

# PRESENTING WITH SKILL AND STYLE



Training of Trainers Workshop for the  
2005 - 2007 UNDAF Rollout Countries

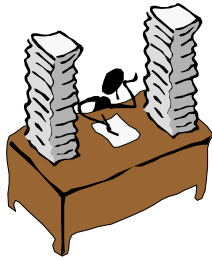
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United Nations System Staff College

Turin, Italy

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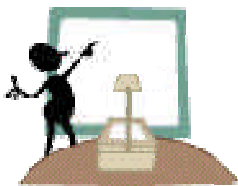
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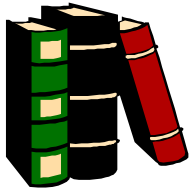


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# Preparation



## Presenting with Skill and Style



## Powerful Presentations

### Preparation

- knowing your listeners
- identifying your purpose
- organising your presentation

### Performance

- speaking clearly
- controlling nervousness
- choosing language
- controlling non-verbal behaviour
- using & designing visuals
- handling questions
- putting final touches

## Preparation



"In all things, success depends on previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure."

Confucius

## Preparation



## Why & What: Identifying Your Purpose



- to inform: gives information in an unbiased manner
- to persuade: gets listeners to accept a specific point of view
- to motivate: move listeners to a specific action

## Who: Know Your Listeners



- what do they know?
- what would they like to know?
- what are their attitudes & behaviours likely to be?
- why are they listening?
- why am I speaking to these listeners?

## Why & What: Identifying Your Purpose: Checkpoints

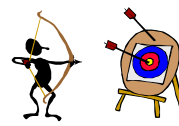
### Don't

- develop more than one theme

### Do

- develop your theme sentence: what you want listeners to remember
- be brief
- list all information needed

## Why & What: Identifying Your Purpose



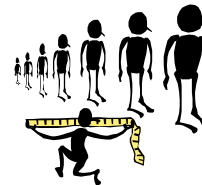
Be brief

- your goal or purpose is your objective
- it is why you are there
- can have only one
- the result you want to achieve
- state in one sentence



Keep in mind that the reason you are there is to **give something of value** to your audience. Remember, they are the focus.

## Audience Profile Worksheet



## Knowing Your Listeners: Checkpoints

### Don't

- take anything for granted
- plan this event according to the last one

### Do

- speak to co-ordinators of event
- visit the site
- determine listeners' level of technical knowledge
- use Audience Profile & Listeners' Checklist

## How: Organising Your Presentation



- best used
- easy to structure
- easy to follow (listeners)

## How: Organising Your Presentation

- Nice to know
- Should know
- Must know



## How: Organising Your Presentation

K Keep  
I it  
S short and  
S simple



## How: Organising Your Presentation

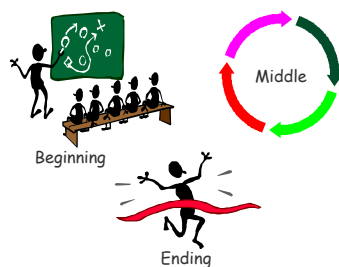
### Four-Step Outline

1. tell what you're going to tell them
2. tell why they should listen
3. tell your message
4. tell what you told them

## How: Organising Your Presentation

### Four-Step Outline

1. tell your listeners what you're going to tell them (topics, timing, questions)
2. tell why they should listen (benefits, what's in it for them, personalise this step)
3. tell your message (facts, arguments, evidence & details: build your case & present ideas)
4. tell what you told them (recall important points & review: conclude with an action statement)



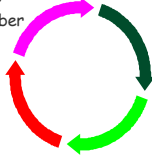
## The Beginning

- capture interest
- relate subject to them
- give purpose
- be brief



## The Middle

- have 3 or 4 main points
  - they will not remember more than 4 points!
- takes 80% of the time
- have signposts and summaries



## The Ending

- summarize main points
- relate conclusion to them
- don't present new ideas
- be interesting: one human-story is more powerful than hundreds of arguments and facts & figures
- be brief



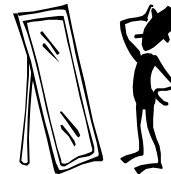
## How - Technology

- power-point
- overheads
- whiteboard/blackboard
- flipcharts
- cards



## Rehearsal

- most important part of preparing
- run through presentation at least twice
- check timing

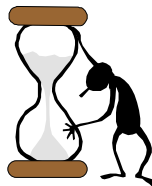


## Timing

"I must apologize for making a rather long speech this morning.

I didn't have the time to prepare a short one!"

Winston Churchill



## Timing: Think about it....



- if you speak to 200 people and you go over your time by 10 minutes,
- that's the equivalent of 2,000 minutes or over 33 hours !!!!
- with 20 people ---that's over 3 hours of wasted time

## Timing: 50% Rule

- rehearse it
- time it
- cut it by 50%

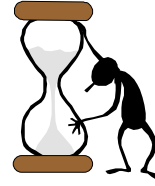


Allows for:

- late start
- over-run by speaker
- interruptions

## Timing

"I do not object to people looking at their watches when I am speaking - but I strongly object when they start shaking them to make certain they are still going."



Lord Birkett

## How: Organising Your Presentation: Checkpoints

### Don't

- simply organise what seems intuitively best to you
- use more than 3 or 4 main points

### Do

- decide what best suits your listeners
- practice the K.I.S.S. method
- rehearse and check timing
- be brief



"The will to succeed is important, but what's more important is the will to prepare."

Bobby Knight

He who fails to prepare is preparing for failure - so

Prepare  
Prepare  
Prepare



# Evaluating Your Current Presentation Skills

To be a more effective presenter it is useful to examine your present skills. The following evaluation can help identify the areas on which to focus in order to increase your competence. Please read each statement and circle the number that best describes yourself.

	<b>Always</b>			<b>Never</b>	
1. I identify some basic objectives before planning a presentation	5	4	3	2	1
2. I analyze the values, needs and limitations of my audience	5	4	3	2	1
3. I write down some main ideas first, in order to build a presentation around them	5	4	3	2	1
4. I incorporate both a preview and review of the main ideas	5	4	3	2	1
5. I develop an introduction that will catch the attention of my audience and still provide the necessary background information	5	4	3	2	1
6. My conclusion refers back to the introduction and, if appropriate, contains a call-to-action statement	5	4	3	2	1
7. The visual aids I use are carefully prepared, simple, easy to read, and make an impact	5	4	3	2	1
8. The number of visual aids will enhance, not detract from, my presentation	5	4	3	2	1
9. I arrange seating (if appropriate) and check audiovisual equipment in advance of the presentation	5	4	3	2	1
10. I use anxiety to fuel the enthusiasm of my presentation, not hold me back	5	4	3	2	1
11. I communicate ideas enthusiastically	5	4	3	2	1
12. I rehearse so there is a minimum use of notes and maximum attention paid to my audience	5	4	3	2	1
13. My notes contain only "key words" so I avoid reading from a manuscript	5	4	3	2	1
14. My presentations are rehearsed standing up and using visual aids	5	4	3	2	1
15. I prepare answers to anticipated questions, and practise replying to them	5	4	3	2	1
16. My gestures are natural and not restricted by anxiety	5	4	3	2	1
17. My voice is strong and clear, and not monotonous	5	4	3	2	1
18. I use my voice well, by varying the pitch and speed	5	4	3	2	1
19. I use pauses as appropriate	5	4	3	2	1
20. I maintain good eye contact with the audience, at all times	5	4	3	2	1

**TOTAL SCORE**

---

# Communication Techniques Worksheets

Fill in this audience profile.

Audience Profile	Answers
Who are they?	
How many will be there?	
Why are they coming?	
What do they know about the subject?	
Why are they interested in the subject?	
What is their relationship to you?	

Put yourself in the shoes of the audience. What five questions/comments/objections could you expect? Fill in the table below.

<b>Questions/Comments/Objections</b>	<b>My Responses</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Make sure your responses are short and complete. If you haven't got a response, now is a good time to find one. If you think the audience is going to ask these questions, it is a good idea to include this material in your presentation.

Just to check that you've identified the most probable questions.....

What question do you hope you won't be asked?

What question might be the most embarrassing?

What question would bring up a past mistake?

Do you have answers to these questions?

It is better to know some of the questions than all of answers James Thurber

# OUTLINE

SPECIFIC PURPOSE:

TITLE:

TIME:

## INTRODUCTION

INTERESTING BEGINNING

REMEMBER - Memorize your first sentence

PURPOSE

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

## BODY

FIRST MAIN POINT

INTERNAL SUMMARY

TRANSITION TO 2<sup>nd</sup> MAIN POINT

SECOND MAIN POINT

INTERNAL SUMMARY

TRANSITION TO 3<sup>rd</sup> MAIN POINT

## BODY

THIRD MAIN POINT

INTERNAL SUMMARY

TRANSITION TO 4<sup>th</sup> MAIN POINT

FOURTH MAIN POINT

INTERNAL SUMMARY

TRANSITION TO CONCLUSION

## CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINT

CONCLUSION + POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION

INTERESTING ENDING

**Remember** - Memorize you last sentence



# Organising a Presentation:

## The WHPI Method

Why?

How?

Prove It

### Advantages

- talk starts and ends with key message: grabs attention
- it's easy: few details and some examples
- can remember: constructed logically
- follows apparent logic of audience: therefore it is more influential and persuasive

### Four Steps:

1. Key Message
2. Why?
3. How?
4. Prove It!

## 1. KEY MESSAGE

- a must
- audience must know what you came to tell
- provide within first 15 seconds (research confirms this otherwise lose audience)
- most time consuming
- most frequent problem (poor preparation)



### What does it contain?

- main action/change of behaviour you want your audience to take as a result of listening to you
- reference to audience
- reference to an example that you'll elaborate on later

The message says:

WHO is it for? .....

WHAT they will do.....

WHY they will do it.....

WHEN they will do it? .....

## Advantages

- short
- said in 20 sec.
- audience know why they have come
- the rest of talk is just details
- has a call to action: audience will want to listen

Repeat message at end, this ensures those who arrive late know the message.

## 2. WHY?



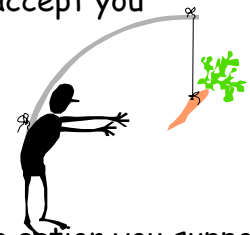
Audience asks themselves: Why should:

- I do that?
  - I think that?
  - that be the case?
- 
- construct your key message
  - think of all the reasons why your audience should accept what you are saying or act upon your material
  - audience knows what you expect them to do and why they shall do it

## Advantages

- have gained listeners immediately
- research shows that audiences that have to commit the least mental effort are the ones most likely to accept the material they are given
- if you follow your logic the audience may be confused
- if you follow the audience's logic, they are more likely to accept you

## 3. HOW?



- how are they going to achieve what you suggest?
- provide some explanation of how your audience can take the action you support
- how they might go about changing their minds on a situation
- is least important part ----- you give only ideas

- should know
- nice to know
- need to know

- not very detailed part of presentation
- follows the logical set of questions being asked subconsciously by the audience
- not included ----- risk of losing audience's support

## 4. PROVE IT!



- most important part after key message
- main evidence comes from:
  - personal examples: especially if you use stories; are very powerful
  - case studies: more difficult to tell
  - statistics: useful to prove a point, but do not carry as much weight as examples or case studies (people put less trust in them)

*Adapted from Graham Jones: [www.whyhowproveit.co.uk](http://www.whyhowproveit.co.uk)*

## Presentation notes...

<b>Date</b>		<b>Venue</b>	
<b>Size of audience</b>		<b>Size of room</b>	
<b>Type of audience</b>		<b>Room layout</b>	
<b>Time allocated</b>		<b>Facilities required</b>	

### Title of Presentation

### Key Message

### Why is the key message important to the audience?

### How can the audience use the key message?

### What benefits can the audience receive from the key message?

### What factual evidence supports the key message?

### What examples prove the key message?

### Likely questions that the audience may ask

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# Putting A Great Presentation Together FAST



