



## A Shortcut to Meaningful Communication

Whenever I work with organizations on improving Employee Engagement we first explore what they think is behind the problem. High on the list, without exception, is communication. The staff wants me to “fix” the leadership team and the leaders want me to fix the staff.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary defines communicate as follows:

communicate `v. 1. Share or exchange information or ideas → convey (an emotion or feeling) in a non-verbal way

For the most part, we pay significant attention to the “share” part of the definition and completely disregard “exchange” and “convey (an emotion or feeling) in a non-verbal way”.

We do love the sound of our own voices, don’t we?

### Here is your three-part shortcut to *meaningful* communication:

Step 1: Ask a question

Step 2: Listen (convey your interest by doing nothing else)

Step 3: Ask more questions based on what you heard during Step 2 (exchange).

Too many think they appear knowledgeable by dominating conversations. Barely listening to what others are saying, they are anxious to jump in to give their opinion, to share their expertise. I’ve heard radio and podcast interviews where the interviewer asks a question that was *clearly* answered already. It was likely missed because s/he was too busy trying to figure out what the next intelligent question should be.



A conversation is similar to a tennis match. You cannot anticipate what’s coming because you simply don’t know. You can only wait with curiosity and react to what’s served up. If you’re too deeply thinking about how you’re going to react to a serve or volley that hasn’t happened yet, then you’re likely to miss the ball altogether. Game, set and match.

You will undoubtedly have a conversation very soon after reading this. Try the formula above and consider whether the conversation was more meaningful than usual, i.e., more in-depth.

To schedule a communication workshop for your team, or individual coaching on communication, contact us! 480-560-9452 [Info@SilverSpeaks.com](mailto:Info@SilverSpeaks.com)

**Silver Rose is an Employee Engagement Thought Leader** who works with organizations to implement practical, proven and timesaving strategies for: (1) improving employee engagement, (2) increasing profitability, and (3) freeing leadership from the need to micro-manage.

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