

Share with a Friend

# Flash!

Advice, perspectives & ideas to accelerate the leader in you



When I grudgingly moved from California to New Jersey a decade ago, I regaled everyone I met with stories about “amazing San Francisco!”

The result? **It took me a long time to make friends.**

Why? I violated a critical rule: know your audience.

Whether we are talking with new neighbors, teaching a workshop, exploring an idea with a team, or giving a presentation from the stage, **we need to start with “know your audience” not “know your topic.”**

1. Know who is in the audience (*their background and experiences*)
2. Understand their communication preferences (*do they want stories, bullets, research, experiences, props?*)
3. Relate to them (*what do you have in common with them?*)
4. Consider their reaction to the topic/message (*will they be defensive or curious?*)
5. Ascertain their priorities (*what’s important to them?*)
6. Determine why your topic is important to them (*why are they willing to listen?*)
7. Talk about what’s important to them (*frame your topic/message accordingly*)

Some practical ways to “know your audience:”

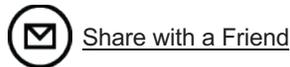
- **Interview people** before a meeting/presentation to learn their priorities, preferences, and perspectives (*don’t just rely on titles and assumptions!*)
- **Ask questions to involve** people and determine what they want to learn about you or the topic
- **Be flexible and adapt** based on what you discover

- **Provide context and backstory** (...if they want it)
- **Explain jargons and acronyms** (...if they need it)
- **Observe their listening** (notice eye contact, smartphone usage, facial expressions)
- **Look around and see where you're at** - let the environment inform (ex: people who live in NJ don't want to hear incessantly how great it is to live someplace else!)
- **Be patient and curb your defensiveness** if they disagree or appear disinterested

To build trust and respect, audiences (of all sizes) want to know that we get them and that what we're saying actually *matters* to them.

Essentially, people just want to know that we care about their stage before our own.

*Ann Tardy*



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# Past Issues

To receive *Flash!* directly in your inbox each week, or to see the 10 most recent issues of *Flash!* [CLICK HERE](#)

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Did you know?

(1) Do you have people who are too busy managing to lead? They definitely need my session Manage AND Lead! I'll be delivering this to the NYC chapter of the **Institute for Management Studies (IMS)** on Thurs Dec 6.

(2) **Conquer the Clock!** I'll be delivering this workshop for the Lower Westchester chapter of the AAPC on Tues Nov 13. For more information email [aapclowerwestchester@gmail.com](mailto:aapclowerwestchester@gmail.com)

(3) Is your organization leveraging our MentorLead mentoring platform? You'll want to join us for our next **Success @ Work webinar** on Wed Nov 14 for the topic: Navigating Conflict, Embracing Confrontation! Addressing the Uncomfortable and the Awkward in Order to Strengthen the Relationship. Check your mentoring platform for details on how to attend.