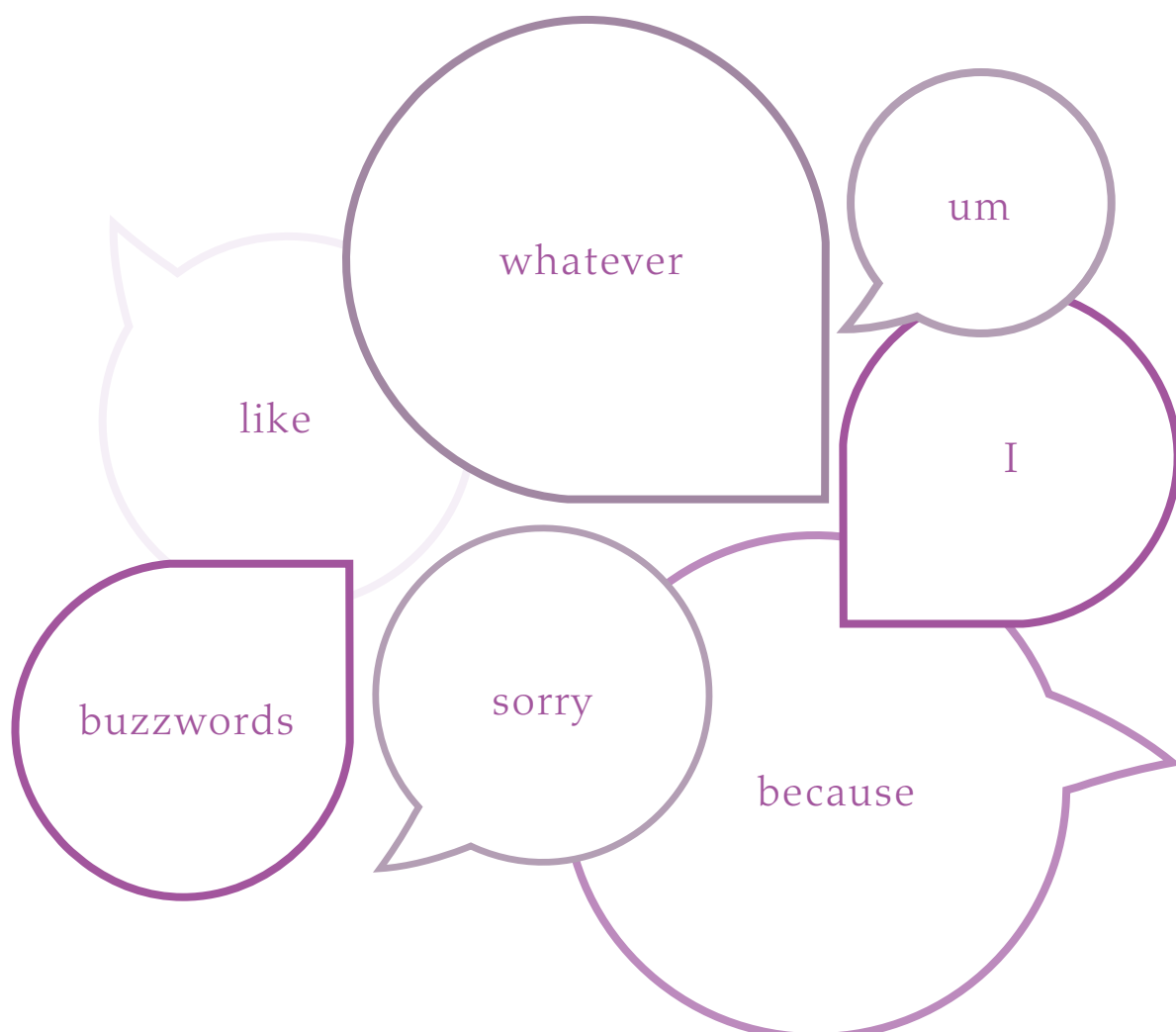
A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their pitch to their manager.

Once you've written your stories, record yourself delivering them. Do you sound engaging? Convincing? Do you use enough tonal inflection? Dramatic pauses? Keep trying new techniques until you hit on something that feels authentic and manageable.



# Vocabulary

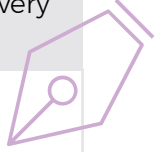
**CERTAIN WORDS HAVE** powerful connotations in the workplace because of the way they make people feel, the reactions they elicit, and the impressions the receiver forms of the speaker. The following are some examples of specific words that studies old and new have found to have special impact.



