

Want to Get Noticed? Speak Up!

Employees who have little or nothing to say generally aren't highly regarded by management. Withholding your opinions and ideas is as useless as not having them. Remember, you're being paid to think, so until you communicate your thoughts, your company isn't getting its money's worth.

Unfortunately, many people tend to remain silent due to their fear of addressing an audience or creating conflict with superiors. Hence, they keep their thoughts to themselves during meetings. Some people clam up even during one-on-one conferences with their bosses.

If you have something important to say in your area of expertise, failure to express your thoughts amounts to withholding pertinent information from your company. Depending on its relevance, it could even be a reason for your dismissal. This is true because your compensation is based, in part, on your knowledge, which is an accumulation of your background, training, and experience. In other words, you are obligated to speak out- it's your responsibility.

Four Tips on Speaking Up

1. **Mentally rehearse what you want to say.** It's OK to refer to notes if you need them- they are a good indication that you came prepared.
2. **Stick to your main point.** Even if someone gets emotional and inadvertently (or purposely) sidetracks you, don't respond. Instead get back to your point.
3. **Don't be close-minded.** Listen to points made by others, and if someone else's point is relevant, integrate it with yours.
4. **Help others speak up.** At a meeting, be sure everyone is given time to express an opinion, even if you must single out that person to ask them to express an opinion.