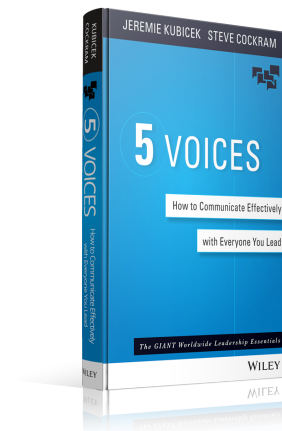


# 5 VOICES

## How to Communicate with Everyone You Lead

-Jeremie Kubicek and Steve Cockram

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## About 5 VOICES

The goal of 5 VOICES is to help you know what your voice sounds like and learn how to value and truly hear the voices of others. The more we know about ourselves, the greater our capacity to lead.

Your voice is your personal trademark and expresses how you approach relationships, values and people. In order to effectively lead other people you need to hear your own voice.

Filled with short quotes and examples, 5 VOICES is a guide to understand how you are wired and how your communication skills are heard by others. 5 VOICES is not your typical personality quiz. 5 VOICES is a synthesis of lengthy tests, including Meyers-Briggs. The result is 5 VOICES that are easy to understand. Anyone, anywhere, at anytime can use 5 VOICES to improve their communication with others. Readers will learn about the five different voices of Nurturers, Creatives, Guardians, Connectors and Pioneers needed for successful teams.

5 VOICES offers a simple, yet profound lens to allow you to understand yourself, your leadership behaviours and the behaviours of those around you.

# 1. THE VOICES OF A TEAM

## Chapter 1 THE VOICE CALLED YOURS

Chapter 1 outlines how individual histories, life experiences and internal wiring shape styles of communication.

The 5 Voices presents a process to help you understand your voice, your role and your influence in a totally new way. You will explore what it is like to be on the other side of you in a group, how you process and share information and how other people tend to hear or respond to you. The 5 Voices is actually a code book to help you decipher the messages in communication.

*“The aha! moment when it comes to leadership is that it takes a team of all 5 Voices to truly enjoy success.” (p. xi)*

## Chapter 2 HOW THE 5 VOICES WORK

Self-awareness is key to communication in 5 Voices. Chapter 2 emphasizes the importance of recognizing the attributes, tendencies, positive values and negative impacts of each voice.

The **Pioneer** is the loudest voice. **Connectors** are the second loudest, followed by **Guardians**. The **Creatives** and **Nurturers** are quieter voices and can often become lost in big, loud conversations.



A person's most natural feeling voice is their **foundational voice**. The other four voices support the foundational voice and can emerge or regress depending on different situations. When people begin to understand their foundational voice and the other voices they are resistant to, they become more effective in their communication, patience and connectivity.

*Your foundational voice is like writing your signature. It comes naturally like using your dominant writing hand. Some other voices feel like our non-dominant writing hand. These voices are more clunky, mechanical and harder for us to use. (p.15)*

- Everyone has the capacity for all 5 voices and all 5 voices are needed for a group to function well.
- Every personality has voices that are more natural and voices that take more effort to use.
- Maturity is about growing beyond our more easy, natural voices and learning to understand and value the contribution of other voices.

5 Voices discusses the ability to know and lead yourself. This is called your Personality Quotient (PQ), or your ability to be self-aware. Your PQ is a mirror to see what it is like for people to be on the other side of you. These behaviours are shaped by nature, nurture and choice. We all have tendencies whether we are aware of them or not and these tendencies shape our behaviours.

*"I think I believed everyone thought and communicated just as I did. Learning the 5 Voices has shown me that we all communicate differently, and it is important to evaluate a variety of different cues to really hear and understand the message being communicated." (p. 22)*

## Chapter 3 DISCOVERING YOUR VOICE

Chapter 3 introduces you to the 5 Voices and asks you to follow a colour coded system to consider what voice is natural or difficult for you to hear, or value, in others. Each voice is assigned a colour code. (p. 29)



**GREEN:** Wow! I totally connect with this voice! Your foundational voice or default position for communication and thinking.



**YELLOW:** I get it, but I have to think about using it! Not your foundational voice, but one you value and find accessible.



**RED:** Nope! Sounds foreign to me! You find this voice hard to value and difficult to access.

Using definitions of each Voice you can begin your assessment.

