

Meeting savvy: Be smart, not smarty pants

Straddling the line between “smart” and “smarty pants” can be tricky. How do you show off what you know—and become more visible around the office—without alienating people with a showy attitude?

“Smart people are trusted with greater responsibility; smarty-pants people are avoided,” says Scott Ginsberg, author of *Stick Yourself Out There*.

Looking for ways to share your knowledge and elevate your visibility? Here’s a strategy to employ at department meetings:

Wait. Don’t say anything until the last five minutes of the meeting. That gives you time to gather your thoughts and clarify your position. “By looking around, listening and learning first, your comment will contain its maximum amount of brilliance,” Ginsberg says.

Distill your thoughts into a single, clear comment or question. Scarcity creates the perception of value, so use your words prudently.

Leave them with a parting thought. When the meeting leader says, “Does anybody have any questions?” or “Any final thoughts before we finish?” raise your hand and say: “I had an observation (or a question).”

All the people in the room will turn their heads and look in the direction of the one person who hasn’t said anything all morning—you.