

THINK FIRST

'My boss thinks I talk too much.' My coachee (a bright, energetic manager in her early thirties) shares. 'She tells me that I take too long to come to the point I wish to make and that can be very tiring, especially during meetings. Not only does it cause meetings to overrun, it ...'

When she pauses to draw breath, I ask. 'You agree with her?'

Most coaches do this rather well; interrupt without being rude. It is a critical coaching skill, if you wish to keep the conversation channelised and on track. Of course, one needs to be mindful that it does not hinder the coachee from useful reflections.

As Napoleon would have said, 'Balance. Always balance.' (I mean, he actually said *audacity*, but if he had been coaching, methinks he would have said balance). However, I digress.

'Well, I want you to understand where I'm coming from.' She responds with an energetic head bob. 'The thing is I like to help people understand why I am adopting that particular point of view or my logic for taking a particular decision. I think that helps me to be more inclusive and I believe it's useful because...' She takes a couple of minutes to explain why she thinks her boss has that opinion. Finally, ends with. 'I think so too. My boss is probably right.'

I retain a straight face all through her soliloquy; we coaches are polite too. Mostly.

'I see.' Now I need her to REALISE that she does take a tad too long to get to the point. But I wish to be as kind as possible, and ensure I do it in such a way that she is inspired to act on her realisation. 'Do you think you share your thoughts, or the outcome of your thoughts?'

She mulls that. Opens her mouth. Closes it. Then finally says. 'Are you asking if I think first and then speak, or start speaking and refine my thoughts by explaining them as I speak?'

I told you. The people I work with are infallibly smart; they just need a gentle nudge.

I resist the urge to smile. Or say anything. Responding instead with a non-committal, 'uh-huh.'

There is silence as she struggles to put words to her thoughts. Finally. 'You are probably right. I SHOULD think before I speak.'

And THAT is never a bad idea. **Whenever possible, try to share the outcome of your thoughts.** It will help you be succinct and the point you wish to make will not get lost in a barrage of words.

Try it. Experience the difference.

A large part of leadership is our ability to **clarify our thoughts first and then articulate them as succinctly and inspiringly as possible**. We need to ensure that the listener(s) walk away with the bullet-points we wish to communicate firmly embedded in their mind(s). AND they are inspired to act on them.

Mukul Deva

I am a Singapore-based keynote speaker, executive coach, mentor, facilitator and internationally bestselling author.

My passion is empowering and inspiring people and organisations to achieve peak performance and transformational results by helping them **ACTIVATE THE RIGHT A.R.C. – Attitude, Resilience and Confidence**.

To enable this I deliver keynotes, coach, mentor and facilitate sessions - so far, to over 250,000 people from 500+ of the biggest and best MNCs and government organisations across the world.

An ex-Indian Army officer and an accredited coach from the Henley Business School, I have co-founded two companies (MSD SECURITY PVT LTD, based in India and INFLUENCE SOLUTIONS PTE LTD, headquartered in Singapore) and written 18 books in 5 different genres. Some have done fairly well. And some are even being made into movies.

I would love to stay connected, to learn from you, and share your insights with others, so that they too may LIVE LIMITLESS.

If you have a story to share, or would like to benefit from the experiences and insights of others, please connect with me at:

My Virtual Home: www.mukuldeva.com

More such insights: www.mukuldeva.com/blog

My Books: <https://www.amazon.com/Mukul-Deva/e/B001IGJVQ>

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