**NURTURER –**  
 “Nurturers are champions of people and take care of everyone around them... They are concerned about relational health and harmony of the group... They protect values and principles and innately understand how actions or behaviours will affect people.” (p.31)

**CREATIVE –**  
 “Creatives are champions of innovation and future ideas. They are conceptual architects and see how all the pieces fit together... Creatives are never satisfied with the status quo; they always believe it can be better... They can see the opportunities and dangers of the future before everyone else.” (pp.33-34)

**GUARDIAN –**  
 “Guardians are champions of responsibility and stewardship... They respect and value logic, systems, order, procedure, and process... They have a selfless capacity to deliver the vision once it has been agreed... Guardians protect what is already working.” (pp.35-36)

**CONNECTOR –**  
 “Connectors are champions of relationships and partnerships... They rally people around things they believe in... Connectors believe in a world where everyone can play and get excited about future opportunities... They are usually persuasive and inspirational communicators.” (p.39)

**PIONEER –**  
 “Pioneers are champions of aligning people with resources to achieve the objective... They approach life with an ‘Anything is possible!’ attitude... They believe visioning a new future is the highest priority... Pioneers brings strategic military-like thinking to achieve the agreed objective.” (p.41)

Using the **GREEN**, **YELLOW** and **RED** colour codes ask yourself how you identify with each voice. The colour coding is not cut and dry and you may find some areas blend together. That is ok. You should still be able to identify your most dominant and resistant voices.

What do you bring at your best? What is your internal voice really asking? What are the negative impacts of your voice?

## NURTURER

### What do they bring at their best?

- Everyone deserves to be heard and appreciated
- Intuition about how other will react
- Pragmatic realism – have we thought this through?
- Positive engagement and questioning
- Commitment to group harmony

### What internal questions are they really asking?

- What will upset people the most?
- Who is going to rebel against this?
- How practical is this?
- Do they really care about my opinion?

### Potential Negative Impacts

- Passive aggressive and change resistant
- Wary to challenge loud directions

## CREATIVE

### What do they bring at their best?

- They can look ahead and see the future of the idea
- Conceptual architects who fit the pieces together

- Not satisfied with good enough
- Sense of social justice and voice for the least heard

### What internal questions are they really asking?

- So what? Are we limiting ourselves?
- Are we going to regret this later?
- Do you really care about my contributions?

### Potential Negative Impacts

- Focus on the 10% that hasn't been achieved, not the 90% that has been achieved
- Idealistic and paralyzing until their vision is achieved
- Ignores practical hurdles such as financial restraints

## GUARDIAN

### What do they bring at their best?

- A relentless commitment to ask the tough questions, especially if no one else will
- Selfless capacity to deliver a vision once it is achieved
- Deliver on time and on budget
- Custodians of resources and how money is invested/spent

- Ability to detach personal sentiments from decision making
- Protect what is already working

### What internal questions are they really asking?

- Is this worth the risk and investment?
- Convince me that change is necessary
- Can we test this before we go all in?
- Am I at risk of being taken advantage of?
- Are we honoring the past as we plan for the future?

### Potential Negative Impacts

- Stubborn and unwilling to compromise when they have a strong opinion
- Desire for truth and right decisions can override the feelings of others
- Can appear critical of others and their ideas
- Poor use of tone and tact when they don't see what it is like to be on the other side of them

## CONNECTOR

### What do they bring at their best?

- Ability to maintain a large number of relationships
- Boundless creativity, imagination and energy
- Create new opportunities and network
- Persuasive and influential communicators

### What internal questions are they really asking?

- What will make this idea connect with other people?
- You really can't "see" my idea?
- Is everyone with me?

- Are you aware of what I've done? Very accomplishment focused.

### Potential Negative Impacts

- People pleasers who don't always rise to a challenge
- They are more aggressive when they are critiqued and can disengage
- Hijack conversations to refocus on their points of view
- Passive aggressive if their idea is rejected

## PIONEER

### What do they bring at their best?

- Strategic thinking to achieve their objective
- Courage to make difficult decisions
- Present an attractive vision for the future
- Capacity to align people and resources to get things done
- Energies and creative problem solving

### What internal questions are they really asking?

- Who says we can't?
- Are you competent? You really don't "get" it?
- Do you have a proven track record?

### Potential Negative Impacts

- Appear arrogant with a "me" focused agenda
- Fail to hear the value of all 5 voices
- Easily frustrated by people who "don't get it"
- "Back me or fight me" attitude
- Insensitive to the needs of others

## Foundational (First Voice) Percentages of People

Nurturer	Creative	Guardian	Connector	Pioneer
43% (p.57)	9% (p.68)	30% (p.69)	11% (p.89)	7% (p.99)
Champion of.... people, relational harmony and values... 70% are female	Champion of... future ideas, innovation and group integrity	Champion of... due diligence, resources and efficiency... 70% are male	Champion of... networks, communication and internal collaboration	Champion of... future vision, tough decisions and how to win

## Chapters 4-8 THE VOICES

Each chapter, organized by Voice, provides a narrative summary of “if, then” examples of characteristics to exemplify the questions asked in Chapter 3. Eight leadership insights are provided for each Voice chapter. A few leadership insights for each chapter are described below.

