

CLARITY FIRST

6 Tips to help you convey complex information

Practical ideas you can employ right now to communicate with greater cut through

LEARN TO CONVEY
COMPLEX IDEAS USING
A SIMPLE BUT
POWERFUL AND
UNIVERSAL STRATEGY

Clarity First Coaching program helps turn technical experts into great communicators.

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#1 PURPOSE

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR PURPOSE BEFORE YOU WRITE ANYTHING

How to get more decisions than questions

Think about the next piece of communication that you need to prepare. It could be an email, a paper or a PowerPoint presentation. Answer this question:

What do I want this particular audience to know, think or do as a result of this communication?

TIP: If you find yourself saying "I need to update my audience" beware. Ask yourself, 'why do I need to update them'? Keep digging until you can explain why so your communication is focused. You might, for example, want your steering committee to agree that your progress is satisfactory. Clarifying leads to more impactful communication.



PATTERNS CAN
HELP. [CLICK
HERE](#)
TO DOWNLOAD
A PATTERN
FOR YOUR
NEXT ACTION
PLAN.

#2 AUDIENCE

KNOW THAT YOUR AUDIENCE IS NOT YOU

Decision makers rarely want to know all the technical details before they get to your big idea

Think about the audience of the next important piece of communication you must prepare.

Who is the primary decision maker?

Who will influence the decision, even if they don't actually MAKE it?

Who else do you need to consider?

What do they want or need from you so they can make that decision?

TIP: Don't be afraid to communicate less! Sometimes we find that once clients are clear about both the purpose of their communication and the audience, they realise they don't need a formal piece of communication at all. A quick phone call or 'catchup' is sufficient.



An oil company spent hundreds of thousands of dollars developing a new pesticide. Then they realised one of their techs had worked it out 5 years earlier. But his report was written so badly no-one finished reading it.

#3 STRUCTURE

DON'T MAKE YOUR AUDIENCE DO ALL THE WORK

Three things to avoid when thinking through your communication

Look at some of your recent pieces of communication and ask yourself some questions about their effectiveness.



Which pieces of communication were effective? Why?

Which pieces were not? What could be improved?

What kinds of responses did you get?

- Did the audience not respond quickly enough?
- Did they ask lots of questions?
- Did they give only a vague response?
- Did you need to chase them to get a response?

TIP: You don't need to be a genius to write well ... [Click here](#) to access a great article that explains that further.



The world's biggest project management association, PMI, found poor communication kills half of all failed projects.

#4 CRITICAL THINKING

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR CRITICAL THINKING ABILITIES

3 things to help you get greater cut through when communicating

How strong are your communication skills?



How strong are your critical thinking skills?



What would you like to improve? Why?

What difference would it make to you personally and to your career if you scored above 8 on both of the scales above?

PS If you have been to Tarpeena and can describe it to me, I'll send them a free copy of our book, *The So What Strategy!* Email me at hello@claritycollege.co and I'll send it to you.



