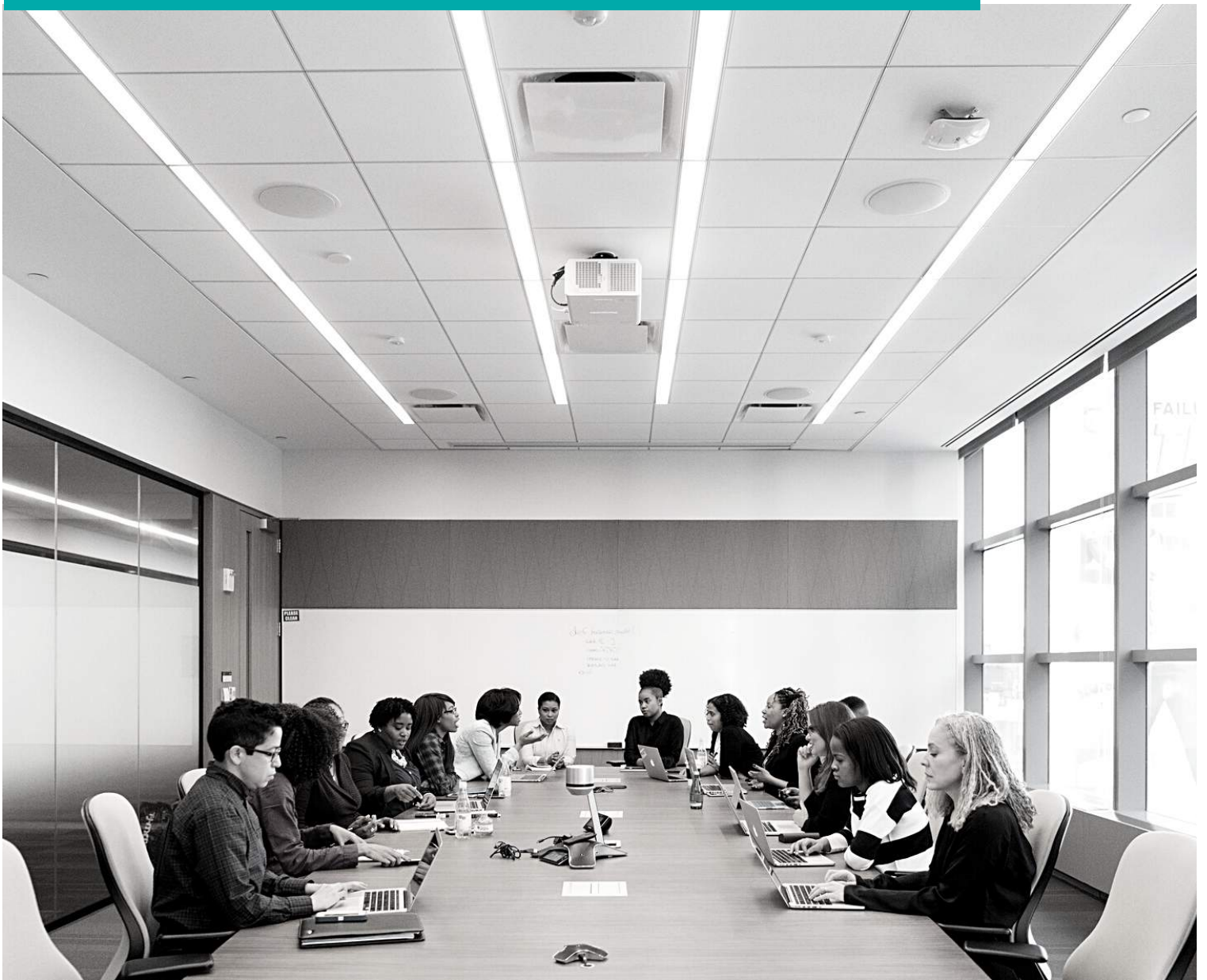


## THE 5X3 CONFIDENT MEETING FORMULA

# 15 WAYS ANYONE CAN CONFIDENTLY SPEAK UP IN ANY MEETING



# THE CHALLENGE



## Do you ...

Do you find it nerve-racking to speak up in meetings? Do you hesitate to speak up?

Do you spend the entire meeting planning what to say and then end up saying little, nothing, or just non-sense?

