

Q. I'm leading a project and we meet once a week to discuss our progress. I've noticed our meetings aren't productive – some get off topic, others seem to be going through the motions. I admit to feeling a little bored. Did I mention we aren't reaching our goals?

A. I often say - if you're noticing it, chances are, they're noticing! Effective leaders learn to trust their gut to guide them. It's easier said than done though, because many things can distract you from what you know to be true. You sometimes create these distractions for example, you focus on how things *should be*, instead of on the *possibilities*. Sometimes, external factors distract you, such as pressure from a customer to meet an unrealistic deadline.

Your job as project leader is to create the right space for your team to be successful. Each person has something great to contribute to the project unique to him or her, so how can you ensure they get that chance? Leadership is found in the relationship you have with your team and your ability to create that safe place where they feel comfortable and confident.

Get real in the way you're communicating. If you're finding these meetings aren't productive or fun, what can you do to shift how you are interacting with each other? Start with putting your agenda aside for a moment and initiate some honest conversation at your next meeting. What will you say to you team about what you're noticing? I guarantee you'll be pleasantly surprised at what you learn – your teams' success is dependent on your collective ability to learn.

Check out *Clear Leadership*, by Vancouver based Gervase Bushe – a great resource to understand the concept of leading through clear and honest communication.