

STOP THINKING LIKE YOU

When considering if a communications idea is good or bad, people incorrectly but frequently imagine *themselves* as the target audience. This is a big mistake.

Let's say you're in a brainstorming meeting to come up with a new idea for a fleet of ice cream trucks. Someone suggests painting all of the trucks in the fleet pink.

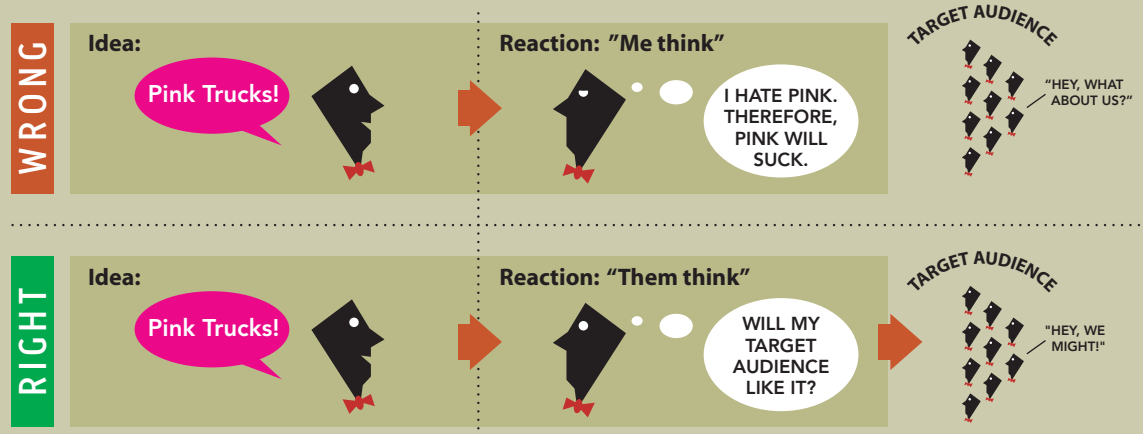
Then someone in the meeting says, "Pink? Pink would be a terrible color for trucks." But more than likely, what that person is really thinking is this: "I personally hate pink!" This way of thinking is called **Me Think**, and it's dangerous.

When developing a message, communicators must engage in an unnatural act: They must stop using **Me Think** (thinking as themselves), and start using **Them Think** (thinking like the target audience.) Only when thinking like your audience do you effectively communicate with your audience. Although this is a basic and obvious concept, it is often ignored, especially by people who must approve an idea.

Actors use Them Think all the time: Shifting from the thoughts and opinions of their mind, into the mind of the character to be portrayed. Good communicators must remember to utilize an identical process, albeit without the stage or screen.

(Tip: When stuck in Me Think mode, listen to and respect the ideas and opinions of those around you *who more closely match your target audience*. Remember this frustrating fact: The more unlike your target audience you are, the harder it is to personally generate Them Think, yet the more important it becomes.)

PERSONAL FOCUS CHECK: Me Think vs. Them Think



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Communicating with the Black Dog™

You can't see a black dog on a black night. But if it's your dog in the yard, you know he's out there. If you want him to come in, you call him or offer him a dog treat. But you don't know your message worked until the dog appears. Marketing communication is like communicating with the black dog. It's one-way with an unseen audience. Communicating with the black dog is also recognizing your audience is never initially interested in your message. That is, until you reach them with a sincere, relevant approach worthy of return contact. Like a treat. At Bidlack Creative Group, we're experts at Communicating with the Black Dog.