## Are you afraid of ...

Are you afraid of looking stupid in front of others? Of saying the wrong things?

Do you feel like you need something really smart to say?

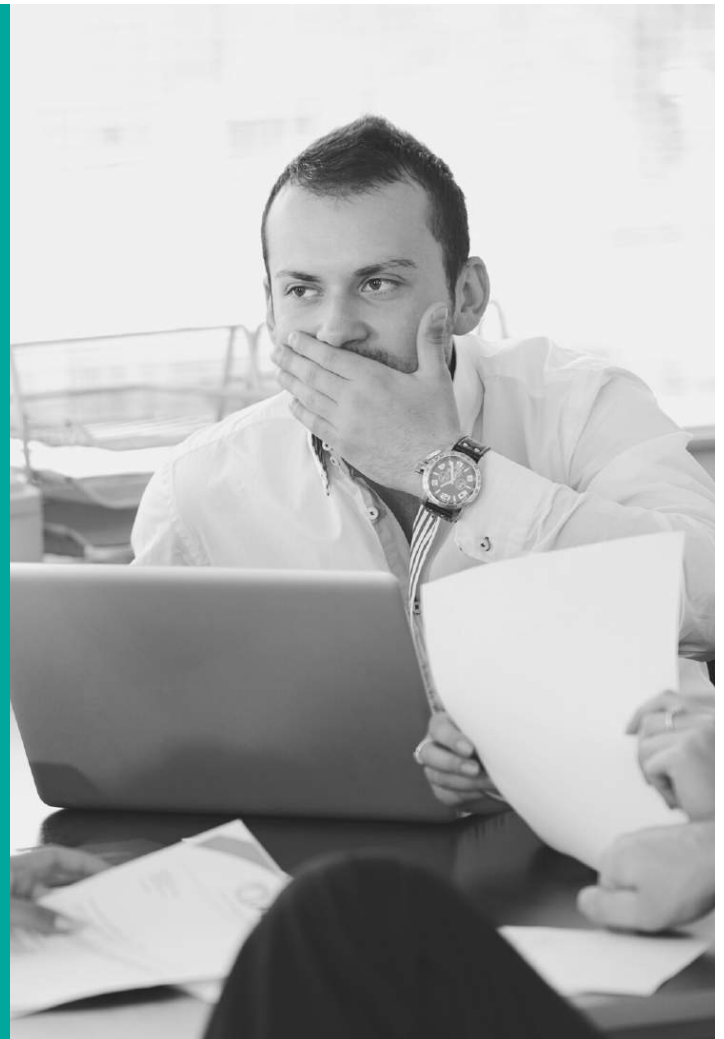
Or are you introverted and generally find it hard to speak up?

# FRUSTRATIONS

Do you identify with these situations?

Does this ever happen to you:

- Not know what to say in meetings even though you know you should speak up?
- Constantly look for a perfect comment so you can look smart, but then fail to do so?
- When you finally have something brilliant to say, someone says it before you do and then you are back to zero?
- By the time you find what to say, the meeting already moved on to another topic?
- You see others make basic comments and get praise from the leadership?



## WHY NOW?

*Find out why you want to speak up more in meetings.*

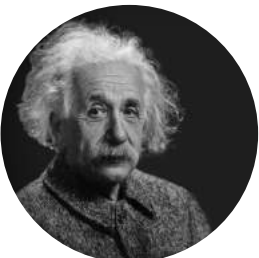


### WHY YOU NEED TO SPEAK UP MORE

- A new manager who needs to speak up more?
- Sponsored by someone who expects you to participate more?
- You got feedback on voicing your views more?
- Passed over for promotion?

### DIFFICULT MEETINGS

- Meetings with many people
- Meetings with senior people
- Unfamiliar meetings
- Official looking meetings
- Boardroom meetings
- Team / department meetings
- Meetings with a harsh leader



**"BE A VOICE, NOT AN ECHO" - ALBERT EINSTEIN**

# SHOCKING STATS

## 50% of workforce are introverts, but meetings aren't

Half of US workforce are introverted, according to Quiet Revolution study. Yet meetings are often designed for extroverts.

## 50% of women were interrupted when speaking

Half of surveyed women were interrupted in meetings, according to Mckinsey / LeanIn study.

## 38% of women had others steal credit

38% of women said that others had taken credit for their ideas in meetings, according to Mckinsey / LeanIn study.



