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MANAGING FOR SUCCESS

Real Solutions Choose The Right Time To Start Pitching Ideas

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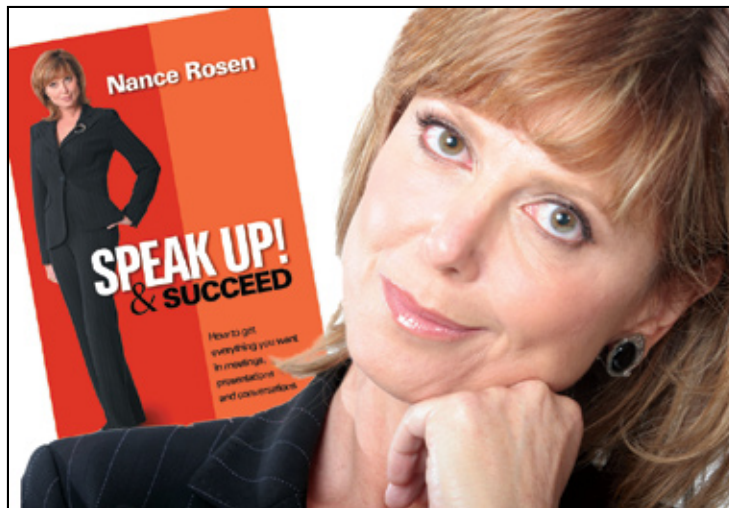
To sell your ideas, you need to listen to others first. Just don't listen too much. "When you keep listening to speakers, you let them reinforce their sense that they're right," said Nance Rosen, managing director of NAX Partners LLC, a marketing and communications firm in Los Angeles. "It's like they're building brick after brick of a fortress by talking more about their viewpoint."

Instead, interrupt gracefully. Redirect the dialogue so that you can assert your point.

Author of "Speak Up! and Succeed," Rosen finds that the best way to interrupt in casual conversation is to hold up an outstretched hand toward the speaker. That, she says, is "a universal cue like a stop sign." At the same time, she'll say "great." If the person misses her cue and continues to babble, she makes another short comment, "Thank you," to signal that she expects the speaker to finish.

Most people get the message and zip their lips. If they don't, Rosen interrupts again by saying "got it" in a firm but polite tone.

By making a series of short comments to indicate that you understand a speaker -- and using the same prompts consistently to silence a motor-mouth -- you can train the person over time to talk less.



When it's your turn to talk, maximize your persuasiveness by grabbing others' attention. Rather than plead your case and enumerate details that support your point, begin with what Rosen calls "a focus on misery." Specifically, engage others by identifying their pain, fear and unfulfilled desire. They will heed your remarks more closely if you begin by appealing to these palpable negatives. "Don't waste time on good news at the beginning," Rosen said. "It's a snooze. Happy talk isn't going to compel people to listen to you."

For example, if you want to propose steps to your management team to streamline your operation, start by saying: "Sales are down, our rivals have launched a product that can steal market share from us, and we've squandered our potential to lock up our niche." From that point, position

yourself as problem solver. Show that you not only understand the obstacles but that you have also developed a plan of attack.

"Anchor your proposal by showing how it will empower you and your team to move forward on many fronts," Rosen said.

Cite what she calls "heroic achievement stories" to showcase your experience as a leader who has overcome pain, fear and unfulfilled desire.

Start with phrases such as "From my experience navigating through a similar crisis, I've discovered that" and "When we were struggling to stay afloat 10 years ago, I decided to."

By establishing credibility as someone who has triumphed over adversity, you reassure others that you're equipped to manage the current challenge. Through your stories, you can also champion the core values

that your listeners care about the most.

Nance Rosen is a former marketing executive with The Coca-Cola Company, past-president of the Medical Marketing Association, former director of marketing in the Fortune 500 technology sector, and host of International Business on public radio. She was the youngest general manager of Bozell Advertising and Public Relations (now Omnicom).

She is now Managing Director of NAX Partners LLC, a strategic marketing and communications firm with clients in technology, healthcare, professional services, consumer goods and business-to-business products and services.

For a wealth of information, visit www.NAXpartners.com. Nance is also CEO of Nance Speaks!, She delivers keynotes, training and workshops for business audiences in the US and around the world. Her most popular topics are Why People Buy, Key Factor Selling, Speak Up! & Succeed, Leadership Matters and Put the "Me" in Team: How to Develop Great Employees.

For a wealth of information, visit www.NanceSpeaks.com. Nance Rosen's new book is *Speak Up! & Succeed: How to get everything you want in meetings, presentations and conversations*, published by Pegasus Media World.