## Step 1 - Clarify your AIM

- **Ask: WHY am I making this presentation?**
  - Why should answer: In order that...so that
- Need a clear **AIM** so ask yourself:
  - WHO are my audience
  - HOW old will they be?
  - WHAT were they doing before they came to the presentation?
  - WHAT might their reaction be to what I have to say?
  - WHAT types of personalities are they?
  - WHAT questions will they ask me?
  - WHAT will they need to know about the subject I am talking about?
  - WHAT do they need to know?
  - WHAT will they do with the information I give them?
- **HOW** will I structure my presentation?
- **AM** I telling or selling?
- **HOW MANY** key points will I put in? (Research shows that it is difficult to remember more than 8 points at any one time)

**The mind cannot absorb what the seat cannot endure!!**

## Step 2 - Brainstorm

- give yourself 20 minutes and write down everything you know about the subject
- take a break

## Step 3 - Group

- go back and group the material
- for a 20 minute presentation: only 4-5 key topics
  - Timing:
    - 3 main topics = 5 minutes per topic

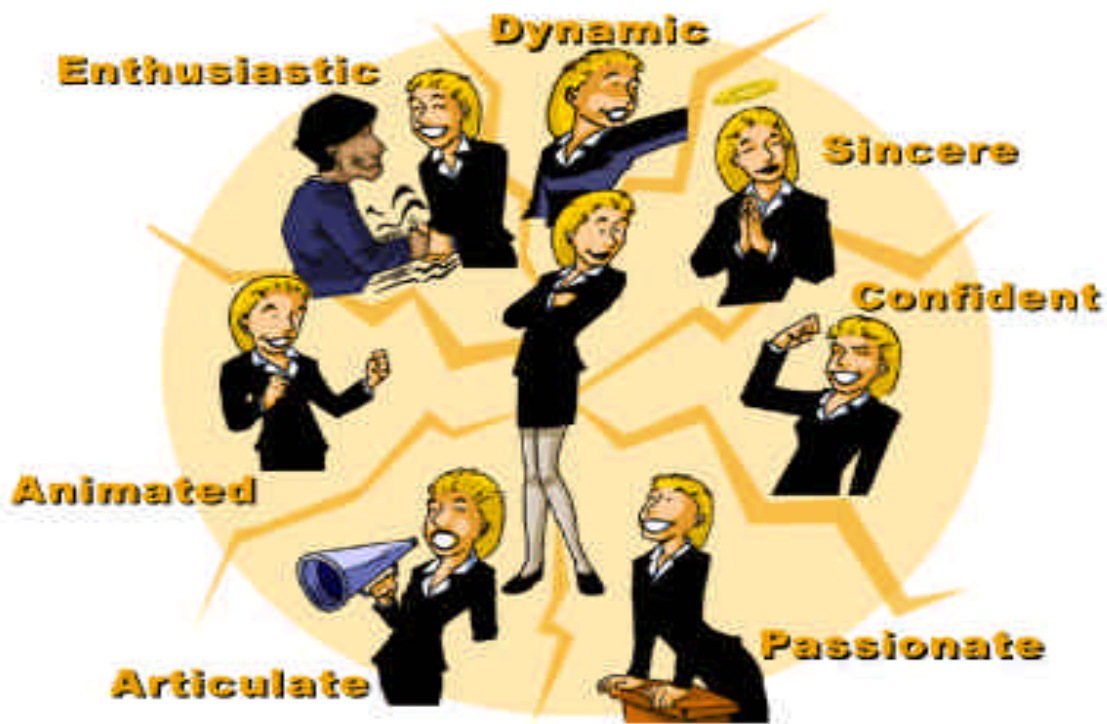
- 2 minutes for pauses in between 3 key topic areas
- 3 minutes introduction and conclusion
- when grouping material, think about key points you want to get across
- give them titles so it is clear to your audience. Create "signposts" so it is easy for your audience to follow.

#### **Step 4 - Order the topics according to your AIM**

- most important first and rest in a logical progression
- control nerves

#### **Step 5 - Link each key topic logically**

# Performance



## Presenting with Skill and Style



## Professional Presentations

Speaking is an art; To improve...



You must apply yourself

You will learn to become a comfortable, effective speaker:



How **not** to:

- be boring
- be monotone
- look or sound nervous

## Powerful Presentations

### Preparation

- knowing your listeners
- identifying your purpose
- organising your presentation

### Performance

- speaking clearly
- controlling nervousness
- choosing language
- controlling non-verbal behaviour
- using & designing visuals
- handling questions
- putting final touches

## Speaking Clearly & Body Language



"There is no such thing as an uninteresting subject; the only thing that can exist is an uninterested person."  
Chesterson

"He says the only trouble with his speaking is that he doesn't know what to do with his hands. He should hold them over his mouth."  
C. Kent Wright

## Speaking Clearly



- is not a matter of accent
- is a matter of clear articulation and pronunciation of sounds


### Speaking Clearly



- rate of speed
- pace
- articulation
- voice (inflection)


### Rate of speed

- number of words per minute spoken
- too many words or
- too few words can be distracting
- varying speed can avoid



Effective speakers change their rate of speed to fit their purpose, content, listeners & personal style

### Pace



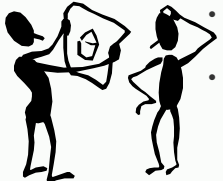
- is the speed at which speaker presents different topics or thoughts within a topic
- speaker adjusts pace according to listeners' and speakers' interest

### Pace

When Presenting	Pause
* very familiar topics	:01 seconds
* familiar topics	:02 seconds
* new topics	:03 seconds
* very new topics	:04 seconds

\*\*each slide deserves at least 10 seconds:  
none rate more than 100


### Articulation



- is not pronunciation
- is the combination of individually articulated sounds to make an understandable word

Poor articulation results in mumbling and unclear speech

### Voice: Inflection



- emphasis placed on a word to create meaning
- variation prevents monotonous presentations
- makes your speech more interesting

## Voice: Making it Interesting

- project your voice
  - aim for the back
- go faster to excite
- to gain maximum attention, say some words **louder**
- repeat important words



## Voice: Making it Interesting

- go **slower** to emphasize major points
- pause often & look round audience
- give emphasis with voice & body



## Speaking Clearly & Body Language

" Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



## Pauses

"The most precious things in speech are pauses."

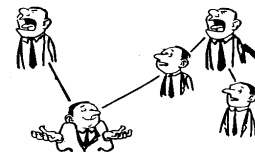
Sir Ralph Richardson

"The right word may be effective but no word was ever as effective as a mighty pause."

Mark Twain

## Pauses

- shortest pauses - from 1/2 - 2 seconds
- long pauses are powerful (more than 3 seconds)
- to emphasise: use before and after any phrase or word
- 4-5 seconds after important points, something relatively complex



- no pause, audience confused/bored
- audience needs 'thinking space' to absorb what you said

## Choosing Language



"Nothing is so simple that it cannot be understood."  
Jr. Teague

"The person who uses a lot of big words is not trying to inform you; he's trying to impress you."  
O. Miller

## Language - Don'ts



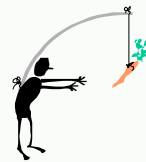
- jargon
- being too formal
- long sentences

## Language - Dos

- use everyday language
- use concrete words



## Making it Interesting



- stories/anecdotes
- explain by analogy
- involve them
  - ask questions
  - pause until reply

## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour



"He says the only trouble with his speaking is that he doesn't know what to do with his hands. He should hold them over his mouth."  
C. Kent Wright

## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour

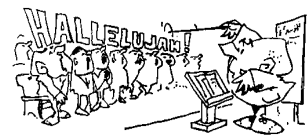
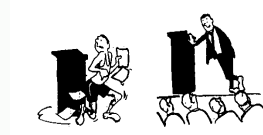


### Techniques



1. dress
2. facial expression
3. eye contact
4. body movement
5. hand & arm gestures
6. conditions affecting behaviour

## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour

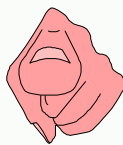
- 1. Dress:** be comfortable, respectful, careful 
- 2. Facial Expression:** a smile is positive; makes listeners feel comfortable 
- 3. Eye Contact/Gaze:** is positive; it depends on distance, situation & relationship 
- 4. Body Movement:** be yourself, move slowly, control nervous behaviour; stems naturally from enthusiasm 



## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour

- 5. Hand & Gestures:** gesture above waist, keep fingers straight, gesture to emphasise key points 
- 6. Conditions Affecting Behaviour:** (not in your control)
  - size of room
  - temperature
  - lighting, acoustics
  - other speakers
  - location
  - time of day, week, year
  - furniture
  - use of visuals
  - your reputation
  - seating arrangements 

## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour: Checklist



Don't

- point at anyone
- rock backwards & forwards
- stand rooted to the spot
- leave your hands by your sides
- avoid eye contact

## Controlling Non-Verbal Behaviour: Checklist


Do Move



- hands & arms around the room
- towards audience
- your eyes around the audience

moving is normal

## Controlling Nervousness



"It's normal"

"It's all in your mind."

"Don't worry about it."


## Controlling Nervousness

" The day I stop being nervous before I go on stage, will be the day I stop acting."  
*Sir Lawrence Olivier*

" The human brain starts working the moment you are born and never stops until you stand up to speak in public."  
*George Jessel*

" Speeches are like babies - easy to conceive but hard to deliver"  
*Pat O'Malley*

## Controlling Nervousness



"It is not that you must be free from fear. The moment you try to free yourself from fear you create a resistance against fear. Resistance, in any form, does not end fear. What is needed, rather than running away or controlling or suppressing or any other resistance, is understanding fear; that means, . . ."

## Controlling Nervousness




- \* watch it,
- \* learn about it,
- \* come directly into contact with it."

*J. Krishnamurti*

## Controlling Nervousness


Defusing Nerves



Rethink your attack of nerves - and rename it

"anticipation"

## Controlling Nervousness: 10 Principles



1. Speaking in Public is **NOT** inherently stressful.
2. You don't have to be brilliant or perfect to succeed.
3. All you need is 2-3 main points.
4. You need a purpose that is right for the task.
5. Best way to succeed...Don't consider yourself a public speaker!!

## Controlling Nervousness: 10 Principles



6. Humility and humour can go a long way.
7. Nothing "Bad" can ever happen!
8. You don't have to control the behaviour of your audience.
9. In general, the more you prepare, the worse you will do.
10. Your audience truly wants you to succeed.

## Handling Questions

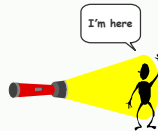


"That is a good question for you to ask, not a wise question for me to answer."

Sir Anthony Eden

## What is a Question?

- the only real question is a request for further information
- other questions are:
  - requests for the spotlight
  - attacks or traps



## 'Real' Questions



- paraphrase
- if real question, answer it briefly

## Handling Questions



"When you know something, say you know. When you don't know something, say that you don't know.  
That is knowledge."

Kung Fu Tzu (Confucius)

## Other 'Questions'

- paraphrase
- get questioner to be more specific
- get rid of 'question' to:
  - one of participants
  - the questioner!



25% -75% Rule: answer all participants not just the questioner

### Handling Questions: Don'ts



- don't avoid questions
- don't interrupt the questioner
- don't be defensive
- don't hesitate to ask other listeners for assistance in answering questions

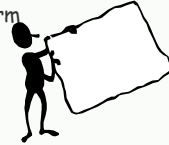
### Putting The Final Touches: Beginning

- say hello
- say who you are
- give purpose and main points
- give schedule
- handouts?
- questions?



### Putting The Final Touches: Notes

- notes should be notes; not sentence form
- easy to see
- never read
- use cards



### Putting The Final Touches: Ending

"Be sincere, be brief; be seated."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

"A speech is like a love affair: any fool can start one, but to end it requires considerable skill."

Lord Manscroft

"Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening."

Dorothy Sarnoff



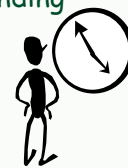
### Putting the Final Touches: Ending

- sum up
- conclude
- handouts?
- any questions?
- close



### Ending

- finish on time
- be flexible
- eliminate content **not** summing up/conclusion





## Practicing

After a concert, a fan rushed up to famed violinist Fritz Kreisler and said, "I'd give up my whole life to play as beautifully as you do."

