

# Speak up for all voices to be heard

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## Overview

Just because a voice isn't big, doesn't mean it isn't powerful—or at least it shouldn't. Unfortunately, statistics show that people with less commanding voices tend to speak up less and get interrupted more—most typically female employees. It's a significant problem that affects individuals at all levels, regardless of position or rank. In order to achieve equality, we need to learn how to speak up when it's our turn and listen when it's someone else's.

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## Insights

- Despite an increasing number of females in high-level positions, women are still statistically interrupted more frequently than their male counterparts
- Communication styles vary from person to person, and not all interruptions are intentional or personal
- Speaking at a lower volume makes it easier for others to regard what a person is saying as having less importance



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## Discussion

What is your personal experience with this topic?

- Do you think people are becoming more aware of the negative impact this has on a workplace environment or community?
- Have you ever witnessed a co-worker being interrupted? What did you do?
- Have you ever been guilty of interrupting others? Did you acknowledge it?
- What do you think is the best strategy if you have been interrupted or noticed that someone else has?



## Strategies to help everyone speak up

- If you're cut off, continue speaking. By intensifying your tone, you are gently reminding the individual that they have [interrupted you](#)
- If someone starts speaking over you, politely ask to complete your thought but be firm in your intention, not apologetic
- Think twice before interrupting a co-worker, making sure they have clearly opened the floor to a response [before jumping in](#)
- If you see someone being interrupted, be an ally and help them gain back command of the room
- Paying attention to how others communicate can help you to learn the right cues for when to respond and how to let others know you have finished

To learn more, visit [the RBC Inclusion Learning Centre](#)



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