

TLP Five-Minute Read Over Coffee – Keeping it simple and generous to your audience

The principle that most resonates with me is that powerful communication is simple and generous to its audience. I repeat this mantra a lot with clients and it is at the heart of my approach to training and coaching. Like any principle it runs the risk of being seen as cheesy, clichéd or maybe a little empty. So this is what this principle looks like for me in my everyday work with my clients.

- Are you being concise? Saying what you need to say, no-more, no less.
- Being concise is not always the same as being direct. Are you saying what you need to say in a professional way? 'Being professional' is a loose term but for me it means speaking in a way that makes my audience feel comfortable or if the conversation is a tough one - respected.
- Are you using language that helps and does not block your audience? If you are using a beautiful idiom - check with yourself if that makes your message easier or more difficult to understand.
- Are you assuming knowledge? If your email has lots of abbreviations (FY - Financial year/For you!?!) - ask yourself if everyone will get their meaning in the first instance.
- Is your ego in the way? I often see examples of needlessly complex sentences and showing off with obscure language. I think this says something about the speaker and not the audience.
- Are you speaking at a speed that helps your audience? This feels a very simple point but I have lots of feedback from international teams struggling with the speed of native English speakers.
- Are you pausing, taking the time to summarise, and ask questions that help check understanding?
- Finally are you communicating with warmth? Warmth does need to involve group hugs and everything being awesome! Warmth can be a simple and understated way of communicating that helps people feel a little bit better in that moment. A few authentic questions about how the other person is -

before going into the content of the meeting can warm up what could otherwise be a mechanical discussion.
