



How To Communicate With Everybody and Nobody

by Brad Abare

Communication without repetition is noise. If you are not willing to repeat what you say, chances are pretty good it wasn't worth saying in the first place. When it comes to the stuff that matters, we must understand that **no one heard us the first time**:

- Your phone call was not comprehended.
- Your e-mail was taken out of context.
- Your lunch meeting requires more follow up than you think.

Communication without repetition is noise. The more I ignore the elephant in the room, the more I play the ass-u-me game, and the more I beat around the bush, the better I get at adding to the noise. Adding to the noise means sticking to the easy stuff. It means spending 95 percent of the conversation on context and 5 percent of the conversation on content.

Communication without repetition is noise. The best place to start with communication is to **tackle the toughest stuff first**:

- Spend the first half of the board meeting on the agenda that really matters, not the last half.
- During an employee review, don't wait until the last few minutes to confront the real issues that need improvement, get to those first.
- When asking for support (time, talent, treasure), be transparent, authentic and vulnerable.
- When you're seeking "buy in," make sure everyone understands what that means. Say it again. Repeat what you think is obvious. Say it another way. Ask for it to be repeated back to you.

Communication without repetition is noise. When we pacify, patronize or placate, we don't serve our audience or ourselves very well. Focus on what the worst possible outcome could be as a result of your audience *not* getting your point. This is where your focus needs to be. Dial in this potential dilemma and destroy it!

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