



Know when to speak up and when not to

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You’re sitting in a meeting listening to others and are tempted to give your two cents, but a voice in your head is telling you to remain silent. This is the wise side of your ego speaking and it’s okay to listen to it. It takes a certain amount of business savvy to know when to speak up and when not to.

In any business or work-related setting, being silent doesn’t mean you are afraid to say what you think. Listen to what everyone else in the room has to say before you make your comments. If you think what you have to say will still contribute value to the conversation, then have the confidence to bring it up. Before speaking, though, think about whether your thoughts will make a difference in the outcome of the situation. If you aren’t sure, it might be

best to stay silent and keep listening.

If you add your two cents but find that your opinion isn’t well received or is not taken under advisement, then it’s time to reassess what you want to get across and change your approach. If your coworkers don’t get your point, don’t insist on being right. Instead, quietly watch the rest of the conversation unfold and let them sail down a road of potential consequences. Remember, if they don’t listen to your advice, and their ideas don’t pan out, you can always remind them of your thoughts the next time around. Perhaps then they’ll listen to you more intently.

Keep in mind, though, if you are unmistakably sure of an impending disaster or situation that could harm the bottom line of the company or organization, you should speak up regardless what others think about it.

If you don’t you could be viewed as being negligent in your choice to be silent. You could even be held legally accountable if either contractual obligations apply to you or if someone got hurt or killed because you failed to forewarn of a dangerous situation. Use good judgment and do the right thing.

Your viewpoints and opinions are important to you of course, but are only important to others when they can contribute to a positive outcome for them. So present your thoughts in a way that will resonate with others and increase the likelihood of your opinion actually mattering to someone. And always remember to not underestimate the power of silence. As Abraham Lincoln once said: “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt.”

~ The End ~