

Here's how to change your position on an issue — and pivot convincingly

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Sunday's Las Vegas massacre irrevocably altered hundreds of lives — and one survivor's stance on gun control.

Josh Abbott Band guitarist Caleb Keeter announced his change of heart on Twitter after a shooter in a 32nd-floor hotel room sprayed bullets into a concert crowd, leaving at least 59 dead and hundreds more wounded in the deadliest mass shooting in modern American history.

As for President Trump — backed by the NRA during his campaign and facing political pressure on gun control in the shooting's aftermath — a leftward pivot may not be as simple. “Impossible: will be the end of everything,” former adviser Steve Bannon predicted to [Axios](#).

Public figures and regular people frequently change their minds on issues large and trivial. (Barack Obama “evolved” on same-sex marriage; Kim Kardashian once called herself “the biggest Taylor Swift fan”). So how can you best shift a position — and communicate it convincingly? Here's what experts said.

Be sincere. “Are you speaking with conviction? Or do your stakeholders — whether they're colleagues or the people who work for you (or) your bosses — do they think you may just simply be recalibrating for political benefit?” said executive coach Roy Cohen. “Often people in work situations will say or do things that they need to say in order to score points, so we have to be very mindful as to what the impression is.”

Explain your rationale. Be specific, thorough and sensitive, Cohen said, providing a defensible explanation of your position shift. Deliver that explanation “in a forum where you can explain yourself at length,” social media entrepreneur Natalie Zfat told Moneyish. If possible, put it in writing — in a blog or on social media, for example — to avoid interruptions or losing your train of thought, she added.

Personalize the issue. One way to sell your position is by attaching the issue to someone or something others care about, corporate and executive coach Joel Garfinkle told Moneyish. After natural disaster in Houston, he said, skeptics of climate change could be more receptive given scientists' belief that it may intensify hurricanes.

Don't apologize. “This is a moment to be proud of,” Zfat said. “Changing your mind, whether it's a career change or your stance on gun control, is a thing that you should be OK to admit and certainly proud of admitting.”

Don't see it as a flip-flop. “To pretend that you have not changed your mind is almost dishonest. To sort of maintain the same stance on every issue (over time) is unbelievable,” Zfat said. “If you're a lifelong learner, keeping an open mind is ... a beautiful thing.”

“Admitting a weakness is often viewed as strength of character,” Cohen added. “You're telling people that you don't have all the answers, but you're making better decisions with additional information.”