

Less Is More by Cathy C. Bonczek

The principle “less is more” is attributed to the German architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

In Modern Design, it means that removing superfluous elements enhances the clarity of concept.

In Philosophy, it means that simplicity can lead to a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

In Minimalism (the lifestyle), it represents the choice to make do with fewer things and serve people and the planet with more attention and time. In Minimalism (the abstract art form), it means a departure from the conventional aesthetic and the use of geometric or simple forms.

In Fashion, it means you emphasize simplicity and clarity. It also means focusing on quality, and prioritizing elegance, functionality and a sense of harmony.

In Makeup, it means that a natural look is more attractive than an overly made-up look.

In Acting, it means emphasizing the economy of effort used to produce a performance.

In Literature, it means something like *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway: clean and spare language to set the stage and the story.

In Business discourse, it means cutting to the bottomline message and making it so clear that it's indisputable what the speaker meant. It translates to clarity and confidence and charisma.

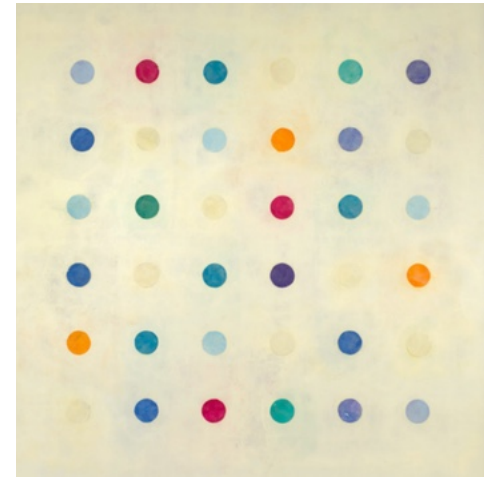
In all of the above examples, the common thread is that to get “less is more,” one has to decide that it's a concept worth embracing. Then one has to practice it, make a concerted effort, and refine, refine, refine. I urge you to embrace the concept in your spoken and written communications. To reduce the excess words in your spoken communications, practice your most important messages out loud. The second time through is always better than the first, and the third time is better than the second. Try to convey your entire point in one sentence. Maybe two.

Consider all the other “noise” that your audience, colleagues and prospects are subjected to – they may already have listener fatigue before you start speaking. Be kind to them.

As I say to most of my clients when they're done speaking, “Now say it in half the words.” It's a great exercise to reduce how much you say.

In your written communications, after creating a page or visual, take a moment to turn page it over, and then flip it once more to see it with fresh eyes. What's the first impression you have of the visual? Does the feeling of the imagery support the most important concept or message? Does it elevate your words, or distract from them?

Remember: Half the words – twice the impact. In the words of Forrest Gump: “That's all I have to say about that.”



Tracey Adams - *(r) evolution 39, 2015.*