

# PERSONAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT

How to Communicate your Personal Brand  
with Confidence & Authority



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**FirstWoman.**

You cannot, not communicate so you cannot, not brand yourself

You may need to read that twice.

The point is every time we communicate, we are creating an impression

- **When you attend a meeting, Zoom or otherwise - it's brand**
- **When you write an email - it's brand**
- **When you post a comment - it's brand**
- **When you write a blog - it's brand!**

How you speak to people, body language, behaviours and the written word all form an impression of the person you are, right or wrong, so it's hugely important to ensure the message you land and the perception you create is the one you want to create.

Women worry a lot about Confidence and being confident or at least adopting the appearance of being confident but to sound assertive and confident you need to speak and write that way.

The first thing is to slow down. Nerves make us speak quickly and in my case go off-script. Have you ever listened to a Barack Obama speech? He uses pace and the pause to its best effect, as a result, he comes across as considered, wise and supremely at ease. Sure, he's a masterful orator but he probably wasn't always, this is something that can be trained.

### **But the scourge of everyday life is the self-sabotaging language. Why do women use minimising language?**

- We have a problem with self-advocacy and making our case, we want to appear confident but not too confident!
- We don't want to be seen as aggressive or pushy, so we overact into passive
- We think it's more polite to be self-effacing
- We don't want to appear the expert, arrogant because heaven forbid someone might think we know what we are talking about

## Decades of social engineering and being 'seen but not heard' have created a dictionary of self-sabotaging phrases such as

- Use of apologetic language: "Can I just say", "I'm just checking" "Sorry to interrupt but"
- Tagging, a form of self-affirmation is when we use a question to check what we just said: "Does that make sense?" "Right?" "Is that something of interest?"
- Deliberate softening: "I believe" or "I think I contribute"
- Qualifying: By qualifying what we are about to say with a self-effacing phrase such as "I'm no expert but" or "far be it from me to say" we are paving the way for saying something wrong, thereby opening it up for challenge, the exact response we want to avoid; verbalising our lack of confidence and removing all our credibility all in one hit!

Becoming more self-aware, of what we say or write and the way that comes across is half the battle. One way of doing this is to define the triggers; make a note of when you are about to speak or write something minimising and take a moment to reflect on why. It is possible to deconstruct the habit loop and look to replace the words which don't serve you with those that do.

Asking for what you want. Owning your strengths, taking credit for your work is not being pushy or arrogant or aggressive it is about being confident in your own worth and your value. As women we have an equal voice, we have an opinion and a perspective that adds value.

*"Lean in, speak out, have a voice in your organisation and never use the word, Sorry"* Trish Bertuzzi