

# THE CONFIDENT WOMANS GUIDE TO SPEAKING IN MEETINGS

How to Speak up and be Heard



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**FirstWoman.**

# FirstWoman.

## *Have your Introduction prepped in advance*

Make sure you are clear on your own introduction, you may need to have a couple of adapts depending on the audience and type of meeting

## *Be the most prepared person in the room*

- Is there an agenda? If not ask for one
- Who is the Chair or Host?
- What are the objectives?
- Who are the attendees, what's their communication style?
- Why are you there? What's your expected contribution?
- The messages you want to land
- The questions you want to ask

## *Vanquish the inner dialogue*

## *Don't overthink what you want to say, say it*

## *Slow down, use fewer words*

## **Don't let others speak for you**

The well-meaning Boss or colleague who has a habit of explaining what you are saying to add credibility. It doesn't help in fact it has the opposite effect. You need to own your voice!

## **When speaking**

- Maintain eye contact
- Speak clearly, slow the pace if necessary
- Avoid apologising and the use of minimising language
- If you are interrupted assert yourself

## **Pay it forward**

If you have no problem speaking up and you see a female colleague struggling, make space, offer them the floor and encourage other men to do the same

## **The more you speak the easier it becomes**

It doesn't matter if you are the most senior person in the room or just starting out, confidence in meetings is invaluable to develop.

When you speak with confidence and authority you are actively owning your career

## Minimising phrases and the alternatives

- "I'm no expert, but..." with "In my experience, the best direction would be"
- "The only thing is..." with "Have you also considered?"
- "Can I just say" with "I'd like to add/I have a suggestion/I'd like to clarify/I'd build on that by saying"
- "When you get a minute" with "this requires your input can you come back to me by X please?"
- "Does what I just said make sense?" with "Are there any questions?"
- "I'm sorry to bother you" with "I need to talk to you about X, is this a good time, if not when is?"
- "I'm sorry, can you tell me" with "I have a question about"
- "Sorry but I disagree" with "There is another way of looking at this"
- "Sorry I didn't hear you" with "Can you repeat that, I missed it"
- "Can you get back to me when you have minute" with "Do not hesitate in letting me know when you can do this"
- "You're probably too busy" with "I'd like to set some time to discuss"
- Replace but with and - as soon as BUT appears in a sentence, everything before it becomes meaningless
- I'll try. I'll try suggests you are doubting your ability and flagging that you might fail or at the very least suggests you aren't committed to making it happen