Kreisler replied, "I did."



## Rules to Follow

### Usually Better

- Talk
- Stand
- Move
- Vary the pitch
- Speak loudly & clearly
- Make eye contact
- Finish on time

### Usually Worse

- Read
- Sit
- Stand still
- Speak in monotone
- Mumble, facing down
- Stare at podium
- Run overtime



## Rules to Follow

### Usually Better

- Focus on main arguments
- Use visual aids
- Summarise main points at beginning & end
- Respond to audience's needs
- Emulate excellent speakers

### Usually Worse

- Get lost in details
- Have no visual aids
- Fail to provide conclusion
- Ignore audience behaviour

## The End ?

"In our end is our beginning"  
T.S. Eliot

Thank you





# Your Voice Personality

Rate yourself on each of the following statements: (1 is very low)

Having a flat voice	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Having an expressive voice
Mumbling or talking through clenched teeth	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Clear and fluent
Having ideas or intentions misunderstood	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Always clearly communicating ideas or intentions
Getting breathless	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Remaining firm and controlled under stress
Umiming and erring	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Using pauses effectively
Conveying little emotion and feeling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Conveying emotion and feelings clearly
Putting little emphasis on single words	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Putting emphasis on the words that convey feeling and meaning
Speaking quietly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Raising and lowering the voice when appropriate
Sounding wobbly and shaky when nervous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Always sounding confident



# Powervoicing

- Could you hear a smile at the beginning?
- Could you detect when the presenter was punching up their voice?
- How many times did the presenter drop their voice when making a key point?
- How many times did the presenter pause for effect? Was the technique always effective?
- Did the presenter emphasise key words to communicate how they felt about the issue?

## Techniques



These voice tips will help you improve the power and credibility of your presentations

### To combat nerves

- if you want to project your voice don't take a big breath, take a deep breath
- put your hand on your abdomen and ensure you take a deep breath before you speak
- a deep breath will push your abdomen out
- good for getting attention and anticipation

### To get attention

- punch up your voice if you want people to hear
- practise projecting your voice to the furthest corner of the room by fixing your eye on spots or having eye contact with people at various distances and speaking directly to them

### To communicate feelings

- drop your voice if you want people to listen
- making your audience strain to hear an important phrase, makes them concentrate

### To assimilate your ideas

- pause for effect

- always pause long enough to think “pause and I breathe” before presenting facts or a new point.. It makes them stand out.
- when pausing look at key people in the audience

### To emphasise key positive words

- alternatively emphasise negative words if you want people to agree that what you're telling them is bad news:

The going may be hard but we shall work together to make the outcome positive.

- try emphasising underlined words to make the above statement positive or italic words to make it negative.

## Developing Your Voice Personality



### Pitch gives meaning to speech

- lower pitched voices sound warm and authoritative
- higher pitched voices more excitable, tense and younger
- higher notes help sound carry (a scream) but can also make us sound shrill and tense
- we need a full range to give meaning to speech
- we raise our voices at the end of a sentence if asking a question and lower it to make a statement

#### Exercises

- To learn the difference between pitch and volume
- count from 1 to 10 rising in pitch... then
- count from 1 to 10 rising in volume ... next
- count from 1 to 10 falling in pitch ...now
- count from 1 to 10 falling in volume ...
- This will tune your ear to the pitch you use

### Pause gives pace to speech

- we manage dialogue, through the use of pauses
- we plan and organise the content of what we are to say with a pause
- we give effect to what we say with a pause (pause for effect) and thereby convey confidence

## Exercises

- Talk to yourself about your day so far ... Every time you need to a pause for a breath, slip in the phrase "I pause and I breathe".
- Before delivering facts or information, pause slightly before delivery. "Good morning" (mini pause) I'd like to tell you about ..."

## Rhythm gives punctuation to speech

- when conveying the subtle meaning of what we are saying we put emphasis on different words
- emphasising the negatives in a statement reveals that you don't support it or feel negative about it
- putting the emphasis on the positives conveys the opposite
- Self important people overemphasise everything they say. It's as if their speech is almost entirely in capital letters

## Breathing gives punctuation/stress to speech

- when stressed we tend to breathe in short shallow breaths
- this distorts the natural punctuation of speech
- it results in us feeling more nervous (excess adrenaline being produced by fight and flight behaviour) and in making our speech disjointed

## Exercises

- when speaking, keep a hand on your abdomen so you can feel when you are breathing correctly
- a low breath will result in the following sequence:  
breathe in ... ..stomach out  
breathe out ... stomach in

## Clarity gives confidence to speech

- if you mumble you sound reticent and lacking in commitment
- if you speak through clenched teeth you appear tense and disapproving
- a stiff upper lip derives from the suppression of emotion (the trembling lip) and also affects clarity

## Exercises

- yawn first, smile, release the jaw, open your mouth, rest your tongue behind your bottom teeth and exhale on a long a-a-a-h (do this several times).

Adapted from Echelon

# Strategies to Improve Your Speech Clarity & Conciseness



- get your speech under control
- get to the point, be clear, stay focused
- be responsive to your listeners

## Then

- avoid rambling...characterised by:
  - overly long sentences, use of vague referents ("he, it & that")
  - lack of apparent structure
  - repetitive, continuous talking

Test your communication skills in the quiz below:

- Do you take a long time to get to the point?
- Do your listeners act confused or impatient?
- Do your listeners hesitate to respond and ask you what you want from them?
- Do people make excuses for "cutting you off?"
- Do you tense up when it is your turn to talk, even at social events with familiar people?
- Do you often lose your train of thought?

If you answered "yes" to at least half of these questions, then you are probably not as concise and clear as you can be.

What You Can Do.....

# 6 Strategies



1. **Rambling** is the result of a lack of strategizing. If you are a rambler, try using a few of the following strategies to organise your speech.

## **Subject - Explain - Give an Example**

This means: State the subject, explain the subject, then give a clear relevant example.

Example:

"The subject that I am going to address is....Let me explain....For example...."

## **Point - Proof - Point**

This means: Make your point upfront, then prove it, then restate the (same) point.

Example:

"The point is....One reason why....Another reason why....So, the point is...."

## **Chronological Order**

This means: Put your ideas in the order in which they occurred over time.

Example:

"First....Next....Two weeks after..."

## **Compare & Contrast**

This means: Organise your information so that you compare and contrast times, costs, value, acceptance, or other factors, variables or properties.

Example:

"Compared to ....In the previous study....In contrast...."

## **Cause & Effect**

This means: State the cause and its consequences; similar to a Problem-Solution Approach.

Example:

"....Because....As a result...."

Using the italic words in the examples helps you and the listener organise information. For listeners, structuring words provide "signposts" or markers of the direction that you are taking.

## 2. Observe body language



Listeners respond warmly & attentively throughout:

- their eyebrows are raised, eyes rounded & they lean forward
  - give you more eye contact
  - follow your directions more accurately
  - ask you fewer questions for clarification
  - appear more relaxed: smiling, shoulders down, hands relaxed
- Read non-verbal signals that others are confused. Confused listeners often:
    - avoid eye contact
    - tilt their heads
    - squint their eyes
    - close their mouths
    - lower their eyebrows
    - cross their arms & legs
    - turn away from you

## 3. Avoid vague words

- avoid unclear words including: this, that, these, those, they, he, she, we, them
- avoid expressions such as: other areas of interest, some things, none of the above

## 4. Stop repeating yourself

- repeating does not help "get through" to your listeners
- change your thinking: "More is not better".

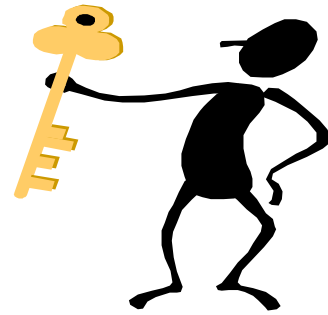
## 5. Say one thought in each sentence

- Research shows that the average listener can hold only 16 words in short term memory
- say one idea per sentence, then end the sentence and start a new one
- rather than start a new sentence, insert a PAUSE between sentences so that you can think, edit, and observe

## 6. Start in the right place and stay on track

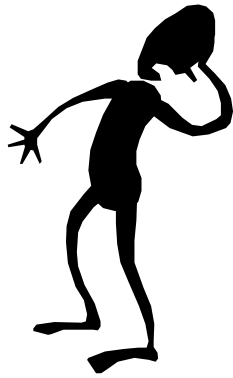
- provide brief introductions to topics to warm up and orient the listeners
- start each conversation with a few sentences to review previous ones
- this reminds the listeners of information that they will need, to understand the rest of the presentation

# Tips & Techniques



- finish each idea before proceeding
- tolerate silence
- shorten your sentences
- picture your idea in your mind, as if on "video", before speaking
- picture your words on a screen in your mind before you say them
- put the most important information in your sentences at the beginning or end of each sentence
- **slow down** by as much as 70% to allow more time to think

Adapted from the article "Winning Over Senior Managers: Improve Your Marketing by Improving Your Communication Skills" by Rae Cook, President, Gorin Communications, Inc., 1996.



# Overcoming Speaking Anxiety

## Did you know ?

- the fear of speaking in public is the #1 fear of all fears
- the fear of dying is #7
- over 41% of people have some fear or anxiety speaking in front of groups

## What are your symptoms?

\*sweaty palms    \*accelerated heart rate    \*memory loss    \*difficulty in breathing

- some anxiety when speaking in front of a group of people is perfectly normal
- acknowledge that this fear is perfectly normal and that you are not alone
- some of the world's most famous presenters have freely admitted to nervousness and stage fright. Mark Twain said it best,

**"There are two types of speakers: those that are nervous and those that are liars."**

## You can reduce your fear by:

- ✓ 75% if you prepare and rehearse
- ✓ 15% by using proper breathing techniques
- ✓ 10% taking into consideration your mental state
- to overcome your speaking anxiety, the first and most important of all is preparation. Think of it like the 9 P's:

**Prior Proper Preparation  
Prevents Poor Performance  
of the  
Person Putting on the Presentation**

# 10 Steps to Reducing Speech Anxiety

1. **Know the room** - become familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early and walk around the room including the speaking area. Stand at the lectern, speak into the microphone. Walk around where the audience will be seated. Walk from where you will be seated to the place where you will be speaking.
2. **Know the Audience** - If possible, greet some of the audience as they arrive and chat with them. It is easier to speak to a group of friends than to a group of strangers.
3. **Know Your Material** - If you are not familiar with your material or are uncomfortable with it, your nervousness will increase. Practice your speech or presentation and revise it until you can present it with ease.
4. **Learn How to Relax** - You can ease tension by doing exercises. Sit comfortable with your back straight. Breathe in slowly, hold your breath for 4 to 5 seconds, then slowly exhale. To relax your facial muscles, open your mouth and eyes wide, then close them tightly.
5. **Visualize Yourself Speaking** - Imagine yourself walking confidently to the podium as the audience applauds. Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and assured. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful.
6. **Realize People Want You To Succeed** - All audiences want speakers to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They want you to succeed - not fail.
7. **Don't apologize For Being Nervous** - Most of the time your nervousness does not show at all. If you don't say anything about it, nobody will notice. If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you have with your speech, you'll only be calling attention to it. Had you remained silent, your listeners may not have noticed at all.
8. **Concentrate on Your Message - not the medium** - Your nervous feelings will dissipate if you focus your attention away from your anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience, not yourself.

9. **Turn Nervousness into Positive Energy** - the same nervous energy that causes stage fright can be an asset to you. Harness it, and transform it into vitality and enthusiasm.
  10. **Gain Experience** - Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking. Most beginning speakers find their anxieties decrease after each speech they give.
- If the fear of public speaking causes you to prepare more, then the fear of speaking serves as it's own best antidote.

