

# Speaking Up and Being Heard



How to Convince Others to Listen



# Selective Hearing at Work

Gender minorities, people of color, and members of other marginalized groups are more likely to be interrupted, talked over, and ignored in meetings

**Being heard is key to everything**

If nobody is listening, how will you

- Find an audience for your ideas?
- Gather resources to execute your vision?
- Get credit for your contributions?
- Be considered for promotions and other opportunities?

**Have concrete strategies to make  
your voice heard!**



# Amplification of an Idea

## How it works:

1. One person makes a point in a meeting
2. Another person immediately repeats the idea and commends it
3. A third person chimes in and moves the idea forward

## Variations:

- Bring the conversation back to someone's idea if they are overlooked
- Advocate for another person's idea outside of the immediate moment

Women/POC and other marginalized workers often receive backlash when speaking up for themselves, but will not typically experience that backlash when speaking up for others

# Throw Your Voice (via Strategic Supporters)

Ask an ally whose voice **is** typically respected to:

1. Introduce your idea (with appropriate credit)
  2. Pass control of the discussion to you directly
- Harder to ignore when someone has deliberately made space for your voice to be heard
  - Builds credibility – you've already convinced one person to support your idea!





# Call it Out – Boldly or Softly

If you are interrupted or someone talks over you while you are proposing an idea...

Be bold:

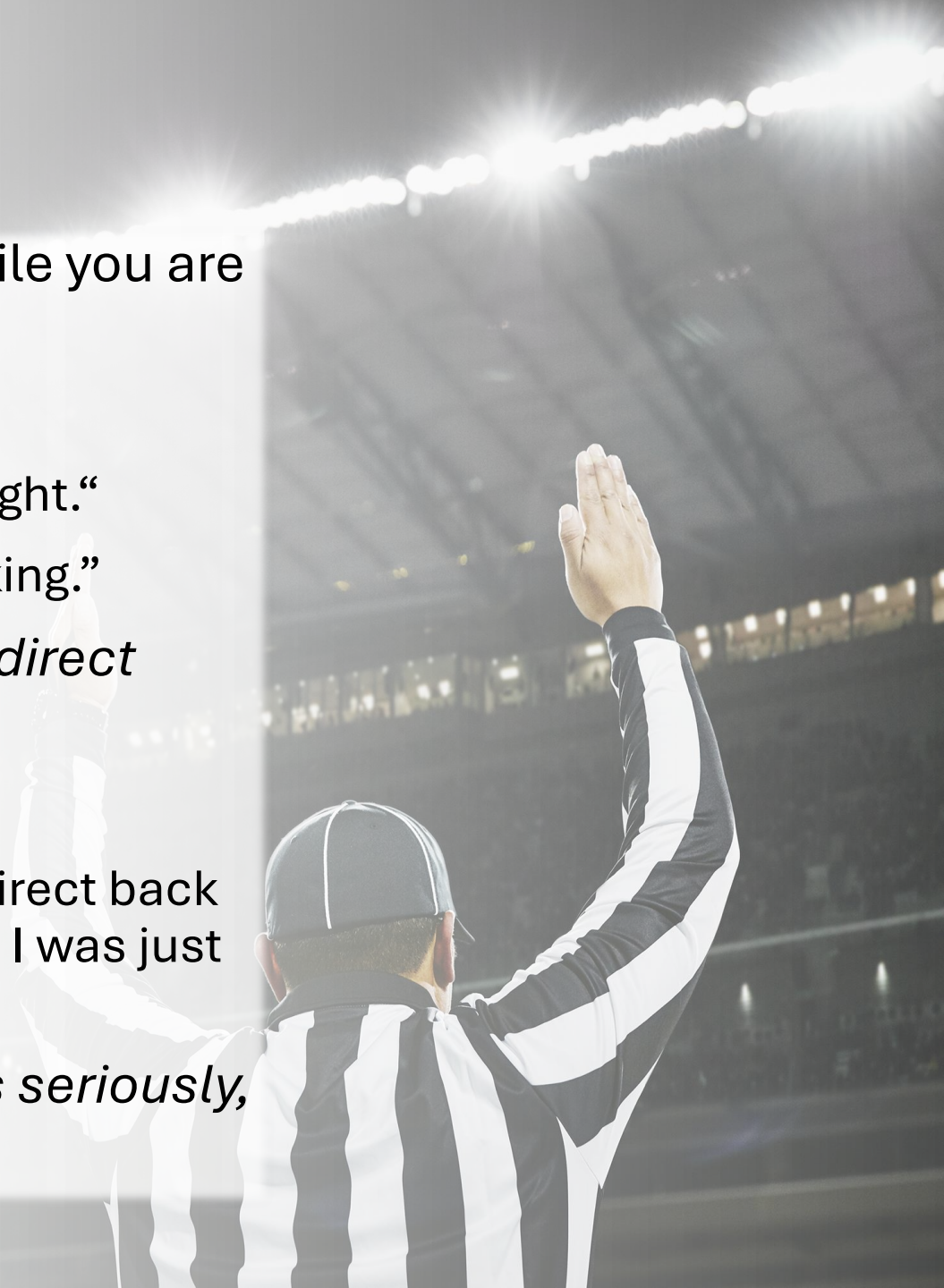
- “Excuse me, I was talking and I'd like to finish my thought.”
- “Please hold your comments until I am finished speaking.”

*People will often have a negative reaction to a direct response*

Speak softly...but not *too* softly:

- Wait for the interrupter to pause, then jump in and redirect back to your idea. “Good point! That relates directly to what I was just saying...”

*People are less inclined to take your softened ideas seriously, even if they do listen to them*





# Play the Long Game

You get interrupted or your idea gets stolen. Instead of reacting immediately, wait and observe:

- Who does this person interrupt/override – is it everyone, or is there a pattern?
- Is this part of the company/group culture, or just one person?

Use your observations to decide on your response

- Can you discuss with the person directly (outside of the meeting)?
- Would involving other (higher level) employees be of benefit?
- Is the culture a good fit for your career plans?

# The Last Word

**Diversity drives innovation – when we limit who can contribute, we in turn limit what problems we can solve.**

*-Telle Whitney*

Your voice is valuable and deserves to be heard





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THANK  
YOU!

