



7 Ways to Be Seen & Heard at Work

How you express your opinions at work (or not) is a reflection of your value as a team member, leader or individual professional. If you aren't able to say what's really on your mind, then your identity at work is inauthentic.

It's not always easy to speak up -- we get it.

Here are some tips to help.



Relevance

Before speaking up, think about whether the issue directly pertains to you. If the answer is yes, then you're entitled to an opinion.



Audience

Don't confuse venting with productively voicing your opinions. Complaining to your co-worker doesn't really help. Speaking up needs to happen in front of the right audience who can actually implement your feedback or fix the issue.



Medium

Low-risk issues like where to have a team lunch can be handled via email or text. But more sensitive topics like a conflict with a co-worker are best handled in-person, on the phone or video chat.



Consequences

Think through the consequences of NOT speaking up. If you don't say something, will your team launch a project with a huge error or take steps that you believe are borderline unethical? That's worth pointing out sooner rather than later.



Time and Place

Is your feedback urgent, or would it improve by thinking it through? Is it something sensitive or potentially embarrassing? A one-on-one conversation might be a better option. Does everyone on the team need to hear it? Then most likely a team meeting is best. Consider when and where you chime in -- it can make all the difference in how the message is received.



Don't Get Defensive

If your feedback is challenged, respond constructively. Assume good intent and don't view it as a personal attack, but rather an attempt for more clarity. Approach crucial conversations with a growth mindset rather than assuming how the other person will respond.



Offer a solution

Problem-solving is valuable in every situation. If you're pointing out an issue, be sure to identify the problem and offer a solution. You will also build trust and credibility with your leader and team.