Remember... **He who fails to prepare is preparing for failure - so**



**Prepare, Prepare, Prepare**

# Tips on Handling Questions



## Stages of questioning

- welcome the question
- take time to think before answering
- clarify the question
- accept criticism positively
- reply positively
- check if the questioner is satisfied (disputable)

## Five Supporting Techniques

### 1. Encourage your audience to ask questions by...

- Stating when questions can be asked  
Inform your audience at the start when they can ask questions eg. Can they interrupt or should they save questions until the end?
- Actively seeking questions  
Step towards your audience, raise your hand and ask...  
"What questions do you have?"
- Pausing long enough after asking for questions  
This gives the audience time to think. If nobody asks a question, ask one yourself like "A question I am often asked is..."
- Asking them to raise their hands  
A visual signal for questions will encourage those who might be shy. It helps to keep order in large groups. The audience will follow your lead and raise their hands instead of calling out.

## 2. Listening to the question

Why do listeners ask questions? Their reasons may include any of the following, to:

- get information
- give information
- impress others listeners
- think out loud
- trick you

Take the question at face value and answer it as directly as you can. Here are a few guidelines on how to listen to questions.

- Get ready to listen
- Pay attention. Don't fumble through your notes or visuals. Establish eye contact with the questioner. Get ready and pay attention.
- Control your biases.
- Separate fact from feeling. Listen carefully for words or statements that indicate whether the speaker is questioning based on emotions or on facts. This difference, will, of course, affect your response.
- Don't interrupt the questioner. Listen to the entire question before responding.

## 3. Respond to questions by...

- Prepare in advance  
Anticipate questions (particularly difficult ones!) and practise answering them
- Repeating the question to the whole group  
Always restate a complex, or incomplete emotional or multi-part question to make sure you understand it. It also gives you time to formulate a good answer.
- Rephrasing the question  
If the question is incomplete a phrase like "I think the question you are asking is ..." is useful.

- **Maintaining your style**  
When answering, always maintain the same style and demeanour you used in your presentation. A change in style can indicate you are not confident about your position.
- **Not falling for the trap question**  
Politicians are skilful at avoiding these. Try some of their responses, "Now that is an important question, and to answer it you have to understand ..." or "That is interesting. I think the important point we have to be aware of is ..."
- **If question is not inappropriate, off the topic, or misleading...**  
Ask the questioner to clarify, restate, justify, or relate the question to your points in the speech. Three words of advice: Don't be defensive.
- **Involving the whole audience**  
Try to involve the whole audience in your answer not just the questioner. If someone tries to 'hook' the speaker with a difficult question it is even more important to present the answer to the whole group. If this does not happen, you concentrate on an individual and neglect the audience.
- **Using the 25% - 75% rule**  
Direct 25% of your eye contact to the questioner and 75% to the rest of the audience
- **Keep things moving**  
There is a rhythm to a good question-and-answer exchange. They volley back & forth in a brisk manner. Keep your answers **brief** and **to the point** with many members of the audience participating.

#### 4. How to say "I don't know"

Always tell the truth. If you try to bend the truth, you almost always will be caught. Play it straight, even if your position is momentarily weakened.

If you do not know the answer to a question, you have several options:

- admit your lack of knowledge and offer to do research and respond later
- ask other listeners for help in providing the necessary information

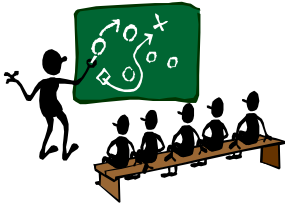
- ask questioners to expand on their questions and explain their reasons for asking
- offer to discuss the question during break time or at the conclusion of your presentation.

## **5. Concluding smartly**

- always remember to thank your audience for questions at the end
- be prepared with some appropriate closing remarks
- end with a summary statement that wraps up the essential message you want them to remember

Taken from: *Echelon & Powerful Presentation Skills*, Dennis Becker & Paula Borkum Becker.

# The Rules of Public Speaking



1. Tell them what you're going to tell them
2. Tell them what you want them to know
3. Tell them what you told them

## 1. Tell Them What You're Going to Tell Them

- Introduce yourself
- Grab their attention!
  - Ask a question
  - Use a quote
  - Use a visual aid
  - Appeal to your audience's interests
- Preview your presentation
  - What are you going to talk about and who's going to cover each section?
  - Overall, tell your audience what to expect

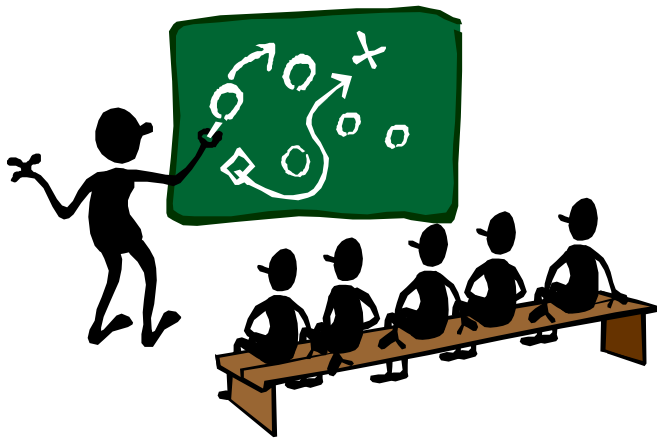
## 2. Tell Them What You Want Them to Know

- Be organized
  - Use pointer words. For example: "I will discuss three of the financial statements that are most important to investors. The first is the cash flow statement. . . Second is the balance sheet . . . And finally we'll discuss the income statement."
  - The more organized you are, the more professional you will appear

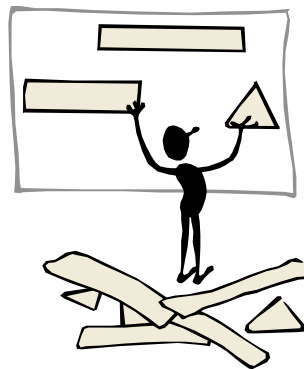
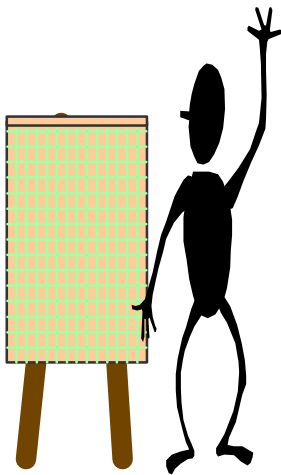
- Summarize each section and then move on
  - Example: "I have covered the three financial statements and now I will discuss the four aspects of our marketing plan."
  - This allows those people in your audience that have "day-dreamed" to catch-up with your presentation and allow them the opportunity to listen again as opposed to just giving-up.

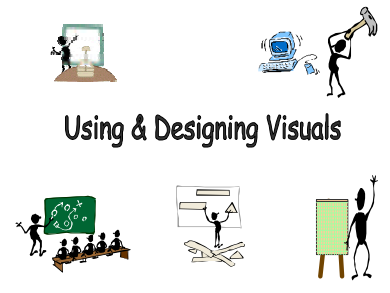
### 3. Tell Them What You Told Them

- Have a summary slide/visual
- Conclusion
  - End with a BANG! - something memorable. Avoid, "That's it" or "I'm out of time"
  - Remember, 90% of your audience will remember the opening and the conclusion - if they are done professionally and creatively.



# Visual Aids

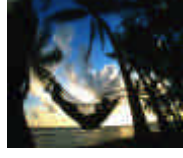




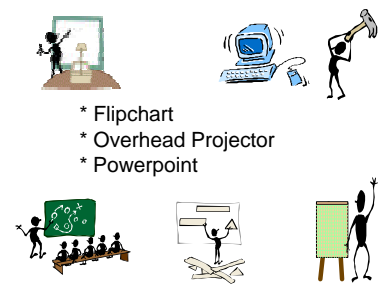
## Using & Designing Visuals

## Using Visuals

- visual memory is 10 x more effective
- words are **not** visuals
- use simple graphs & charts



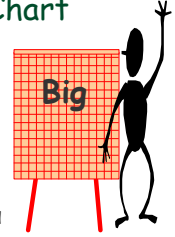
"A picture is worth a thousand words."  
Chinese Proverb



- \* Flipchart
- \* Overhead Projector
- \* Powerpoint

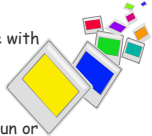
## Flip Chart

- big and bold
- use all space (not with words)
- use drawings
- use colours (not red)
- face audience, talk, write, talk
- flip over when finished




## Making Transparencies

- use software and/or write with special pens
- max. 8 lines
- use keywords
- start bullet points with noun or verb - be consistent
- use pictures
- use **colours**



## Visual Impact

- more is not better
- overall impression counts (authority, comfort)
- text contrasts with background
- dark backgrounds for screen presentations
- light for overheads



## Visual Impact

Avoid certain combinations:

-----  
brown/green, blue/black, blue/purple  
red/green  
-----


6% - 10% of audience experience deficiency or colour blindness

## Visual Impact: Fonts & Size

- Sans-serif fonts
- Verdana fonts
- Arial
- avoid script fonts
- be consistent

**Text Type**

## Choose Graphics

- use photographs, pictures 
  - don't overdo
  - keep animation low key & appropriate
- \*\*Guideline: 50% of the slides should have some graphic element

## Making it Interesting

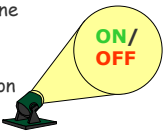

- use emotional impact
- rethink any statistic so that it:
  - is memorable
  - relates to audience

Italian Embassies  
Worldwide

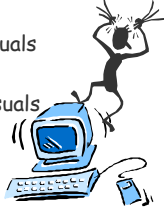


Asia & Pacific	14%
Europe	37%

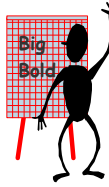
## Overhead Projector

- use a mask to show one point at a time 
- use a pen or pointer on the machine 
- switch it off so they focus on you

## Using Visuals: Don't...

- hide behind your visuals
- read
- let technology or visuals be more interesting than you 
- use visuals as detailed notes

## Using Visuals: Do...



- use lowercase text:  
avoid "SHOUTING"
- allow sufficient time to absorb information:  
1 slide = 40-90 seconds
- have backups - be prepared for technical failures

## Using Visuals: Do...



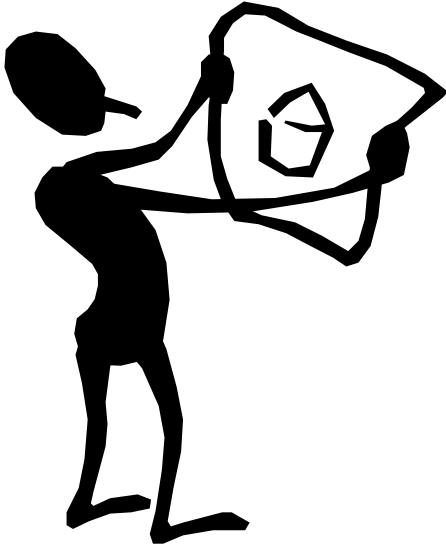
- let your visuals aid you
- use visuals to clarify and emphasise
- make one point per visual
- introduce each visual before showing it
- practice handling your visuals beforehand

Strive for consistency to



maintain clarity!