# WHAT IT MEANS

*You're not alone!*

The worst part is that when you don't speak up in meetings, you're perceived as less smart, less credible, less leadership-like even though you're actually more thoughtful than others!

Not only that, the meeting owners stop inviting you to the meetings since you don't participate much, removing you from important information and visibility.

*"I was in a regular weekly meeting with about 20 senior people but wasn't participating much. I saw an opportunity and volunteered to prepare a few slides with data to situate everyone at the start of the meeting. That way, I became a core member in the meeting and had a chance to speak and be heard at the start of each meeting. When they downsized this important meeting, I remained in it."*



# BENEFITS

## A quick look at the benefits of speaking up more in meetings.

There is no better place than a highly visible meeting to promote yourself without actively promoting yourself.

While too many meetings can be a waste of time and productivity, some meetings provide strategic opportunities for networking, personal brand positioning, and growth, leading to faster promotions.

If you can, choose your meetings wisely. Attend the meetings with:

1. Greater visibility from senior people.
2. An opportunity to participate more actively, not just listen.
3. A topic you feel knowledgeable and confident about.
4. More structure / clear agenda.

Here's what meetings can do for you:

- More visibility with leadership
- Unexpected opportunities
- Access to privileged information
- Greater internal networking
- Showcase your expertise
- Influence decisions, promote your ideas, and command respect.



# NOW WHAT?



## SPEAKING UP IN MEETINGS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ANXIETY BUILDING AND PERFECT...

### THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO PARTICIPATE - FIND YOURS

- Focus on the process
- Be curious
- Share perspectives
- Activate others
- Insert yourself

### FOCUS ON CONNECTION & CONTRIBUTION

You don't have to be smart all the time. Try engaging and connecting with others, like asking questions, showing you're interested, illustrating someone else's point, or inviting others to speak.

# PARTICIPATION MYTHS

## I might say something stupid

Instead of focusing on taking the spotlight, focus on maximizing your contribution. You can't contribute to meetings if you stay quiet.

## I don't have anything valuable to say

If you are in the meeting, someone believes that you have something to contribute. It could be a perspective, examples, or question.

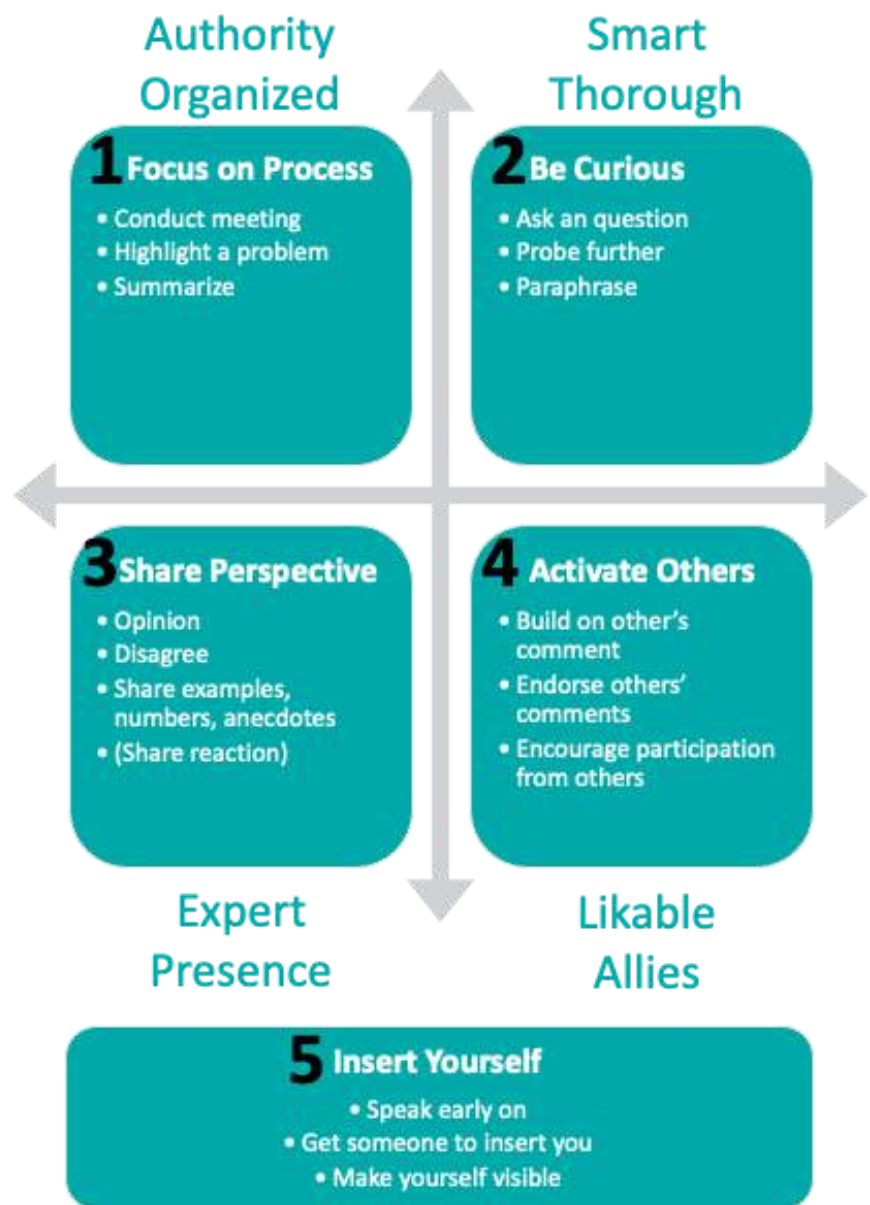
## I should defer to the more experienced

