

SPEAK LIKE A BOSS LIBRARY ACKNOWLEDGING SOMEONE'S PERSPECTIVE WITHOUT AGREEING



Resolving a disagreement or conflict does not always require you to take sides. It's possible to acknowledge someone's thoughts or ideas without agreeing with them.

Reporters and interviewers frequently acknowledge people's opinions without agreeing. It's also a useful practice for leaders. Acknowledging people's thoughts shows empathy and indicates that you're listening, even when you disagree with their opinion.

The basic principles of conflict management involve thinking before reacting and actively listening. Resolving conflicts also requires you to focus on the future. This allows you to find a path forward without necessarily needing to agree with a person's feelings or opinions.

Use the following tips to acknowledge someone without agreeing.

Tip 1: Recognise the Difference Between Feelings vs. Opinions

Actively listen to what the other person has to say. As the person expresses themselves, listen for the difference between feelings and opinions. Your feelings are your emotions. Someone may feel mad, glad, sad, hurt, scared, or ashamed.

Opinions are thoughts on a specific topic. When someone says, "I feel that you're wrong," they're stating an opinion instead of expressing a feeling.

Tip 2: Acknowledge the Other Person's Feelings or Opinions

After listening to the other person express their feelings or opinions, repeat their main points back to them. This acknowledges that you've listened to their side of the situation and understand what they had to say.

Acknowledging isn't the same as agreeing. Acknowledging someone's feelings or opinions involves listening and reiterating what they say.

For example, after someone finishes expressing their feelings or opinion, you may say, "I hear what you're saying. I understand how you feel and what you expect to be done. Summarise what the person said without sharing your opinion."

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Tip 3: Explain the Reasoning Behind the Other Person's Feelings or Opinions

Now that you have acknowledged their thoughts, you can offer some insight into how they arrived at their conclusion. Interpret what they expect to happen.

You can now either agree, disagree, or remain indifferent. If you choose to disagree, you need to explain your reasoning. Explain what you can and can't do. If you choose to remain indifferent, you need to find a way to redirect the conversation toward another topic and move on from the situation.

The main point is that you should never disagree without allowing someone to express their feelings and opinions. Give the other person the opportunity to explain themselves before summarising their statements. Disagreeing with someone before hearing them out may result in a negative attitude or aggressive behaviour that you can easily avoid using the tips discussed.

10 phrases for active listening

1. You think...because...
2. You feel...because...
3. You're saying...because
4. You believe...because...
5. Your opinion is...because...
6. You've noticed...and so you believe...
7. What happened was... and so you think...
8. Based on...you think that...
9. Your perspective is that...because...
10. What matters most to you is...because...

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Planner: acknowledging without agreeing

I'd like to hear your thoughts on describe the situation in just a few words and then allow the other person to speak.

I understand. So, you feel/believe that summarise their feelings or opinions.

I think that you feel/believe this way due to explain the reasoning behind their feelings or opinions.

Next, I think that we should provide an opportunity to move on to another topic or explain the next step in dealing with the current situation.