



# Powerful Leadership Communication: 4 Key Strategies

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According to a 2023 Axios research report, the cost of ineffective communication (from leaders and across the organization) adds up to more than \$15,000 per employee, per year—or \$2 trillion annually across the U.S. alone.

The report goes on to highlight the cost of poor communication in human terms:

- Misalignment, as leaders and employees fall out of sync
- Disengagement, as trust and transparency break down
- Massive waste, in time, productivity, profit, and potential

The good news is, there is evidence-based data—and real-life stories—that show us what best-practice leadership communication looks like today.

In this blog, we've collected highlights from a recent PowerSpeaking Live! panel discussion, "Lessons in Powerful Leadership Communication." Expert panelists joined [PowerSpeaking CEO Carrie Beckstrom](#) to explore the forces that are changing the expectations of leaders, and how anyone who leads teams can become a more effective, inspiring communicator.

## Change With the Times: Transparency and Dialogue

In the 2023 Axios study mentioned, 77% of leaders thought "essential communications" in their organizations "are helpful and relevant."

Only 46% of employees agreed. Bit of a disconnect, right?

Expectations of leaders are changing. To re-engage and build trust with employees and stakeholders, Carrie and Dan Albaum, author of the book "The Impact Makers: Voices of Leadership," agreed that leaders need to:

- Abandon the old one-way communication model, put ego aside, and adopt a servant-leader mindset

- Drive engagement by fostering dialogue with employees and stakeholders, asking questions, and making it safe for everyone to participate
- Communicate effectively and frequently to make connections, remove barriers, and lift teams to higher levels of performance

Dan and Carrie share more insights about these leadership communication imperatives here.



Clearly, employees and stakeholders have new expectations of leaders, and one of the most important is authenticity.

Next up . . .

## Lead With Values-Driven Authenticity

Authenticity is a critical characteristic for leaders to exhibit with today's workforce. But what does that mean, exactly? What does it look like in action?

Stanford Graduate School of Business Mary Oleksy explored these questions with Carrie.

We love these key insights:

- We are all “human beings, not human doings,” so authenticity is critical if leaders want to truly connect with people and inspire action
- To be authentic, leaders first need to become very clear about their values, and always communicate from that place to create a sense of safety and connection
- Once clear on guiding values, leaders should lean into their own, unique style of communicating

Mary and Carrie elaborate on these key points here.



Honest self-reflection allows leaders to be clear about their values and authentic communication style.

It also builds a great foundation for the next powerful skill, and that's tailoring communications to diverse audiences . . .

## Understand and Focus on the Audience

Today, leadership communication often requires connecting and communicating with extraordinarily diverse audiences.