Listen to the more experienced but remember that you have a seat at the table, so others expect you to use it.



# 5 X 3 CONFIDENT MEETING FORMULA

*You don't always have to share an opinion. Here is the 5 x 3 formula that will remove the stress from your meetings!*



# STRATEGY 1

## FOCUS ON PROCESS

### CONVEY AUTHORITY / ORGANIZATION

Here are some ways you can participate in meetings by focusing on process.

#### HELP CONDUCT THE MEETING

Help manage the meeting flow, even if you aren't the meeting organizer. Help ensure people stick to the agenda and are moving ahead fast enough.

*"Those are all great points, and I see we still have half of the agenda items to go through. Let's move on to..."*

#### HIGHLIGHT A PROBLEM

Bring the attention to a problem that is being overlooked.

*"A reminder: our revenues are falling in the last quarter and that could deplete our cash reserves in the next 12 months."*

#### SUMMARIZE

After the group has discussed a topic for a while, especially when the discussion points are scattered, summarize it to ensure everyone is on the same page before moving on.

*"Based on what all of you have said, our next step is to hire an UX consultant. Do you agree?"*



# STRATEGY 2 BE CURIOUS

## CONVEY INTELLIGENCE / THOROUGHNESS

Here are some ways you can easily participate in meetings, disagree without confrontation, and gain more clarity by being curious.

### ASK A QUESTION

Ask questions to better understand what is being discussed, understand gaps, move towards another direction, and even disagree without confronting.  
*"What is the main problem we are trying to tackle?"*

### PROBE FURTHER

Clarify something that is not clear by asking to break it down further (e.g. numbers, conclusions, next steps, objectives.)  
*"Where did that number come from?"*

### PARAPHRASE

Confirm your or the group's understanding of a topic or agreement.  
*"What you are saying is that ...?"*



# STRATEGY 3

## SHARE PERSPECTIVE

### CONVEY EXPERTISE / PRESENCE

Here are some ways you can share a perspective on a topic or something that was shared in the meeting.

#### SHARE OPINION

Share your view from your unique perspective.  
*"My view is that ..."*

#### DISAGREE

Politely disagree with someone else's perspective.  
*"I understand where you are coming from, and ..."*

#### SHARE EXAMPLES, NUMBERS, ANECDOTES

Advance the conversation with illustration, data points, case studies, or customer stories.  
*"Recently, I had an example of that where ..."*

#### SHARE YOUR REACTION

Your response to what someone says indirectly shows your perspective on a topic, and also signals that you are listening and involved.  
*"That is concerning ..."*



# STRATEGY 4 ACTIVATE OTHERS

## CONVEY COOPERATION / LIKABILITY & BUILD ALLIES

Here are some ways you can participate with an inclusive and cooperative role.

### **BUILD ON OTHER PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

This shows you value the perspective of other people and you can add to it.

*"To add to Peter's idea, I think ..."*

### **ENDORSE OTHER PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

This helps build the connection with the person you endorsed and it encourages them to participate even more.