# Visual Aids



- Words are not visuals
- Visuals must be necessary and visual

## Visual aids must be

- simple
- legible
- appropriate
- planned
- accurate
- colourful
- manageable
- meaningful

## Visuals are used to

- illustrate ideas
- simplify handling of ideas
- arouse interest
- broaden experience
- increase retention of ideas
- maintain attention
- save time
- create impressions
- convince/shock

# Choosing and Using Visual Aids

(adapted from 'Visual Aids' [www.a2ztraining.co.uk](http://www.a2ztraining.co.uk))

## Aim & Audience

- understand your aim and audience first
- understand your strengths and weaknesses as a presenter
- then decide on the tools and aids to use

## Suggestions

- break a longer presentation up into sections
- use one type of visual aid for each section
- use two or three types during the course of the entire presentation
  
- for less formal briefings, flipchart and overhead may be the most appropriate
- print a graph and paste it on a flipchart for small groups
  
- remember the KISS principle: Keep it short and simple
- talk to the group, not to the screen/flipchart/whiteboard
- avoid "shouting" at the audience with UPPERCASE text
- avoid overcrowding slides - make two
- give the audience time to read the information
- avoid reading to the audience
- ask someone else to proof read your visuals
- check equipment before you start
- have backups available
  
- limit the number of aids you are going to use
- ask: "What does it add to my message"
- use aids appropriate to the audience

## Bullets

- keep bullets concise
- 6 words per bullet
- no more than 6 bullets per slide



**Be prepared for technical failures!!**

# Using Colour in Your Presentation

## Red

- warmest colour; eye is immediately drawn to it
- use to provide focus
- use only for statistics that are negative
- increases the human pulse rate and stimulates an audience
- use as background or dominant colour for adding impact where you want to excite
- overuse can leave your audience restless



## Black

- can add life and dimension to the presentation
- devoid of all emotion
- use as backdrop where additional concentration on separate images is required

## Brown

- dull and earthy
- lacks energy and vitality
- useful as a neutral colour for statistics

## Green

- used to stimulate thought, but not excite
- provides perfect backdrop for discussion of issues
- neutral not to lead, but strong enough to stimulate
- darker colours (jade and dark turquoise) are most suitable

## White

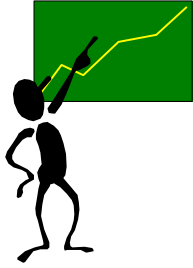
- use behind detailed diagrams or clinical data
- avoid as the main presentation background
- most powerful light reflective colour and will tire audience if overused

## Blue

- colour of the Corporates, serene, calm, exuding power
- is calming, reduces blood pressure
- creates an expectancy of peace and trust

## Purple

- is the colour of fantasy
- useful for entertaining or amusing the audience



# Using Charts & Graphs

adapted from: Using Charts, [www.strategiccomm.com](http://www.strategiccomm.com)

## Guidelines for designing visuals

- ? Convey one message per chart. Make the message the heading.
- ? Use the rule of seven. Do not use more than 6 rows or columns in one table.
- ? Make the chart easy to read. Label the X and Y axes and label the lines, bars, or pie wedges.
- ? Make the most important text largest, the most important data lines or sections darkest.
- ? Be accurate. Always start a numerical axis at zero. Compare only like variables.
- ? Eliminate all unnecessary details. Avoid grid lines, data points, boxes, and other devices unless they relate to the message.
- ? Use no more than four colours per visual.
- ? Avoid vibrating fill patterns, such as contrasting lines, wave patterns, and crisscrosses.
- ? To focus attention, use colour, shading, or images such as arrows to highlight key words or concepts.
- ? Write in upper and lower case. Words written in all capitals letters are hard to read. Serif Fonts work best
- ? Create "breathing" space among all rows and columns. Make bars and columns wider than the spaces between them.
- ? Use presentation software sensibly. When necessary, adjust the default mode to simplify a visual.

# Make Charts Communicate

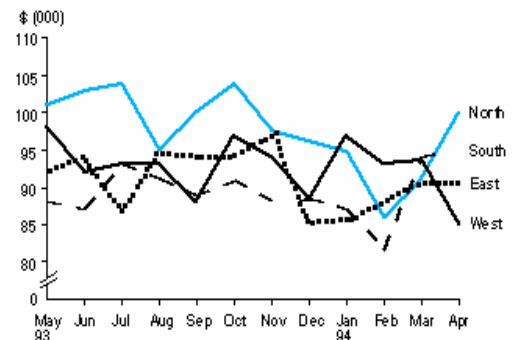
- create charts to help the audience see what's happening
- simplifying a chart often requires changing the chart form
- your heading should always tell people what you want them to look for on a chart
- use an action statement or message (has a verb and is a complete sentence) in the heading

## Choosing the Chart

### 1. To show change over time, use:

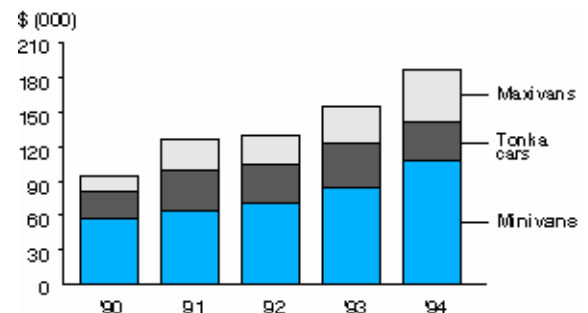
#### Line chart

- look for a key word such as "grow", "decline," or "trends" which detects change over time
- best used when you have more than 4 or 5 points
- emphasizes continuity over several months or years



#### Column chart (Vertical Bars)

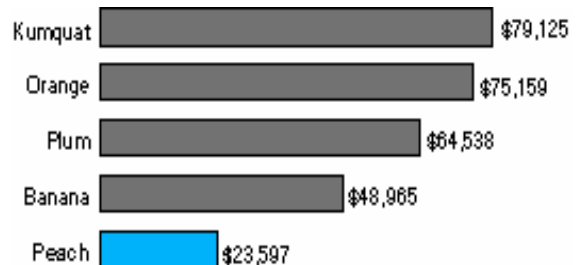
- use if you have fewer than 5 data points
- if you want to display different values of one or more items or show variations in value over time
- vertical bars work better than horizontal bars for time series data because we associate left-to-right with the movement of time



## 2. To compare items at one point in time

### Horizontal bar chart

- look for a key word such as "ranks" or "compares"
- if you want to show the highest profit, the lowest interest rate, or to rank variables from largest to smallest



### Bar charts

- are the best way to compare a set of individual items or several sets of related items
- the bar's label identifies the item

### Segmented bar

- when you want to show relative proportions of 2, 3 or 4 wholes
- each bar represents 100% and each segment a percentage
- a series of vertical segmented bars shows how percentages change over time

## 3. Comparing parts of a whole

### Pie charts

- look for words such as "percentage," "portion" or "share"
- not more than 5 pie slices
- each slice should be easy to see and interpret
- best when you want to highlight one part of the whole
- place the highlighted part in the 12 o'clock position and explode it out of the pie for emphasis



"Don't let the artistic possibilities interfere with the message."

# PowerPoint for Presenters



"Misused, it can obscure rather than clarify the message."

## Technical Tips

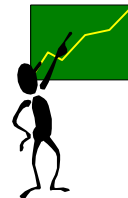
- ensure that the PC used to deliver the presentation has your fonts installed
- print your slides onto acetates as a backup
- make sure your slides are visible to everyone
- practice on the computer you are using to present
- ask about technical arrangements beforehand (podium, slide changes)
- avoid overusing sound

## Pictures

- be wary of standard clipart (Some images have been around for a long time)
- use clipart of the same style throughout your presentation

### Graphics should:

- only **enhance** your message, not detract from it
- be relevant to the slide



### A Picture or 1000 Words?

- a graphic can put a message across much more easily than words
- charts are easier to remember than raw statistics
- flowcharts are easier to remember than written procedures (use a handout)
- a simple photograph or graphic can be used to express a message without words

### Time to Absorb

- allow sufficient time to take in the visuals prior to speaking

## **Masters/Templates**

- understand how the masters work and how to change them
- make changes on the master not on individual slides
- have a consistent format
- don't make your message fit your design - add text to blank slides
- add a design/template and other graphics to suit the message and audience

### **Logos on the Master**

- to repeat an object (e.g. a logo/other graphic), place it on master slide

### **Indicate Headings & Breaks**

- change background colour to indicate heading slides or section breaks in a long presentation

## **Fonts**

- avoid using different fonts; use one or two fonts consistently throughout
- best fonts are sans serif fonts (without flicks at top and tail; i.e. Arial/Gill Sans)
- avoid scripted fonts that are hard to read
- use "fun" fonts such as Comic Sans MS for an informal feel

## **Creating Movement in Your Presentation with Animations and Transitions**

- animations are often overdone in a presentation
- if in doubt, avoid them!
- when used correctly they can add interest, focus and emphasis
- if you emphasise everything, you emphasise nothing
- choose effects with care

### **Don't Build - Focus**

- a bulleted list can focus audience attention -- overdoing it can annoy the audience!
- don't hide the bullet list completely
- if previous/future points are hidden, audience's attention may wander
- display a static bullet list in the dimmed colour
- on top of that list, place an identical list, but one that builds point by point

- audience can see the whole list, but you can still indicate the current point for focus (this works best with a subtle effect such as dissolve)
- use other shapes as bullets (arrows, dashes)

### **Highlight From Behind** (useful technique to display a list, but focus on a point)

- animate the background colour rather than the text
- create a bullet list in the "dimmed" colour
- place a rectangle behind each paragraph in the list
- animate rectangles to appear one-by-one, making the text above them stand out
- hide the rectangle to focus on the next point

### **Bring Your Titles to Life**

- animate the background for large blocks of text on a title slide
- add text, in the background colour so that it is hidden
- add 6/9 rectangles 3 across and 2 or 3 deep, perfectly sized & positioned
- to fill slide use a different fill colour from the background
- position rectangles behind the text and animate rectangles
- should appear one after another-top left-followed by bottom right, etc.
- text remains static but displayed as coloured boxes appear behind in jigsaw fashion

### **Build & Explain**

- use animation to build complex flowcharts in sections
- each logical section can then be explained before the next section appears
- animate charts by series or category in PowerPoint 97 and 2000 (use wipe effect)
- wipe up for a column chart
- wipe right for a bar chart

### **Slide Transitions**

- are a subtle way to reinforce psychologically the message of a slide

#### **DO**

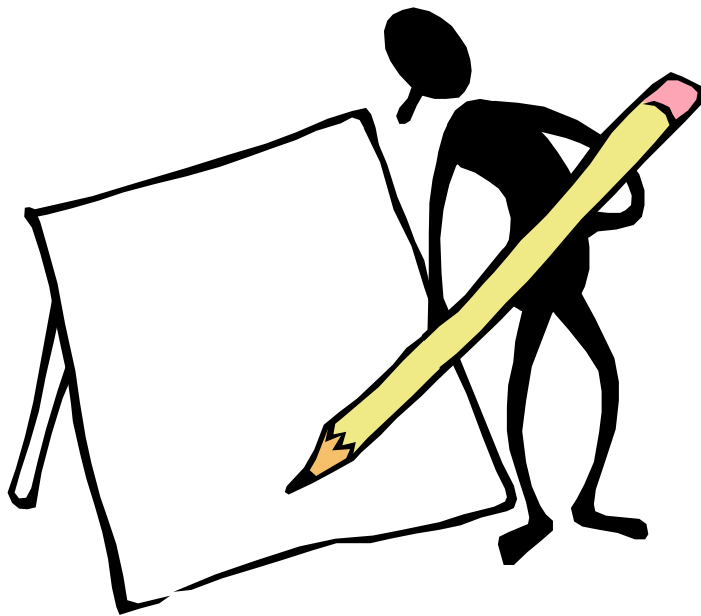
- apply with deliberate, conscious purpose
- use a single transition for most slides
- apply a special transition on the slides whose message you want to reinforce

## DON'T

- apply at random
  - use PowerPoint's random transition feature - it is distracting
- 
- **positive effect:** - use transitions that contain Right/Up in the name (Wipe Right)
  - **negative message:** - use transitions that contain Left/Down
  - **speed up the pace:** - use either Cut or Cut Through Black
  - **closing/starting again:** - use transitions that appear from the outside inward (Box In, Dissolve/Split Horizontal In)
  - **new opportunity:** - use transitions that appear from centre out (Box Out/Fade Through Black/Split Vertical Out)

(adapted from 'PowerPoint for Presenters', [www.a2ztraining.co.uk](http://www.a2ztraining.co.uk))

# Final Review Checklist



## Planning and organising my presentation

I plan to:

- Develop objectives
- Analyse my audience
- Brainstorm main ideas (mindmaps)
- Plan handouts
- Plan visual aids
- State the benefits (if applicable)
- Incorporate a main idea, preview, and review sentence
- Structure my introduction
- Develop a strong conclusion

## Developing and using visual aids

I expect to:

- Use the KISS principle
- Choose the correct type of chart
- Refrain from talking to the visual aids
- Use my pointer/laser sparingly or not at all
- Prepare my powerpoint presentation for presentation purposes not as a handout

## Preparing for my presentation

I will:

- Rehearse standing up and using visual aids
- Check seating, the audio-visual equipment, all handouts, etc.

