

COMMUNICATE YOUR VISION

By Barbara Bouchet, MEd

ADAPTED FROM
The ENLIGHTENED EDGE for LEADERS:
Ignite the Power of You

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and *The Leader in Me*

The
**ENLIGHTENED
EDGE**
for
LEADERS

Ignite the **POWER** of You

BARBARA BOUCHET

COMMUNICATE YOUR VISION

Show others what you see, what you care about, what is possible and where you stand.

AN inspired vision has the potential to mobilize the diverse talents and strengths of many individuals and bring them to a shared point of focus. A powerful vision communicated with high visibility is a tremendous tool for influencing others.

Your leadership vision paints a picture of what is possible and inspires the viewer to move toward that possibility. It outlines a realistic path toward an inspiring future.

When you communicate your vision, others learn about who you are, what you care about, and what you are committed to. If you deliver your vision precisely and purposefully, you also show others where you stand on issues that are relevant to them.

Since your vision for what is possible will need the support of others, it needs to be communicated with passion and skill. If you do this well, it will be reassuring to some people, but challenging for others.

You can do a lot to inspire enthusiasm and minimize disruptive resistance. Before you verbalize your vision or position, ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ Is my vision authentic and inspiring?
- ◆ Is what I have to say true?
- ◆ Is it kind?
- ◆ Is it relevant and necessary?
- ◆ Am I using the best vehicle for delivery?

INSPIRE WITH AUTHENTICITY

When others see and feel what you are truly passionate about, it rings true and can be inspiring. Sometimes this means sharing a specific experience or a story that establishes your humanness in some

significant way. Sometimes it means touching the hearts of your listeners. It always means connecting with something important to them. An inspired group moves forward happily and will easily join you. An uninspired group is very slow to move and respond.

BE TRUTHFUL

This does not always mean full disclosure. It does mean high integrity and being smart about your audience. Be sure you know what they need and that you can anticipate the kind of impact you'll have. There will always be an upside and a downside to taking a stand and telling the truth. High integrity requires careful assessment of potential for benefit and harm to both you and your audience. If you are concerned about negative consequences as a result of what you have to say, make sure you acknowledge the cost of not speaking up

BE KIND

Being kind is most important when your vision has potentially difficult consequences for someone. For example, if you need to announce a reduction in staff as part of a bigger vision of success for your organization, your message needs to show respect for those who will be affected. Kindness is often sacrificed when saying what is necessary or true, but it doesn't have to be. Think about how your message will effect the other person(s) and acknowledge this with some care. A little sensitivity can go a long way in mitigating potential harm.

MAKE IT RELEVANT

Others will lose interest if they don't know why it's important to them. To engage your audience, craft your communication so it's clear, relevant and appropriate. Make sure that each thing you say has meaning and that you aren't getting lost in words. Being too diplomatic can work against you if it dilutes what you have to say and why it's important. Providing a clear context for your message may also be necessary, especially if the relevance of your vision is not obvious. Make a case for why your vision is worth considering.

CHOOSE YOUR COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Selecting an appropriate communication channel for delivery will support the impact of your message. For instance, email should never be used to deliver highly charged emotional content. Face to face delivery for a high contact message is optimal. You lose your ability to influence if you rely on low contact communication channels when high contact is warranted. When you speaking in person, pay special attention to non-verbal communication. Consider getting some feedback in advance so you can find out if your non-verbals are adding to or detracting from your message.

Action Steps

1. Consider any upcoming presentations, meetings and strategy sessions that may be coming up for you in the next month or two. Focus on one that is especially important for your success and think about the central message you will be trying to convey. Write it down.
2. Review and assess any important communication by using the questions from the beginning of this article. Then revise as needed.
3. Get feedback from someone else regarding your communication. You have no way of knowing

how you come across until you get this valuable information.

4. Learn more about [communication, miscommunication](#) and the art of [saying what needs to be said](#).
5. Call or email Barbara to set up a free initial consultation. We can discuss how to create a tailored communication strategy for or your organization, or how to get feedback for you regarding your presentation style or what might be involved in being coached for greater impact.

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BARBARA BOUCHET, MEd

- ◆ Coach
- ◆ Consultant
- ◆ Facilitator

WORKING WITH

- ◆ Leaders
- ◆ Teams
- ◆ Professionals

AUTHOR OF

- ◆ [The Enlightened Edge for Leaders; Ignite the Power of You](#), book
- ◆ [The Contact-Zone™: Power & Influence](#), board game and training
- ◆ [Work-Life Effectiveness Assessment](#)
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To talk to Barbara, call **206-361-4730** or
 email: BB@ContactPointAssoc.com