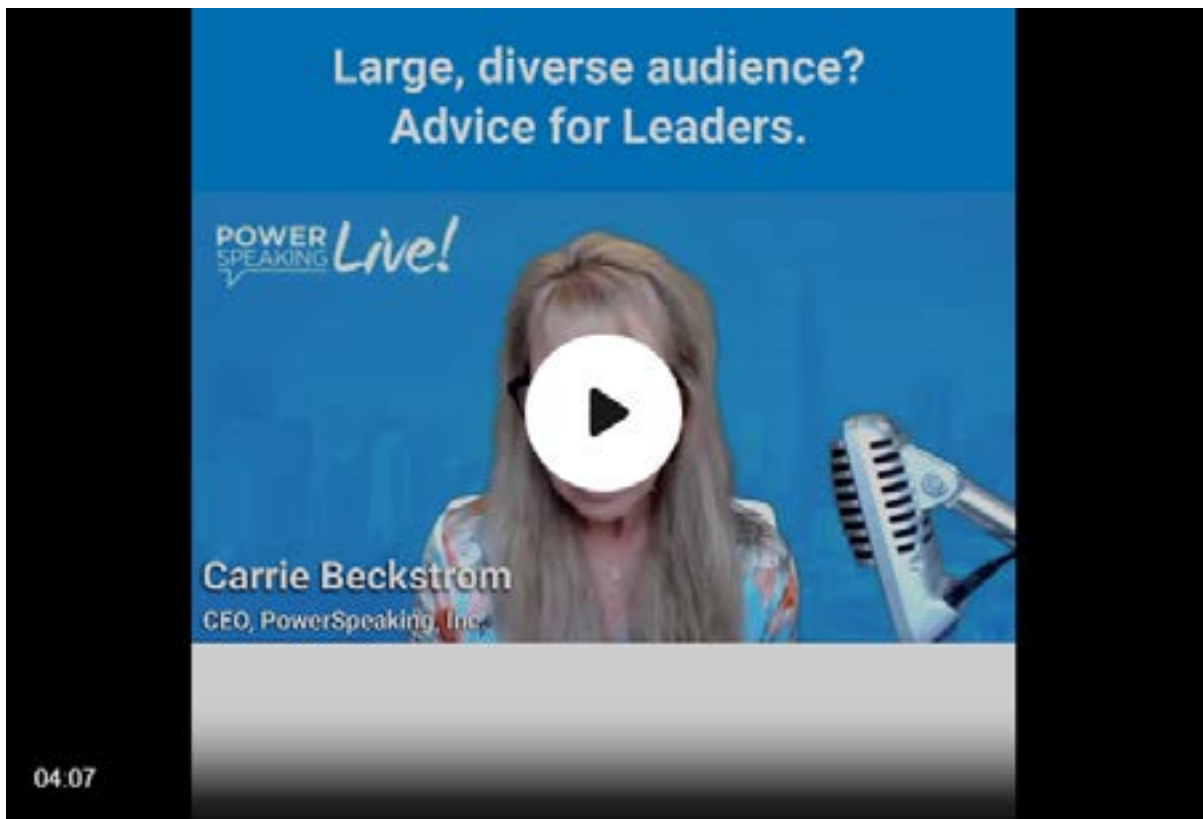
Panelist Mano Cheema, former Head of Architecture for AstraZeneca, shared advice for keeping the different needs of global employees in mind when presenting important information to them.

- Try to see the world through the eyes of the people to whom you're presenting
- Adjust your language so your message is meaningful to all audience members
- Use internal social media as an added tool to engage and inform

We'd also add these pointers:

- Use stories with universal themes like love and belonging, power and responsibility, and fun and playfulness
- Greet the audience in multiple languages
- Provide an option for the audience to submit questions in advance and be certain to take at least one question from each region of the country represented

Mano presented to many large, global audiences in his career. He shares more detail in this clip.



The last strategy we'll highlight fosters an environment in which leaders and their teams communicate proactively to achieve success.

## Be a Proactive Communicator

Mary told a wonderful story about how positive, proactive communication can yield extraordinary results.

It's a story about a prestigious, competitive Stanford speaker program called the LOWkeynotes, in which graduate students who are accepted have eight weeks to prepare for and deliver a change-the-world, TED-like presentation that gets posted to Youtube.

The most inspiring part of the story is how the student team worked together to achieve truly awe-inspiring results. Interestingly, their actions mirror the hallmarks of effective leadership communication:

- Establish a shared purpose and vision of success at the beginning



- Define clear roles, goals, and processes for working together
- Create a collaborative, supportive environment in which both individuals and the team as a whole could achieve their vision

Mary shares the full story here.



Apple founder Steve Jobs once said, "Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people."

Let's take that one step further. Great teams—including their leaders—do great things when they're inspired and dedicated to achieving great communication.

## Want More Resources?

We hope you found this blog valuable. If you'd like to gain even more insights into the specific communication skills leaders need today to build trust, engage stakeholders, and drive business forward, check these out:

**PowerSpeaking Live!:** Delve into more clips from the "Lessons in Powerful Leadership Communication" panel discussion on our [Youtube](#) page, or the full event recording and podcast [here](#).

**CEO Carrie Beckstrom's blog,** "[Leadership Communication: The New Expectations and How to Meet Them.](#)"

She addresses topics such as:

[\*\*Active Listening:\*\* \*The best decision-making tool\*](#)

[\*\*Consistency:\*\* \*Preserve the power of your message\*](#)

[\*\*Social advocacy:\*\* \*When it's the right thing to do\*](#)

... and more.

# Expert Training to Help You and Your Team Become More Powerful Communicators

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