## While delivering my presentation

I plan to:

- Stay aware of what I'm saying and how I say it
- Be animated, enthusiastic and direct
- Use eye contact to make my presentation personal and conversational
- Keep a clear, strong voice, and not speak too fast

## To deal with anxiety

I plan to:

- Breathe deeply
- Focus on relaxing and think positive
- Acknowledge that fear is perfectly normal
- Move during the presentation
- Maintain good eye contact with the audience

## Question-and-answer techniques

I plan to:

- Ask for questions by stepping forward with my hand raised
- Anticipate questions and practise the answers
- Watch the questioner and listen carefully to the question
- Keep my hands in a neutral position when listening to questions
- Repeat question (if necessary) for clarification or so all can hear
- Keep the same style and demeanor that I had during the presentation
- Use eye contact and involve the whole audience in my answer (25% - 75% rule)

## Feedback Checklist

### **Preparation**

Purpose clear?  
Material right for this audience?  
Made interesting?  
Clear structure?  
Only 3 or 4 main points?  
Enough preparation?  
Good timing?

### **Beginning**

Interesting beginning?  
Introduced him/herself?  
Purpose?  
Main points?  
Handouts?  
Questions?  
Time?  
Concise?  
Clear?

### **Language**

Points expressed simply and briefly?  
Signposting?  
Summaries?  
Informal language?  
No jargon?  
Uses stories/examples?

### **The Visual Aids**

Right number?  
Interesting?  
Helpful?  
Not crowded?  
Clear?  
Not too many words?  
Big enough?  
Moves to let audience see?  
Waited for audience to read?  
Masks points when necessary?  
Uses colour?  
Uses drawings/pictures?

### **Body language**

Effective eye contact (80 - 90%)?  
Looks at everybody?  
Preference for looking to right/left?  
Moves towards audience?  
Helpful gestures?  
No physical mannerisms (touching hair, nose)?

### **Voice**

Good volume?  
Variations in speed?  
Effective pauses?  
Interesting?  
Enthusiastic?  
Clear?  
No hesitations (err, em)?  
No verbal mannerisms (you know)?

### **Ending**

Interesting ending?  
Summary?  
Handouts?  
Concise?  
Finishes on time?  
Message clear?

### **Questions**

Paraphrases questions?  
Answers audience?  
Answers briefly?  
Answers tactfully?  
Shows patience?  
Remains in control?

# Suggested Readings



## PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

Bowman, Lee with Crofts, Andrew. High impact business presentations: the secrets behind the success of the world's most persuasive speakers, London: Century Business, 1993. - viii, 245 p.: ill. - Includes index. ISBN 0-7126-5625-1

Ehrenborg, Jöns and Mattock, John. Powerful presentations: 50 original ideas for making a real impact, London: Kogan Page, 1993. - 117 p.: ill. - ISBN 0-7494-1164-3

Frank, Milo O. How to Get Your Point Across in 30 Seconds or Less, Pocket Books, N.Y., 1986

Goodale, Malcolm. Professional Presentations, Video and Book, Cambridge University Press, 1997

Hindle, Tim. Making Presentations, Dorling Kindersley Ltd., London, 1988. ISBN: 0-7513-0527-8; [www.dk.com](http://www.dk.com)

Janner, Greville. Janner on speechmaking, Aldershot, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Gower, 1989. - vi, 47 p.- (Gower audio manual). - Accompanied by a sound cassette. - ISBN 0-566-02835-2

Mira, Thomas K. Speak Now or Forever Fall to Pieces, Random House, N.Y., 1995

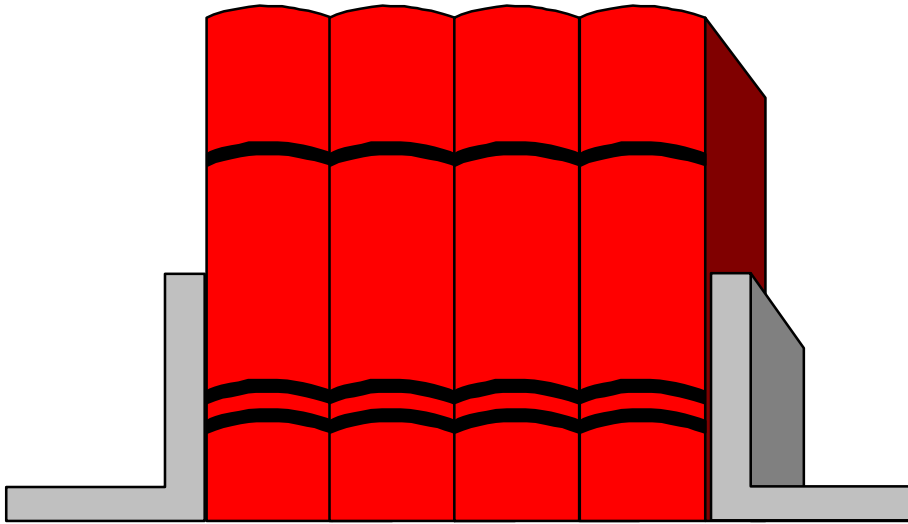
Making effective presentations. - London: Kogan Page, 1993. 112 p.: ill., map. - (Management action guides / Manchester Open Learning). - ISBN 0-7494-1138-4

Townsend, John. The Business Presenter's Pocketbook, Management Pocketbooks Ltd., 14 East Street, Alresford, Hampshire, U.K.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WEBSITES

Management Pocketbooks	<a href="mailto:pocketbks@aol.com">pocketbks@aol.com</a> <a href="http://members.aol.com/pocketbks">http://members.aol.com/pocketbks</a>
Creativity Web	<a href="http://www.ozemail.com">http://www.ozemail.com</a>
Training Zone	<a href="http://www.trainingzone.co.uk">http://www.trainingzone.co.uk</a>
Power Pointers	<a href="http://www.powerpointers.com">http://www.powerpointers.com</a>
Presentations	<a href="http://www.presentations.com">http://www.presentations.com</a>
Presenters University	<a href="http://www.presentersuniversity.com">http://www.presentersuniversity.com</a>
Big Dog's Leadership Page	<a href="http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leader.html">http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leader.html</a>

# Articles

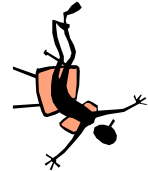


# 7 Reasons Why Executive Speakers Fail

adapted from Mark Sanborn ([www.marksanborn.com](http://www.marksanborn.com))

Analyse your last presentation by asking these seven questions:

- Did I stick to my allotted time?
- Did I develop and present purposefully?
- Was I thoroughly prepared?
- Did I capture attention at the very beginning?
- Did I positively influence listeners?
- Was I appropriately entertaining, or at least not boring?
- Did I end only once?



**If you did not answer affirmatively to the above, keep reading.**

Few things create a more vivid perception of an executive than his speaking ability. The higher executives rise in an organisation, the more frequently they are called upon to address others. Ironically, little or no training is given to executives to develop this skill. If they become good at public speaking, it is either a gift of genetics, they get lucky, or a combination of both.

More often than not, speeches that business people make are less than memorable. And far too often the presentations were painful, not only for the speaker to give, but for the audience to feign interest throughout. The majority of executive presenters, even those who flopped dramatically, were well-intentioned. Nobody sets out to destroy her/his credibility with a bad presentation.

## **So why do people fail in spite of noble intentions?**

Intention requires technique to be successfully communicated. It doesn't matter how well you want to hit the golf ball. Only good form and practiced skill allow you to consistently do so. Public speaking is no different. So many people seem to think that speaking well in front of an audience is a natural skill. Public speaking, like all skills, is developed. The more often one speaks, the better one becomes if--and this is a big if--s/he focuses on eliminating undesirable behaviours and developing needed ones.

**The fastest gain that can be made in improving your ability to speak well is to eliminate those things that cause disaster**

There are seven common reasons why executive speakers fail:

1. a disregard for time
2. unclear purpose
3. inadequate preparation
4. failure to capture attention
5. pomposity
6. boredom
7. false endings

### 1. A disregard for time

- history has no record of anyone who gave a speech that was too short
- speaking too long or taking more time than allotted--seems to be epidemic among high level business leaders
- many executives completely destroy agendas by speaking for an hour when scheduled to speak for 15 minutes (and no employee is going to complain to the executive's face about talking way too long)
- the length of a presentation shouldn't be a function of title or power, but a function of how long you agreed to talk. If you say you need ten minutes, quit after 10 minutes
- start on time and **stop** on time (not only will your audience respect you for it, but it will prove that you respect your audience)

### 2. Unclear purpose

- the million dollar question of any presentation: **what's the point?** (Executives who don't have clear objectives for their presentation usually achieve little)
- begin by asking: "At the end of this presentation, what do I want listeners to think, feel and do?" Good presenters speak to the head, the heart and the hands. (Challenging people with lot of information of limited practical application is more frustrating than inspiring)
- clearly identify a worthwhile purpose for the presentation
- speeches that someone else writes for you? It is critically important that a speech writer have access to you and your ideas. (your speech will only be written as well as the input you provide)

### 3. Inadequate preparation

- the best speakers are always prepared for what they say, even if their demeanor suggests otherwise
- how to tell if a speaker hasn't prepared: he doesn't say anything important. To make best use of your time and the audience's time, think through and practice what

you'll say. (If you saw a Broadway show where none of the actors had practiced in advance, you would demand your money back)

#### 4. Failure to capture attention

- the scarcest resource in the world used to be time; today it is attention. What you say and how you say it had better grab the audience's attention immediately. (In the theater, you'll never see an actor warm-up on the audience. They warm-up backstage.)
- most importantly, make your remarks relevant. Post moderns are less interested with the question "Is it true?" and more interested in the question "How does it affect me?" (never forget to prove that your message matters to the listener)

#### 5. Pomposity

- impressing people is, for the most part, a head-game: it changes what they think of us. **Influencing** people is a behavioural game: it changes what people do because of us
- a preoccupation with self is deadly. Self-absorbed speakers present to get their needs met, rather than meet the needs of the audience. The audience instantly recognises it.
- one of the best kept secrets in speaking is this: the audience wants you to do well (allow for mispronunciations and other mistakes)
- you wouldn't be asked to speak unless someone believed that you have credibility, and something to say

#### 6. Boredom

- presentation and perception go hand-in-hand. (entertaining is not in itself a worthwhile goal for an executive presenter, but is sure beats the alternative, which is to be boring)
- "Amusement" comes from two words meaning "not to ponder." "Entertainment", on the other hand, is engaging. The value of entertainment for a speaker is that it mentally engages listeners
- telling a joke is risky. When it works, it works well. When it fails, nothing fails worse

#### 7. False endings

- a simple rule to remember: a good ending happens only once (several points, or the introduction of new points, is not a conclusion)
- you can only effectively conclude once (each false ending weakens the message that was in front of it)

# **How To Conquer Public Speaking Fear**

**By Morton C. Orman, M.D.**

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Public speaking is a common source of stress for everyone. Many of us would like to avoid this problem entirely, but this is hard to do. Whether we work alone or with large numbers of people, eventually we will need to speak in public to get certain tasks accomplished. And if we want to be leaders or achieve anything meaningful in our lives, we will often need to speak to groups, large and small, to be successful.

The truth about public speaking, however, is **IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL!** If you correctly understand the hidden causes of public speaking stress, and if you keep just a few key principles in mind, speaking in public will soon become an invigorating and satisfying experience for you.

## **Purpose Of This Report**

The purpose of this Special Report is to help you overcome the fear of public speaking. It begins by discussing ten key principles to always keep in mind. If you approach any problem in life with the right starting principles, everything else will fall into place. On the other hand, if you start with the wrong guiding principles, you can try all you want, but there is little chance you'll improve.

This Report also reveals eleven "hidden" causes of public speaking stress. I have summarized these eleven causes, along with the ten key principles, at the end of this Report, so you can easily review them.

