

# MESSAGE BUILDER

## Lesson 3: Open with CABA

You've been asked to run the meeting, deliver the proposal to the VP, or maybe just host the conference call. Most of us have heard the "Hey guys, it's \_\_\_\_\_ here, thanks for joining the call, let's dive in..." or maybe it was, "Good morning, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be presenting \_\_\_\_\_."

Now let me clarify, I said we hear those starts, not we're paying attention to those starts; at this moment, you've lost the battle before it even started. At the beginning of our meetings, calls, or presentations, we're all fighting to focus our attention and buy-in to whatever is being said. So how do we do it?

### **Open with CABA**

CABA is a formula that helps the audience, when done correctly, make the decision to not only give you attention but also keep it throughout your situation (presentation, meeting, etc.). You will also give your audience a glimpse into the future with what they can expect during and after the presentation.

Keep in mind, CABA can be delivered in your closing in any order, BCAA, ACBA, CBAA, ABAC, etc. It will depend on your purpose and audience as to which you chose. Also, it should only take 5-10% of your total allotted speaking time (30-60 seconds for a 10 minute talk)

### **Credibility**

Establish credibility with your audience to let them know why YOU are speaking to them not your boss or some other subject matter expert. This is not just stating your job title (depending on your audience, it could be) but rather a way to show why you, for example, "I've compiled our market research from last year's Black Friday and put together a new tool for forecasting."



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## **Attention**

This part of the formula directly relates to grabbing your audience's attention. We can do this one of four ways: with an interesting statement, asking a question, giving a quote, or telling a short story. When you are deciding to pick one of the four, make sure you chose something that will grab your specific audience's attention and get them to want more. Asking a question like, "What would it mean to you to be able to code 5 times faster and see less down time?" to a group of HR Professionals, might not be that attention grabbing.

## **Body**

This is just a preview of what's to come in your presentation. This is not where you deliver your entire presentation. As humans, we all want to know where are we going in a meeting and how do we know where we currently are? When you give your audience a brief overview of what you will cover, you give them the milestones or landmarks of your meeting to make it easy to follow along. If it's easy to follow, it's easy to keep their attention because they're never lost

## **Audience**

This last piece of CABA (but remember you can arrange it any way) is a step that is often missed, but when done correctly leaves a lasting effect. We call this the audience connection and it really answers the question, "What's in it for me?" When your audience knows the benefit they will receive from listening to you, they are more likely to give you their time. Think, "What will they get or gain by listening to me or this meeting?" then give it to them!

The opening to your meeting, call, or presentation is your first impression of that situation. It is your first chance to set a tone, pace, and expectation of why should your audience buy-in to you! Over the years we have seen some amazing presenters and leaders captivate their audience from the very beginning by using these steps. We just structured and formalized it for you.

What's the next step? Start adding your personality and preferred order of CABA to your meetings and watch your audience be engaged from the beginning!