#5 SOCIALISATION

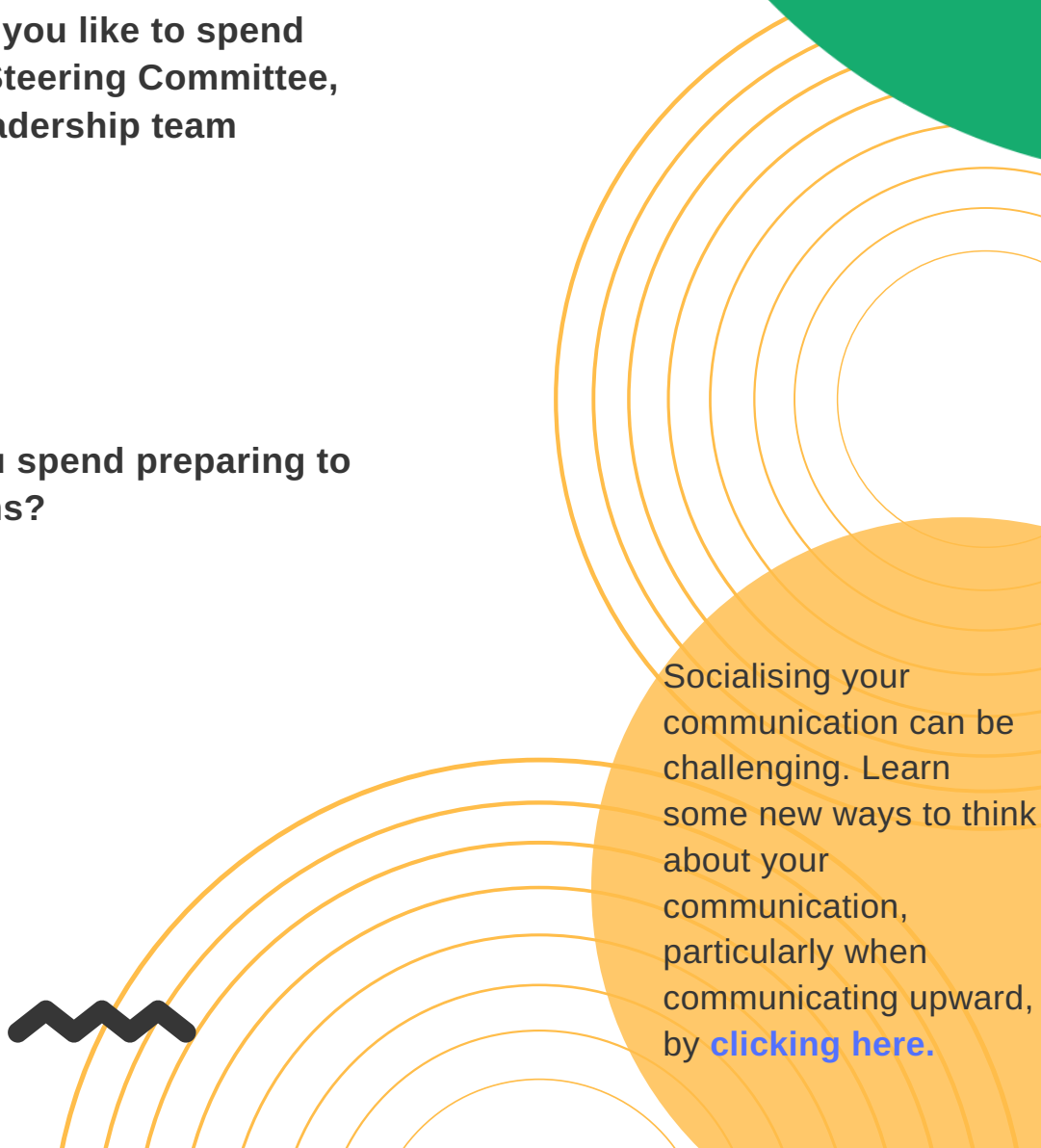

AVOID THE CHAIN OF PAIN BY SOCIALISING YOUR STORYLINE FIRST

1 simple process helps you gain agreement on your messaging fast

Have you seen anyone use a storyline in this way before?

How much time would you like to spend preparing for routine Steering Committee, Technical Forum or leadership team updates?

How much time do you spend preparing to present to these forums?



Socialising your communication can be challenging. Learn some new ways to think about your communication, particularly when communicating upward, by [clicking here](#).

#6 END PRODUCTS

USE YOUR STORYLINE TO FRAME THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR COMMUNICATION


Turning technical experts into great communicators

Is the main idea for your communication easy to see at first glance?

Can your audience skim your communication to get the general message or do they need to read closely to find the top level supporting points?

Does the format of your communication match the logical hierarchy of your thinking?

If your communication is lengthy, have you offered an executive summary that introduces not only the ideas, but the structure of your storyline?



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TEMPLATES BY
[CLICKING HERE.](#)

**COMPLEX IDEAS CAN BE
COMMUNICATED QUICKLY
AND CLEARLY**

Clarity First Program

**Helping technical
experts become great
communicators**

Davina Stanley has more than 20 years' experience in helping technical experts communicate complex information. Since training at McKinsey she has helped professionals from almost every profession and across most industry sectors.

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