### Chapter 4 Nurturer Insights (p. 57)

1. When you speak you represent 43% of people. Your views and opinions truly matter!
2. People see you as a highly skilled professional. It’s time to believe that!
3. Learn to challenge the views of others on your team when you believe they are wrong!
4. Pioneers are not as insensitive and arrogant as you think. They just see the world differently from you.

### Chapter 5 Creative Insights (p.68)

1. Learn to celebrate the wins even if it wasn’t as perfect as you hoped.
2. Don’t play safe, give yourself permission to think outside the box.
3. Financial realities are important, good enough may have to be good enough sometimes.
4. People are not deliberately ignoring your ideas, it’s hard to truly hear a Creative Voice.

### Chapter 6 Guardian Insights (pp.79-80)

1. How you communicate is important (volume and sensitivity) – you can be right and wrong at the same time.
2. Learning to compromise is a healthy part of team life.
3. Your team knows you are competent, do they know you care?
4. Networking and social media are not a waste of time.

### Chapter 7 Connector Insights (pp.89-90)

1. Hinting at your frustrations with teammates does not guarantee anyone truly hears you.
2. It’s ok to be you – when you believe in something passionately don’t be afraid to share it.
3. Be intentional – take time to think through how you can create a culture where other voices bring their best.
4. Be patient with those whose due diligence process is rigorous, painful and time consuming.

### Chapter 8 Pioneer Insights (pp.102-103)

1. Beware the intellectual superiority complex, you don’t have all the best ideas. You can actually be wrong.
2. Take time to truly hear the views and opinions of others. Memorize the Rules of Engagement (see ch. 10).
3. Only 7% of people view the world through your eyes - winning is not the driving motivation for most people.
4. Find a Nurturer and ask them to mentor you in how they see the world.

## 2. HOW TO INTERACT WITH EACH VOICE

### Chapter 9 UNDERSTANDING YOUR WEAPON SYSTEM

Each Voice has a weapons system of words that can come through tone, volume and tact (or lack thereof). Usually this occurs as friendly fire in teams and the Nurturer steps in and cares for the wounded and people simply carry-on. When the weapons are unchallenged or outnumbered, teams function poorly. When team member understand the impact of their weapon system and develop behaviours to employ them effectively, team dynamics and productivity can improve.

#### Weapons of Choice

##### The Pioneer – Grenade Launcher



The loudest voice will have weapons ready to critique and launch attacks for competitive confrontation. “Can someone else give me a solution that will actually work?” or “Seriously, I should fire all of you and start over”. Some pioneers can create an environment of fear and intimidation. If you are a pioneer, you should take the time to find out what it is like to sit on the other side of your communicative assaults.

##### The Nurturer – Medic



Every army has medics trained to fight by serving in emergencies. Their weapon is an emergency first aid kit. Nurturers care for people, dress their wounds, offer counsel and diffuse conflict.

##### The Creative – Feeler and Thinker



The authors identify two different types of creative weapons. *Creative Feelers* are values-focused and people-orientated. Creative Feelers don’t believe in weapons because they are morally wrong and unnecessary. If the ideologies of a Creative Feeler are violated, they can be determined and destructive. *Creative Thinkers* have a piercing logic that is so analytical and

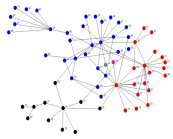
logical it is like a Special Forces operative with a sniper rifle. If they feel a core idea or value is about to be violated, they fire back with precise logic that swiftly changes the direction of the discussion.

## The Guardian – Interrogator



As guardians protect systems, infrastructures and money they can become an interrogator and ask a barrage of questions to test the intellectual validity of the proposal.

## The Connector – Cyber Warfare



The connector has a loud voice and will use their internal and external network of people (and now the cyber world) to get their message out to as many people as possible.

The authors explain the different effects of immature and mature voices and explain a rationale for the various behaviours. Each voice has a weapon that it brings to the table. It is important to consider what your voice is, how you use your weapons and how they can injure or assist your communication with the people around you.

## Chapter 10 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

The authors have brought readers to a point of self-awareness and alignment to understand their own voices. 5 VOICES provides you with the common vocabulary of Nurturer, Creative, Guardian, Connector and Pioneer to create more effective teams. There is no such thing as accidental synergy on a team of people. The Rules of Engagement is a strategy that can change how people communicate and work together.

