



# Playing the Status Game

It can be all too easy to crumble in front of others we perceive as having a higher status, even when we're the expert in the room with valuable knowledge to share. The preparation we've done feels like it counts for nothing as our inner monologue is yelling just get through it and live another day. This perceived sense of 'status mismatch' gets in the way of great people sharing great insights. The status game starts when we enter the arena, as simple as entering a room or getting up to present at a meeting.

## Here are three common self-sabotaging behaviours and what to do instead!

Looks & sounds like	Unintentional effect	Try this.....
Hardly entering the room before you speak	Not sure I should be here or my content is that important	Resist the urge to speak immediately, smile and make soft eye contact instead. When you think you've entered the arena, take one more step, plant both feet and take a natural breath. Now say hello!
Making yourself appear smaller. Typically, by leaning slightly forward bringing your arms and legs closer to your 'main-frame'.	I need to protect myself from you because you may not buy into what I'm saying.	Work out the most comfortable, biggest physical version of you. There is no need to strut around power posing like a politician! You'll portray confidence with relaxed open and upright, rather than rigid posture.
Upward inflection and/or dropping off the end of sentences. Talking too fast and not leaving any pauses.	Turns statements into questions, makes us harder to listen to and work out the value in what we're saying.	Start with short jargon free sentences, know where your full stops are and leave a pause for the audience to catch up. <b>Short - Simple - Shut Up</b>

As you prepare the content for your moment in the arena, also think about how you'll play the status game by:

- **Calling out concerns:** 'Speaking at the Senior Leadership Meeting worries me because I could look stupid'.
- **Substituting with something true:** 'I will know about the project and that's what the audience will be interested in'.
- **Qualifying the status of the other people in the meeting on a scale of 1-10:** Take a reflective rather than an emotional view to get to the reality of the situation.
- **Choosing your status (1-10) in the meeting:** Most likely how you'd rate yourself at your natural best, there's no need to be the same as everyone else. Just 'mind the status gap' and ensure you're not artificially lowering (or raising) your status. Status can be ambiguous & over powering; being clear and taking control will add confidence.