WORDS	WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY	WHAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER
Because	<p>A classic study by a Harvard Professor of Psychology found that queue jumpers are up to 34% more successful when they give a reason for their pushing in. More specifically, when they asked if they could cut into the queue for the photocopier, 60% of people complied. But when they asked if they could push in because they were in a rush, compliance rose to 94%.</p>	<p>Just adding 'because' to your request doesn't necessarily mean you'll be successful, particularly when the stakes are higher. But it's worth taking a moment to consider how you can frame your request in a way that clarifies your 'why' – you might be more successful for it.</p>
Sorry	<p>Double voice discourse is the term academics give to the particular speech pattern that speakers use when they have made the assumption that whatever they have to say is going to be perceived negatively. As well as over-apologetic speech (e.g. "Sorry, can I just ask a question?"), it comes through in other negative vocabulary: "Unfortunately I can't make that time." "I'm afraid I can't get to the phone right now."</p>	<p>Remain mindful of how negative language creeps into your everyday communications. Switch on your brain's antennae to pick up on such discourse – both your own and that of others. Mentally re-phrase what has been said so that you have a more positive example to use next time.</p>
I	<p>Numerous studies have explored how people use this ubiquitous word. The key finding is that the more powerful and secure a person is, the more likely they are to use 'we' than 'I', whereas the opposite is true for less powerful or vulnerable individuals. When business leaders use 'we', it has the effect of 'bringing the troops together', so it has the potential to carry more weight than 'I', particularly in the context of teamwork.</p>	<p>When you're sharing stories about your current work, is it more beneficial to take an 'I' approach, or to demonstrate your team credentials by making it about 'us'?</p>
Um, like, whatever	<p>These are called 'filler' words, and they can make even the most powerful leader appear rattled, unprofessional and unrehearsed.</p>	<p>Get to know any filler words you overuse. Ask for feedback, or record yourself talking impromptu for a few minutes to see if any patterns crop up. Then make a commitment to eliminate such words from your communication.</p>
Buzzwords	<p>You might well be "passionate" about your latest project. Your team might be engaged in "blue-sky thinking" to develop new ideas. And you might genuinely be looking forward to "touching base" with a colleague. But buzzwords have no place in powerful communication because they have the potential to make your listener either completely switch off or become seriously irked.</p>	<p>If a word or phrase has crept into your vocabulary purely because of its ubiquity, it's time to dig out your thesaurus and find an alternative that hasn't lost all meaning.</p>

# Your personal action plan

**1** Thinking about your communication role models, what elements of their style or delivery would feel authentic for you to try out?



**2** In what upcoming events or situations can you commit to trying out some of the techniques you've learned in order to power-up your communication?

**3** In what ways will you commit to becoming a better listener? What will you do, with whom, and by when?

**4** What further resources will you draw on in your mission to become a more powerful communicator?

# everywoman Experts

EVERYWOMAN CREATES RESOURCES on topics that matter most to our Network members. We draw on member surveys and the latest thinking from the academic and business worlds, as well as our own experiences as we navigate our professions. Each workbook offers practical advice, enabling tangible actions for your daily working lives.



## MAXINE BENSON, MBE & KAREN GILL, MBE

Co-founders of everywoman, Karen and Max have spoken to thousands of women about the challenges they face at work. Through their own experiences of starting a business, they uncovered a real need for a network where female entrepreneurs and businesswomen could interact and share experiences. The everywomanNetwork, launched in 2013, serves as a truly global tool to enable members the world over to boost their professional progression through online membership.

### EVERYWOMAN WORKBOOK TEAM

Rebecca Lewis, Associate Editor

Anna Melville-James, Editor

Kate Farrow, Head of Partnerships

Any topics you'd like to see covered on the everywomanNetwork?  
We'd love to hear from you: [editor@everywoman.com](mailto:editor@everywoman.com)

# Further reading

## everywomanNetwork resources

**Workbook:** Step up your influencing skills through body awareness and clear communication

**Workbook:** 60 minutes to improving your communication skills as a team

## External resources

**Video:** TED Talks playlist on the art of storytelling

## Endnotes

- i <http://www.mediate.com/articles/SimpsonMbl20170808.cfm>
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- vi [www.ted.com/talks/julian\\_treasure\\_5\\_ways\\_to\\_listen\\_better?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better?language=en)
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- ix <https://hbr.org/2017/04/female-supreme-court-justices-are-interrupted-more-by-male-justices-and-advocates>
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- xii <https://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/how-did-storytelling-become-such-buzzword-business>
- xiii <http://lifehacker.com/5965703/the-science-of-storytelling-why-telling-a-story-is-the-most-powerful-way-to-activate-our-brains>
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- xv <https://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/immersion-future-storytelling>

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