



The ECHO™ – Your Weekly Presentation Tip

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What Are They Asking?

You take a question from someone in your audience. Then what happens? The natural reaction is to start thinking about your answer as soon as you have a hint about what they're asking. When you do that, you stop listening to the rest of the question. And when you answer, you may miss the point of the question entirely.

That's because there's an issue buried somewhere in that question, buried in the words and the tone the questioner uses to ask the question. Your job is to understand that issue so you can answer appropriately. Here's how you do that:

- Listen carefully to the question. Ask yourself, "What are they really asking me?" Sometimes you have to dig through a lot of words, emotional language, or attitude.
- Uncover the issue that's at the center of the question. Ask yourself, "What's the issue of this question, in a word or short phrase?"

Now, you'll respond to the real issue behind the question - not to how it started or how that issue got buried in the questioner's words and attitude.

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