

# Finding Your Voice in the Boardroom

*WGOB E-Guides provide tips for your board journey, empowering you with the confidence and courage to lead and serve on corporate boards.*

Navigating the boardroom can be daunting. To establish your presence and influence on any board, it's crucial to find and assert your voice. Here are 10 strategies to help you speak up with courage and confidence.

## 1. Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

Before entering the boardroom, make sure you thoroughly prepare. Understand the agenda, research your topics, and anticipate potential questions. The more prepared you are, the more confident you will be in your contributions to the board discussions.

For more guidance on practical preparation, [refer to this blog post from DirectorPrep.com](#).

## 2. Know Your Board Members

Familiarize yourself with your board colleagues. Knowing their roles, interests, and potential viewpoints can help you tailor your messages and anticipate the dynamics in the room. Building relationships with your board colleagues is essential to creating a collaborative board culture. Meet them for coffee, schedule a virtual call, or attend board dinners. Also, consider sitting beside a different board member at each meeting.

## 3. Master the Art of Listening

Listening is as vital as speaking. By attentively understanding your colleagues' viewpoints, you can craft responses that address their concerns or complement their ideas. Active listening enhances your contributions and builds a reputation as a thoughtful and considerate leader. Use the beginning of the board meeting to listen actively. This will help you gauge the tone and flow, allowing you to find the right moment to interject with your insights.

## 4. Leverage Nonverbal Communication

Your voice isn't just what you say; it's also how you say it. Nonverbal cues such as eye contact, posture, and gestures can fortify your verbal communication, making your message more compelling. Developing strong nonverbal communication skills can significantly enhance your presence. Your body language can bolster your verbal presence, and your non-verbal communication can reinforce your credibility and authority.

## 5. Craft Clear and Impactful Messages

When you speak, be direct and to the point. Avoid jargon or lengthy explanations. Clear, concise communication makes it easier for others to grasp and respect your viewpoint.

In the boardroom, clarity is key. Ensure your points are well-organized and succinct. Tailor your communication to your audience, sometimes using technical jargon for simplicity when necessary. Practice helps — consider structuring your thoughts before speaking to maintain clarity and impact.

## 6. Be Curious and Ask Questions

Asking questions is an excellent way to demonstrate engagement and assertiveness. It shows you're curious and involved and can open up space for your contributions to the conversation. [Refer to this article for more insights on curiosity in the boardroom.](#)

## 7. Own Your Expertise

Remember, you were invited to the boardroom because you bring value. Trust in your knowledge and experiences. Confidence in your expertise will naturally inspire others to listen. To effectively communicate in the boardroom, it helps to understand the unique value you bring to the table, recognizing the strengths, experiences, and insights you have that others may not possess. By aligning your contributions with these distinctive attributes, you'll be more confident in what you share and how you share it.

## 8. Seek Out Allies and Mentors

Seek allies who can support and echo your ideas. Building relationships with board colleagues fosters growth and resilience and can create a supportive environment where your voice is more likely to be amplified.

Mentors can provide feedback on your boardroom interactions and offer strategies for improvement. For more guidance on the role of mentors in the boardroom, [download our WGOB E-Guide to Effective Mentorship on Your Board Journey.](#)

## 9. Embrace Authenticity

Being authentic in your interactions creates trust and connection with your audience. Authenticity builds credibility; when others see you as trustworthy, your voice naturally carries more weight. To explore the concept of authenticity in the boardroom in more depth, [refer to Dr. Deborah Rosati's article, \*Beyond the Façade\*, in this issue of I Am Unbreakable Magazine.](#)

## 10. Reflect and Seek Feedback

After meetings, reflect on your contributions. What worked well? What could be improved? Seeking feedback from trusted colleagues can provide valuable insights for your personal growth.

Finding your voice in the boardroom requires preparation, confidence, and strategic communication. By honing these skills, you'll ensure your insights are heard, respected, and impactful. For more guidance, [download Dr. Deborah Rosati's e-book, \*Elevating Your Board Effectiveness\*.](#)

Remember, your voice matters. By finding and asserting your voice around the table, you can drive meaningful change in any boardroom setting.