*"Great point Peter, I had not thought about that ..."*

### **ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION FROM OTHERS**

Be a facilitator that helps everyone get a chance to speak, especially when there are some dominant voices in the meeting.

*"Peter, I'd love to hear your perspective on this."*



# STRATEGY 5 INSERT YOURSELF

## EASILY INSERT YOURSELF IN THE CONVERSATION

Here are some tips to get yourself to start speaking and be heard, especially in busy meetings where many people are speaking and interrupting each other.

### **SPEAK EARLY ON**

Aim to speak in the first 10 min of the meeting if you can. It will put you at ease and have others naturally engage more with you during the meeting.

### **GET SOMEONE TO INSERT YOU**

Ask someone like a colleague or meeting organizer to invite you into the conversation, or ask for a specific role in the meeting where you are expected to speak (e.g. like the person who brings the data or sets the agenda).

### **MAKE YOURSELF VISIBLE**

Sit somewhere where everyone can easily see you, and lean in with your body language and increase eye contact to signal you are about to speak.



# BEST PRACTICES

*The do's and don'ts of speaking up in meetings*



## DO'S

- Speak at the start of the meeting.
- Sit somewhere others can see you.
- Try out different ways of participating and contributing.
- Acknowledge other's ideas.
- Choose your meetings wisely.

## DON'TS

- Only speak at end of the meeting.
- Wait for the perfect moment.
- Wait for the perfect idea.
- Hesitate when you contribute.
- Speak too softly.

**"WHEN YOU SPEAK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU PASSIONATELY CARE ABOUT, YOU WILL BE MORE COMFORTABLE AND FEEL MORE CONFIDENT IN YOUR ELEMENT." - BRIAN TRACY**

# FAQ (1)

A quick answer to some of the most common questions.

## How to get over the fear of speaking in a meeting?

- Come in early.
- Engage in the first 5 min.
- Learn the many ways to contribute, find what suits you, and experiment new ways.

## How to speak in a meeting with confidence and authority?

- Get the agenda, prepare, and share your ideas beforehand with attendees for feedback.
- Project confidence in your body language and voice.
- Attend more meetings and speak more to build the habit.

## What are key skills for effective meeting participation?

- Active listening.
- Engaging and sharing your views.
- Body language.

## When to hold back in meetings?

- Don't speak if someone more senior asks you to not speak.
- Don't speak if you just want to show off.
- Don't speak first if you are more senior and want others to engage more.



## FAQ (2)

A quick answer to some of the most common questions.

### How to contribute effectively?

- Be succinct but not so succinct that people don't understand you.
- Have strong enough presence with volume, firmness, and physical presence.
- Engage often.

### How to look smart in meetings?

- Look confident.
- Speak up more often.
- Be concise.

### How to speak up in virtual meetings?

- Be mindful of your image (lighting, angle, audio, background).
- Follow the designated method do speak (raising hand, comment, unmuting, etc.)

### What if I hate meetings?

- Find out what meetings serve your goals and which ones don't.
- Get yourself into more of the meetings that add value.
- Increase your engagement by increasing your participation and having an objective for meeting.



# FAQ (3)

A quick answer to some of the most common questions.

## What are some rules to keep in mind during a meeting?

- Aim to speak at least once.
- Speak in the first 5 to 10 min.
- Use "AND" instead of "BUT" to gain the support from others.

## What if I have nothing to say?

- Ask thoughtful questions.
- Ask for other people's views.
- Summarize key points.

## How to improve speaking skills in meetings?

- Remove verbal and non-verbal hesitation like use of "maybe" or not completing your sentences.
- Practice speaking more often in meetings.
- Learn different ways to contribute to meetings.

## What to never say in meetings?

- Do insults or judgement like "that's stupid".
- Monopolize conversation.
- Say that something is not your job of that you don't have time.





## CHALLENGE

***Here is your challenge: In all of your meetings this week, try to say something, even if small, within the first 5 min of the discussion. It will boost your confidence and engagement!***

Speaking up in meetings is a very important skill for your career success and work fulfillment. Don't leave it to chance.

Speaking up in meetings in a effective and confident way is a core skill of being assertive and advocating for yourself at work.

**[Watch the videos and get the workbook that accompany this guide for a more detailed explanation by clicking here >>](#)**