**The Rules of Engagement follow a deliberate speaking order for meetings. The Nurturers go first, followed by Creatives, then Guardians, the Connectors and last the Pioneers.**

This allows the quieter voices to bring their wisdom and insights to the table and can dramatically encourage buy in. Nurturers probably won't want to go first. The authors discuss the value of making sure the 43% of the Nurturers out there have their vision heard. In contrast, the Pioneers will likely resist going last as their loud voices tend to force their ideas on others to drive change. If the Pioneers develop their active listening skills they can hear the insights and perspectives of the 93% who do not share their Pioneer foundational voice. Consistent implementation of the speaking order allows leaders to use the strength of all 5 Voices.



## Key Messages for Voices in the Rules of Engagement

### Nurturer

1. We want to hear your opinion
2. No one will critique you immediately (p.131)

### Creative

1. It's ok to be wrong sometimes
2. We promise to ask clarifying questions (p.134)

### Guardian

1. Please ask the difficult questions
2. We promise to watch how we use our body language (and listen to you) (p.137)

### Connector

1. Please sell your ideas as passionately as you can
2. Please recognize we will critique them (p.140)

### Pioneer

1. Please listen to everyone else's view first
2. Beware the strength of your critique on others (p.143)

## Chapter 11 VOICE CONTROL – MASTERING YOUR TENDENCIES

### Understanding Your Voice Order

When people speak they are using a complex blend of all 5 voices. The authors have found that the foundational voice, by nature, will shape what others hear when you are speaking. Your foundational voice is like your filter. In reviewing the earlier exercise you identified your **green**, **yellow**, and **red** voices (or a blend of **green-yellow** or **yellow-red** etc.). Your first three voices may be fairly obvious to observe. Your fifth voice, the one that you struggle with the most, may be red. You are probably conscious that you quite incompetent with using it. Your fourth voice can be the trickiest one. The authors identify it as “unconscious incompetence”. You may not recognize that you do not use your fourth voice effectively.

You need to be the champion of your own voice and for every person in your circle of influence (whether at work or at home). Recognize when you are missing a foundational voice in your team. For example, you might not have a Creative voice at the table. By now, you should recognize that you need all 5 Voices to be effective. The authors recommend that if your team is missing a particular foundational voice you may want to look outside your team to find a sounding board or someone to fill the gap.

### 70/30 Principle

If you are using the voice that comes most naturally 70 percent of the time, you will always have the energy to do the 30 percent of the activities that require you to use your fourth and fifth voices. The authors offer this as a guideline to help people perform at their best. If someone used to be really engaged and energetic but is now cynical and worn-out they may be using their fourth and fifth voices too much.

### Cultural Bias

The authors briefly discuss cultural bias and how societal pressures and culture can affect voice order. For example, if a culture has a deep mistrust of strong, charismatic visionaries they may view Pioneer and Creative voices with suspicion.

# 3. BUILDING POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE TEAMS

## Chapter 12 LEADING EFFECTIVE CHANGE

Chapter 12 discusses which of the 5 Voices are most effective at communicating. The authors juxtapose the 5 Voices on Everett Rogers's Diffusion of Innovation Theory (figure 12.1, p.164) to illustrate why certain voices have difficulty understanding each other.

### Communication Effectiveness

While every team needs the 5 Voices not all voices communicate as effectively as others.

**Creatives** are **16 % effective**. Creatives represent the smallest population of voices and are early adopters of ideas.

**Pioneers** come in at **31.75% effective**, reaching only some of the Creatives and Connectors.

**Connectors** reach **47.5%** of people. They help the Creatives interact more effectively with the Guardians and Nurturers.

**Nurturers and Guardians reach 59% each.**

The quietest voices are the most effective communicators! It is essential to understand that 73 percent of people are hard wired to put their foot on the brake when change is being considered. They need a clear understanding of the details and future direction. This causes frustration for Pioneers and Creatives and if they don't understand the disconnect they are having with the majority of the population, productivity and morale decrease. The authors suggest creating an advisory group looking at the voice order of people and identifying trusted people who might be a best fit to bring together your team.

