

5 essentials of purposeful communication to become an inspiring leader

 By [Brian Eagar](#)

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Communication is the only tool that you really have to lead, influence and inspire in an impactful manner. How else do you actually lead people, teams and the organisation? How do you have the much-needed courageous conversations to hold them accountable? How do you drive change, lift strategy off the paper, strengthen culture, foster unity, inspire and galvanise all those around you to follow you?



Brian Eagar

You may believe that you are not a good orator but this is no excuse for not communicating – anyone can learn to tell a story. Avoid underestimating the power of your message and falling into the trap of hiding behind technology in the digital, artificial intelligence-driven time we lead in. Our teams are crying out to be engaged constructively so that they can support the organisation fully. Your story can't be replaced by an automatically-generated email. If you want to enhance, improve or change the culture in your organisation, it starts with changing your language and your personal involvement as a leader.

Communicating *on purpose* is not about changing you into an inauthentic communicator. It's about making sure that your message does not get lost in translation, and that it is framed to suit your personality, your purpose, your context and most importantly, your audience. This is how you tell a gripping story and why you need to consider the Five Essentials of Purposeful Communication:

Telos – Build it on purpose

Telos is about the ultimate final cause – or purpose – of your message. It is important that you decide what you want to achieve upfront. If you clearly define the Telos of your communication first, before anything else, the Topos, Logos, Ethos and Pathos will flow more naturally, and you'll be better prepared to step up to the lectern or in front of the camera, and persuade people to take action.

Topos – Choose your frame ie. create context

Do not underestimate taking the time to understand your audience's context so that you can present your message in a

way that they can identify with. It is important to clearly position the chunks of information within the context of your overall message while ensuring that your message speaks to your audience's context.

Logos – Leverage logic and reason

Logos refers to using reason or logic. This is about using the factual information in your message and presenting it in a way that makes sense to your audience. Firstly, you need to make sure that you use facts that are relevant both to your message and your audience. Secondly, you need to include examples or parallels that will help your audience to understand the information and put it into perspective.

Ethos – Inspire belief

Ethos is about acquiring and maintaining the trust and respect of your audience. In short, it refers to engaging your audience with enthusiasm or empathy, underpinned by authenticity. This means citing sources and using vocabulary that will appeal to your audience and delivering your message with the appropriate emotion and authenticity.

Pathos – Touch their hearts

Pathos refers to emotional appeal and how enrolling your message is. In other words, what is in it for your audience and why would they benefit from listening to you? When you use Pathos to convince somebody, you make them feel an emotion that moves them to action. This is where your message makes the transition from mind to heart to hands. Most importantly, be authentic; people will quickly realise when you are trying to manipulate them.

These five essentials cannot be separated from each other, nor can the message be separated from the author/speaker. If all these essentials work together, they will strengthen your message exponentially. However, neglecting just one of these could potentially destroy your message.

Similarly, as the deliverer of the message, you can render the best constructed message a failure by the manner in which you speak, your body language or even by what others believe your character to be like ie. your personal brand. In short, if your personal brand is not believable, they won't believe in your message. Remember, you *are* the message. This is why it is vital for you to appreciate the value of harnessing this powerful gift – the ability to use words to inspire and achieve.

Be mindful of the words you speak and those you fail to speak. You choose what you say and how you say it, and therefore you also choose the way in which you impact others. You owe it to your audience – and to the purpose of your message – to be well prepared. As the familiar saying goes: practice makes perfect.

ABOUT BRIAN EAGAR

Brian Eagar is the founder and group CEO of TowerStone. From being voted as the naughtiest kid most likely to fail at school, Eagar found success in the information and technology sector as a young sales and marketing executive, culminating in an executive sales and strategy role for one of the Siemens businesses based in Germany. On his return to South Africa, his passion to inspire leadership led to the creation of TowerStone Leadership Centre in 2006.

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