



# Vistage Speaker Bureau



## Profile – Carole Spiers

<https://vistage.co.uk/speakers/carole-spiers>



**Carole Spiers** is an International Motivational Speaker and CEO of Carole Spiers Group. She delivers mastermind programmes and keynote presentations to leaders who need to communicate effectively and inspire their teams through times of change. Carole is a sought after BBC Guest-Broadcaster and best-selling author of *Show Stress Who's Boss!*

## Changing Times Demand Positive Leadership!

**W**e are now living in a world in which change is endemic. There is, consequently, an imperative for leaders to be visible, available and able to communicate openly with their workforce, at every level throughout the organisation. Organisational change can range from a simple process to a major strategic policy review. Whatever it is, there will be a need for strong leadership that is an exemplar of determined action to motivate and inspire the workforce because individuals and teams will seek direction, purpose, reassurance and confidence. Change brings uncertainty. The challenge facing leaders and managers is that different people take dissimilar timescales to arrive at the acceptance point of change.

For some, change can be an opportunity whilst for others it can appear to be a restriction on career advancement or an increased workload with no commensurate increase in pay. The latter may actively resist the actual change proposed or just accept it with extreme reluctance. However, it is important to remember that not everyone has to embrace change in order for it to be effective. Under pressure, the need for resilience grows and it is important that pressure is managed so that there is no opportunity for it to turn into stress. Work stress can include changes in mood; irritability; poor time-keeping and reduced productivity; absenteeism; negative comments and low morale.

It is essential that everyone concentrates on aspects that are within their control and do not expend energy and time on matters that are not within their remit to change. Team members need to be taught how to build their own personal resilience.

### ■ Before you talk, start by listening

The best communicators are invariably the best listeners. Set aside regular times to talk to your team. Ask focused, open questions and wait long enough to listen and evaluate the answers. Establishing rapport with your employees on a one-to-one basis is a skill that creates the foundation for successful management.

Always try to involve everyone affected by the proposed changes, through consultation wherever possible. Then,

hopefully, the design and implementation of revised methods of working will incorporate the concerns of those impacted. How change impacts both individuals and the organisation is critical information that needs to be taken into account throughout the change management process. Particularly in times of uncertainty, employees need reassurance, stability and focus and to feel that they are valued. Therefore, you need to sell your message and your sales pitch needs to be persuasive.

### ■ Communicating change

During periods of change, challenges may multiply and decisions need to be made as to who will become the key differentiators to deliver results. Encourage flexible attitudes and appreciate that some behaviours will need modifying and/or accentuating in order to achieve successful outcomes. However, be careful, as the temptation to manipulate facts to prove your case can sometimes be compulsive. At the other end of the scale, don't just assume that everyone is already aware of all of the facts. Delivering a clear message and focusing on the positive is an imperative because failure to do so can result in misinformation.

Integrity is paramount during times of change and this is the time to demonstrate both it and your passion for the way forward and as passion is infectious, the chances are that it will be passed on down the line of command. Be proactive and speak to your customers or clients to provide solutions to their current challenges – remembering to focus on their agenda - not on your own!

The adaptation of existing skills and utilisation of new skills and ways of working may be needed in order to meet revised circumstances. Managing uncertainty is a skilled art, but once control measures are successfully introduced, you will then be in a better position to achieve the required results. Change affects everyone and it is for the senior team to lead by example. To achieve a successful outcome, they must be authentic, believable and strong in order to implement the required new agenda.