## **Key Principles**

### **Principle #1--Speaking in Public is NOT Inherently Stressful**

Most of us believe parts of life are inherently stressful. In fact, most of us have been taught to believe that life as a whole is very stressful! To deal with any type of stress effectively, you first must understand that life itself, including public speaking, is **NOT** inherently stressful. Thousands of human beings have learned to speak in front of groups with little or no stress at all. Many of these people were initially terrified to speak in public. Their knees would shake, their voices would tremble, their thoughts would become jumbled . . . you know the rest. Yet they learned to eliminate their fear of public speaking completely. You are no more or less human than they are. If they can conquer the fear of public speaking, so can you! It just takes the right guiding principles, the right understanding, and the right plan of action to make this goal a reality.

Believe me, it's not difficult. I'm a good example of someone who conquered the fear of public speaking. And while I didn't do it overnight, it wasn't difficult. All it took was approaching the problem in the right way.

## **Principle #2--You Don't have to be Brilliant or Perfect to Succeed**

Many of us have observed public speakers and thought to ourselves "Wow, I could never be that smart, calm, witty, entertaining, polished . . . or whatever." Well, I've got news for you-- you don't have to be brilliant, witty, or perfect to succeed. That is not what public speaking is all about. I know it may look that way, but it's not. You can be average. You can be below average. You can make mistakes, get tongue-tied, or forget whole segments of your talk. You can even tell no jokes at all and still be successful.

It all depends on how you, and your audience, define "success." Believe me, your audience doesn't expect perfection. I used to think most audiences did, but I was wrong! Before I discovered this, I used to put incredible pressure on myself to deliver a perfect performance. I worked for days to prepare a talk. I stayed up nights worrying about making mistakes. I spent hours and hours rehearsing what I was going to say. And you know what? All this did was make me even more anxious! The more perfect I tried to be, the worse I did! It was all very disheartening (not to mention unnecessary).

The essence of public speaking is this: give your audience something of value. That's all there is to it. If people in your audience walk away with something (anything) of value, they will consider you a success. If they walk away feeling better about themselves, feeling better about some job they have to do, they will consider you a success. If they walk away feeling happy or entertained, they will consider their time with you worthwhile. Even if you pass out, get tongue-tied, or say something stupid during your talk . . . they won't care! As long as they get something of value, they will be thankful.

They don't even need to feel good to consider you a success. If you criticize people, or if you stir them up to ultimately benefit them, they might still appreciate you, even though you didn't make them feel good at the time.

## **Principle #3--All You Need is Two or Three Main Points**

You don't have to deliver mountains of facts or details to give your audience what they truly want. Many studies have shown that people remember very few of the facts or information speakers convey. While you may choose to include lots of facts and information, you only need to make two or three main points to have your talk be successful. You can even have your whole talk be about only one key point, if you wish.

When I first began speaking in public during medical school (kicking, screaming, and quivering all the way), I wasn't aware of this simple principle. I wrongly believed that my audience wanted encyclopedic knowledge from me, which of course I didn't have. So I tried to research my topic thoroughly and deliver as much worldly wisdom as possible.

Boy was that exhausting! It was also boring for my audience to suffer through. Later, when I began giving public seminars on how to cope with stress, I spent hours each week typing a twenty-page script to read from, so I wouldn't forget any important tidbit.

As time went on, I gradually learned that this degree of complexity wasn't needed. As a result, the length of my discussion notes gradually declined. My twenty-page typed manuscript gave way to a

five-page detailed outline. Then, I replaced my outline with ten or fifteen index cards. Eventually, I could conduct a full two-hour seminar with only one 3X5 index card (containing my two or three key points) to support me! As long as I focused on these two or three key points, I was able to speak at length about them by naturally drawing upon my past experiences and knowledge.

Remember, all your audience wants from you is to walk away with one or two key points that will make a difference to them. If you structure your talks to deliver this result, you can avoid lots of complexity that isn't really needed. This also should make your job as a speaker much easier, and more fun too!

#### **Principle #4--You also Need a Purpose That is Right for the Task**

This principle is very important . . . so please listen up. One big mistake people make when they speak in public is they have the wrong purpose in mind. Often, they have no specific purpose in mind, but the one that is operating within them unconsciously causes a whole lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety.

This is a prime example of what I call a "hidden cause" of public speaking stress. When I first started speaking in public, I thought my purpose was to get everyone in the audience to approve of me. I mistakenly thought that this was what good public speakers try to do. I wasn't consciously aware of this purpose, nor how foolish it was, but it was there nonetheless.

Because of this hidden purpose, I felt I needed to be absolutely perfect and brilliant to win my audience's unanimous approval. If just one person in the audience disapproved . . . my goose was cooked! If one person left early, if anyone fell asleep, or if someone looked uninterested in what I was saying . . . I was defeated!

This was very anxiety-producing. Later, after I became aware of this stress-producing purpose, I was able to look at it honestly and realize how foolish it was. How many public speakers get 100% approval from their audiences? The answer is zero!

The truth about public speaking is no matter how good a job you do . . . someone is going to disapprove of either you or your argument. That is just human nature. In a large group of people, there will always be a diversity of opinions, judgements, and reactions. Some will be positive, others will be negative.

There is no rhyme or reason to it. If you do a lousy job, some people will sympathize with you and feel for you, while others will critique you harshly. If you do a fantastic job, someone will resent your ability and might disapprove of you on that basis alone. Some people will leave early because of an emergency. Some will fall asleep because they were up all night taking care of a sick child. Therefore, it's foolish and unrealistic to attempt to get everyone in your audience to think well of you.

More importantly, it's the wrong type of purpose to adopt in the first place. Remember, the essence of public speaking is to give your audience something of value. The operative word here is GIVE not GET! The purpose of public speaking is not for you to get something (approval, fame, respect, sales, clients, etc.) from your audience. It is to give something useful to your audience.

Yes, if you do this well, you'll gain notoriety, respect, sales, and new clients. But this should never be your organizing purpose going in. If you focus on giving as much as you can to your audience, you will then be aligned with the truth about public speaking. You also will avoid one of the biggest pitfalls that cause people to experience public speaking anxiety.

Giving of yourself is rarely stressful or anxiety producing. When I give a talk to a group of people, I often imagine myself handing out \$1,000 bills to everyone in the audience. I try to give them at least that much value. If a few individuals in the group reject this "gift," it no longer surprises or demoralizes me. I no longer expect anything different.

### **Principle #5--The Best Way to Succeed is Not to consider Yourself a Public Speaker!**

While it may seem paradoxical, the best way to succeed as a public speaker is not to consider yourself a public speaker at all.

Many of us have distorted, exaggerated views of what successful public speakers do. We often assume that to be successful ourselves, we must strive very hard to bring forth certain idealistic qualities we presently lack.

Consequently, we struggle desperately to emulate those personal characteristics of other speakers which we wrongly believe are responsible for their public speaking success.

In other words, we try to become someone other than ourselves! We try to be a public speaker, whatever that image means to us.

The truth about public speaking is that most successful speakers got that way by doing just the opposite! They didn't try to be like somebody else. They just gave themselves permission to be themselves in front of other people. And much to their surprise, they discovered how much fun they could have doing something most other people dread.

The secret, then, to their success is that they didn't try to become public speakers!

You and I can do the very same thing. No matter what type of person we are, or what skills and talents we possess, we can stand up in front of others and fully be ourselves.

I now love to speak in public. Why? Because it's one of the few times I give myself permission to fully be myself in the presence of others. I can be bold, compassionate, silly, informative, helpful, witty . . . anything I want. I can tell jokes, which I don't normally do, tell humorous or poignant stories, or do anything else that feels natural in the moment.

As a result, I make much better contact with my audience. I don't drone on and on about some uninteresting subject. I'm alive, I'm energized, I'm fully invested in everything I say and do. That's another gift I can give my audience. It also allows me to tell when I've gone on too long or when the people who are listening to me begin to drift away.

When you really get good at being yourself in front of others, you can even stand up in front of a group of people without any idea how you're going to get across your two or three main points.

Sometimes, I enjoy throwing myself in front of a group without knowing specifically what I'm going to say. I just focus on my three main points and remember I'm there to give people something of value. Then I give myself permission to say whatever comes to mind. In many instances, I say things I've never said before! They just come out of me spontaneously while "being with my audience." Sometimes, I'm truly amazed at some of the things I end up saying or doing.

And you know what? People in the audience often come up to me afterward and say, "you were great, I wish I had the confidence to give public talks like you." That's exactly the wrong way to think. Don't try to give talks the way I do, or the way anyone else does. Just go out there, armed with a little knowledge and a few key points, and be yourself. Everything else will usually work out. It might be a little rough the first few times you try it, but after a while, you'll settle into some very successful ways of being that will be all yours and no one else's.

### **Principle #6--Humility and Humor Can Go a Long Way**

While each person will eventually find his or her style of public speaking, certain maneuvers can be used by almost everyone. Two of these, humility and humor, can go a long way to making your talks more enjoyable and entertaining for your audience.

Humor is well understood by most of us, so little needs to be said about it here. If being humorous feels comfortable for you, or if it fits your speaking situation, go for it. It usually works, even if you don't do it perfectly.

By humility, I mean standing up in front of others and sharing some of your own human frailties, weaknesses, and mistakes. We all have weaknesses, you know, and when you stand up in front of others and show that you're not afraid to admit yours, you create a safe, intimate climate where others can acknowledge their personal shortcomings as well.

Being humble in front of others makes you more credible, more believable, and paradoxically more respected. People can connect with you more easily. You become "one of them" instead of a remote expert who's head and shoulders above them (which you really aren't). It also sets a tone of honesty and self-acceptance, which people recognize in themselves as well. Don't try to do this, however, if it's not authentic for you. True humility is easily distinguished from the pretense of acting humble. If you pretend, your audience will perceive this and lose respect for you.

Often, humor and humility can be combined very effectively. Telling humorous stories about yourself, or using your own personal failings to demonstrate some point you are trying to make, can be both entertaining and illuminating.

For example, if you get nervous when you stand up to speak in front of a group, or if you suddenly feel nervous during the middle of your talk, don't hide this fact from your audience (they can tell anyway). Be real--and humble--by acknowledging your fear openly and honestly. Ask your audience for forgiveness while you take a few moments to collect yourself.

Or, you can start your talk with a humorous story that produces the same effect. For example, I've seen speakers begin their talks by saying "What lies at the bottom of the ocean and shakes all over?" Answer: a nervous wreck! This is a very endearing strategy that also helps relieve speaking anxiety.

## **Principle #7--When You Speak in Public, Nothing "Bad" Can Ever Happen!**

One thing that adds to the fear of public speaking is the dread people have that something awful, terrible, or publicly humiliating will happen to them. What if I pass out from nervous exhaustion? What if I forget everything I intended to say and am left standing there, totally speechless? What if the audience hates me and begins throwing things at me? What if they all get up and leave after the first ten minutes? What if they snipe at me with harsh questions or comments once I'm done? What if someone in the audience tries to turn the group against me?

These could be embarrassing if they occurred. Fortunately, most of them don't happen. Even when they do, it's useful to have a strategy in mind that has them turn out perfect. Sound difficult? It's not really.

I've found that most of the "negative" things that happen when I'm speaking can be handled by keeping this one simple, but powerful, principle in mind: everything that happens can be used to my advantage.

If people get up and start to head for the door, I can stop what I'm doing and ask for feedback. Was there something about my topic, my style, or my manner of presentation that was offensive to them? Were they simply in the wrong room at the start and didn't know it? Did someone misinform them about what my talk was going to cover?

Regardless of what they tell me, just stopping to deal with this situation, honestly and humbly, will often score points with my remaining audience. It also will give me the opportunity to learn how I am affecting people, so I can make any corrections that might be needed.

Even if everyone walked out and refused to give me a reason, I could ultimately find ways to benefit from this experience. At the very least, I could use it as the opening for my next presentation. "You know, I gave this same talk the other day and everyone in the audience walked out in the first ten minutes. That's my current record, so I guess we'll just have to see what happens today."

