

Be Bold(h)er: Top 5 tips for increasing your communication confidence

By Tiffany Olson

1. Be aware of the verbal crutches.

Drop the "just."
Drop the "actually."
Drop the apology.
Drop the "only a minute."
Drop the upspeak.

2. Identify your problem areas in communication.

Do a self-assessment, look back on feedback you've received from others in the past and ask people to give you feedback now. Strive to receive the information with an open mind, not with an attitude of defensiveness.

3. Focus on making one change at a time.

Focus on one trait that stands out in a bad way and work on changing it. Then shift to the next one and address it. You might spend a few weeks on one behavior before moving on to the next and that's okay.

4. Assemble your team.

Find an accountability partner. It's important that this person will keep you focused on forward movement and addressing one change at a time. Also, find mentors with different areas of expertise for different developmental needs (one for career strategy, one for leadership skills, etc.).

5. Work to increase confidence in other areas.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Do one thing every day that scares you." It's a good practice to do something you're not already good at. It's humbling, character building and confidence building.