*"Whether you communicate less effectively than you realize or have an untapped ability to influence, all of the voices benefit from understanding the dynamics of how we hear one another." (p. 169)*

## Build the Bridge

First, you must know yourself and your voice. Next, know your team and their voices. Then, you can build a bridge to create a culture where people feel safe to use their voice and make meaningful contributions to your team and its goals. Remember, the Pioneers, Creative and Connectors are not afraid about jumping across the gaps to a solution. They feel “if the vision is compelling, we will find a way”. Whereas the Guardians and Nurturers ask “How do we make it sure it’s safe for me to bring all the people I feel responsible for to the other side?” (p. 177). This concept should help you understand whether you have effectively built the bridge or at least have the bridge under construction to reach your goal.

Slowing down is actually speeding up. The best leaders will know this. Once they engage all 5 Voices and have people moving they can slowly pick up the pace. This is counter intuitive for Pioneers and Creatives, but the faster they want to travel the slower they have to start the process. (p. 178)

## Chapter 13 100x TEAM CHALLENGE

The previous chapters focus on the Self Circle of Influence. Chapter 13 looks at the Team Circle of Influence. On a scale of 1-100 (one being the lowest) you can rank your team on the following indicators to examine its health and effectiveness. (p.184)

- Symmetry
- Performance
- Communication
- Capacity
- Relationships

The 100x Team Challenge asks you to get you and your team close to 100 percent alignment. The challenge is:

1. Will you commit to mastering your own voice to get 100 percent health in the way you live and lead?
2. Will you commit to leading your team closer to 100 percent health, alignment and effectiveness?
3. Will you commit to helping your team members understand their foundational voices?
4. Will you commit to understanding and valuing your other teammates and their voice order?
5. Will you commit to leading your team meetings using the Rules of Engagement and the tools of communicating, vision, leading effective change and building the bridge?
6. Will you commit to multiplying what you have learned to the entire organization? Will you work to build a bench of liberating leaders? (pp 190-195)

## Chapter 14 CHANGE THE WORLD

Using the concepts and vocabulary of the Nurturer, Creative, Guardian, Connector and Pioneer voices, you can be an authentic and intentional leader. The 5 Voices provides you with the tools to use your tone, tact and weapons wisely and speak with your true leadership voice.

## 4. EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

5 Voices is easy to read and provides food for thought. While the book starts off slow and ends weak, the middle is worth digesting. Similar to other books, it highlights that people have a natural (foundation) way of communicating. Simplifying styles into five categories seems a bit limiting but creates an accessible and memorable framework when examining the key communication message in the book. Examining one's self-awareness, not only in terms of how they understand it but in terms of how others hear and interpret it, is useful. In terms of understanding the various needs, perspectives and goals of each of the 5 Voices readers gain insight into why people communicate differently. It also adds value and understanding to the common dismissive of "that's just the way X is".

In the first section, the authors engage the reader into understanding and applying the concept of the 5 Voices. The second section regarding "understand your weapons system" and "rules of engagement" is a bit disjointed. The authors use of the concept of "weapons" creates battle lines between the voices. Perhaps that was their intent. The "rules of engagement", the order in which people speak at a meeting, is a useful approach to level the playing field of participants in many situations. However, it does not adequately address how the previously mentioned weapons systems are effectively disarmed with such an approach. The one page dedicated to discussing cultural bias would have been best omitted as it only presents broad stereotypes. The authors draw upon their consulting background and clients for many good examples that unfortunately sound like a bit of a sales pitch. The third section of the book offers some good ideas for building powerful and effective teams but loses the reader when they are directed to contact the authors company, GiANT, for further consultation.

This book is an effective tool for self-awareness and appreciation of others. It allows you to re-examine why you say what you do, how you say it and how it is heard by others. *5 Voices How to Communicate Effectively with Everyone You Lead* can be applied more broadly to the topic of "How to Communicate with Everyone You Meet" if you choose to critically examine how your voice is being heard by another person. This book may or may not revolutionize leadership skills, but it is useful for overall self-awareness. It may be difficult to apply 5 Voices ideas to some teams, but it is worth reading to consider how you use your voice, and how you hear the voices of others.

### Discussion

1. What is my most dominant (foundation) voice? What are the strengths and weaknesses of my voice?
2. What are the foundation voices of the people on my team? Are all 5 Voices represented and heard?
3. How does my voice interact with the voices of other people? Do I understand why my tone, volume and presentation of ideas might be difficult for some people to understand? How can I adjust my communication styles?
4. How can I use the Rules of Engagement to improve collaboration and results? How do I value the different voices of the people around me?

## 5. ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jeremie Kubicek is the cofounder of GiANT Family of Companies and CEO of the Leadercast and Catalyst Conferences. He is the author of the bestselling *Making Your Leadership Come Alive* and *5 Gears: How To Be Present and Productive When There Is Never Enough Time*.

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