The same principle holds for dealing with hecklers or people who ask harsh or confrontational questions. If you assume that nothing truly bad can ever happen when you're speaking in public, you'll be amazed how well you can relate to such events and how often you can indeed use them to your advantage.

And once you've successfully used this principle many times, your anxiety about public speaking will almost completely go away. You'll know it will be virtually impossible for anything "bad" to happen that you won't be able to handle. That is a very comforting thought.

**TIP:** If you want a good role model for developing this skill, rent a video tape of Johnny Carson's opening monologues. He was a master at using this principle. No matter how his audience responded, Carson was always ready to use their response, positive or negative, to make another joke. He simply couldn't lose, even if the material his writers provided him was rotten.

### **Principle #8--You Don't Have to Control the Behavior of Your Audience**

To succeed as a public speaker, you don't have to control the behavior of your audience. There are certain things you do need to control--your own thoughts, your preparation, arrangements for audio-visual aids, how the room is laid out--but one thing you don't have to control is your audience. They will do whatever they do, and whatever they do will usually be "perfect."

If people are fidgety or restless, don't try to control this. If someone is talking to a neighbor, or reading the newspaper, or falling asleep, leave them alone. If people look like they aren't paying attention, refrain from chastising them. Unless someone is being intentionally disruptive, there is very little you need to control.

Thinking you need to change or control other people is a hidden cause of stress in many areas of life. This is just as true for relating to a group as it is for relating to your friends, spouse, children, or other acquaintances.

### **Principle #9--In General, the More You Prepare, the Worse You Will Do**

Preparation is useful for any public appearance. How you prepare, however, and how much time you need to spend are other matters entirely.

Many of the errors in thinking we've discussed so far often creep in to people's strategies for preparation. If you have the wrong focus (i.e., purpose), if you try to do too much, if you want everyone to applaud your every word, if you fear something bad might happen or you might make a minor mistake, then you can easily drive yourself crazy trying to overprepare your talk. In these instances, the more effort you put in, the worse you probably will do.

On the other hand, if you know your subject well, or if you've spoken about it many times before, you may only need a few minutes to prepare sufficiently. All you might need is to remind yourself of the two or three key points you want to make, along with several good examples and supporting facts and . . . BOOM you're ready to go.

Overpreparation usually means you either don't know your subject well or you do, but you don't feel confident about your ability to speak about it in public. In the former instance, you'll need to do some extra research. In the latter, you'll need to develop trust in your natural ability to speak successfully. The only way to do this is to put yourself in the spotlight, over and over again.

Go out and solicit opportunities to speak on your subject in public. Offer to speak free or for a small fee, enough to cover your expenses. If you have something of value to tell others, keep getting in front of people and deliver it. In no time at all, you'll gain confidence. You'll also begin to respect the natural public speaker/communicator within you.

### **Principle #10--Your Audience Truly Wants You to Succeed**

The last principle to remember is that your audience truly wants you to succeed. Most of them are scared to death of public speaking, just like you. They know the risk of embarrassment, humiliation,

and failure you take every time you present yourself in public. They feel for you. They will admire your courage. And they will be on your side, no matter what happens.

This means that most audiences are truly forgiving. While a slip of the tongue or a mistake of any kind might seem a big deal to you, it's not very meaningful or important to your audience. Their judgements and appraisals will usually be much more lenient than yours. It's useful to remind yourself of this point, especially when you think you've performed poorly.

### **Review of 11 Hidden Causes Of Public Speaking Stress**

1. Thinking that public speaking is inherently stressful (it's not).
2. Thinking you need to be brilliant or perfect to succeed (you don't).
3. Trying to impart too much information or cover too many points in a short presentation.
4. Having the wrong purpose in mind (to get rather than to give/contribute).
5. Trying to please everyone (this is unrealistic).
6. Trying to emulate other speakers (very difficult) rather than simply being yourself (very easy).
7. Failing to be personally revealing and humble.
8. Being fearful of potential negative outcomes (they almost never occur and even when they do, you can use them to your advantage).
9. Trying to control the wrong things (e.g., the behavior of your audience).
10. Spending too much time overpreparing (instead of developing confidence and trust in your natural ability to succeed).
11. Thinking your audience will be as critical of your performance as you might be.

### **Review of 10 Key Principles To Always Keep In Mind**

#1---Speaking in Public is NOT Inherently Stressful

#2---You Don't Have to be Brilliant or Perfect to Succeed

#3---All You Need is Two or Three Main Points

#4---You also Need a Purpose That is Right for the Task

#5---The Best Way to Succeed is NOT to Consider Yourself a Public Speaker!

#6---Humility and Humor Can Go a Long Way

#7---When You Speak in Public, Nothing "Bad" Can Ever Happen!

#8---You Don't Have to Control the Behavior of Your Audience

#9---In General, the More You Prepare, the Worse You Will Do

#10--Your Audience Truly Wants You to Succeed

That's all there is to it. Just look for these eleven hidden causes and keep the ten corresponding principles in mind.

Of course, you will need to practice. It's extremely easy to forget the ten key principles. No matter how often you review them, you'll instinctively fall back into your old stress-producing patterns.

And remember, if you get up in front of a group and find this stressful, it only means you forgot the truth about what public speaking is all about. Go back and review this Report. Find out what you did wrong or what you didn't remember. Then go back out and speak again until you get it right. It may take time, but the long-term rewards will be impressive.

# PowerPoint Is Evil

## Power Corrupts. PowerPoint Corrupts Absolutely.

By Edward Tufte



Genevieve Liang

Imagine a widely used and expensive prescription drug that promised to make us beautiful but didn't. Instead the drug had frequent, serious side effects: It induced stupidity, turned everyone into bores, wasted time, and degraded the quality and credibility of communication. These side effects would rightly lead to a worldwide product recall.

Yet slideware -computer programs for presentations -is everywhere: in corporate America, in government bureaucracies, even in our schools. Several hundred million copies of Microsoft PowerPoint are churning out trillions of slides each year. Slideware may help speakers outline their talks, but convenience for the speaker can be punishing to both content and audience. The standard PowerPoint presentation elevates format over content, betraying an attitude of commercialism that turns everything into a sales pitch.

Of course, data-driven meetings are nothing new. Years before today's slideware, presentations at companies such as IBM and in the military used bullet lists shown by overhead projectors. But the format has become ubiquitous under PowerPoint, which was created in 1984 and later acquired by Microsoft. PowerPoint's pushy style seeks to set up a speaker's dominance over the audience. The speaker, after all, is making power points with bullets to followers. Could any metaphor be worse? Voicemail menu systems? Billboards? Television? Stalin?



AP/Wide World Photos

Tufte satirizes the totalitarian impact of presentation slideware.

Particularly disturbing is the adoption of the PowerPoint cognitive style in our schools. Rather than learning to write a report using sentences, children are being taught how to formulate client pitches and infomercials. Elementary school PowerPoint exercises (as seen in teacher guides and in student work posted on the Internet) typically consist of 10 to 20 words and a piece of clip art on each slide in a presentation of three to six slides -a total of perhaps 80 words (15 seconds of silent reading) for a week of work. Students would be better off if the schools

simply closed down on those days and everyone went to the Exploratorium or wrote an illustrated essay explaining something.

In a business setting, a PowerPoint slide typically shows 40 words, which is about eight seconds' worth of silent reading material. With so little information per slide, many, many slides are needed. Audiences consequently endure a relentless sequentiality, one damn slide after another. When information is stacked in time, it is difficult to understand context and evaluate relationships. Visual reasoning usually works more effectively when relevant information is shown side by side. Often, the more intense the detail, the greater the clarity and understanding. This is especially so for statistical data, where the fundamental analytical act is to make comparisons.

**GOOD**

Estimation of relative rates, by cancer site

Estimated rates and standard errors

	1970	1975	1980	1985
Bladder	298.8 (4)	55.2 (8)	471.1 (4)	442.3 (4)
Cervix	260.0 (4)	99.8 (2)	34.0 (4)	75.4 (4)
Colon	34.7 (1)	96.4 (1)	93.1 (4)	68.0 (1)
Hepatocellular	48.0 (2)	64.7 (1)	87.5 (1)	68.9 (1)
Testis	35.4 (4)	79.3 (4)	71.3 (4)	88.0 (4)
Hodgkin's disease	95.2 (1)	59.8 (4)	79.8 (4)	87.5 (1)
Colorectal, adenocarcinoma	44.2 (1)	69.2 (1)	80.8 (1)	79.2 (1)
Thyroid, follicular	40.3 (1)	75.2 (1)	79.3 (1)	67.6 (1)
Ovarian, epithelial	78.5 (1)	44.1 (1)	62.8 (1)	68.6 (1)

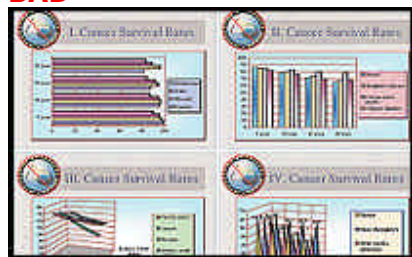
Graphics Press

**A traditional table: rich, informative, clear.**

Consider an important and intriguing table of survival rates for those with cancer relative to those without cancer for the same time period. Some 196 numbers and 57 words describe survival rates and their standard errors for 24 cancers.

Applying the PowerPoint templates to this nice, straightforward table yields an analytical disaster. The data explodes into six separate chaotic slides, consuming 2.9 times the area of the table. Everything is wrong with these smarmy, incoherent graphs: the encoded legends, the meaningless color, the logo-type branding. They are uncomparative, indifferent to content and evidence, and so data-starved as to be almost pointless. Chartjunk is a clear sign of statistical stupidity. Poking a finger into the eye of thought, these data graphics would turn into a nasty travesty if used for a serious purpose, such as helping cancer patients assess their survival chances. To sell a product that messes up data with such systematic intensity, Microsoft abandons any pretense of statistical integrity and reasoning.

**BAD**



Graphics Press

**PowerPoint chartjunk: smarmy, chaotic, incoherent.**

Presentations largely stand or fall on the quality, relevance, and integrity of the content. If your numbers are boring, then you've got the wrong numbers. If your words or images are not on point, making them dance in color won't make them relevant. Audience boredom is usually a content failure, not a decoration failure.

At a minimum, a presentation format should do no harm. Yet the PowerPoint style routinely disrupts, dominates, and trivializes content. Thus PowerPoint presentations too often resemble a school play -very loud, very slow, and very simple.

The practical conclusions are clear. PowerPoint is a competent slide manager and projector. But rather than supplementing a presentation, it has become a substitute for it. Such misuse ignores the most important rule of speaking: Respect your audience.

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*Edward R. Tufte is professor emeritus of political science, computer science and statistics, and graphic design at Yale. His new monograph, The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint, is available from Graphics Press (www.edwardtufte.com).*

## "I Hate PowerPoint" - A Viewpoint by Julie Ireland <http://www.JulieIreland.net>

Ok I went and said it out loud. I HATE POWERPOINT. Ohhhh that felt good. I have never heard of an audience participant who came away from a workshop saying, "Wow that speaker brought the topic alive with PowerPoint." Think of the greatest orators of our time. Mark Twain, Will Rogers, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Winston Churchill all did it with conversation, teaching, storytelling and communicating.

With some compulsory exceptions (technical, mathematical, medical etc.) too many of today's speakers rely unnecessarily on PowerPoint. Perhaps no one else will tell you, but I will, **PowerPoint is impersonal and mind numbing. A trait of an excellent speaker is not fancy clip art, not background music, not dancing fonts, but the ability to verbally paint a picture with language.** Now that is a skill. The telling of an interesting story is what keeps someone on the edge of his or her seat, not because you had a fade in and out button on your PowerPoint.

No wonder so many speakers are dull and lifeless, they actually have been brainwashed to believe that PowerPoint is interesting. Have these people never seen the eyes of their audience members glaze over? Have they never heard the sound of snoring from the back of their classroom? Have they never seen audience member's role their eyes while PowerPoint is being set up? They are so excited about the fact they have mastered the art of bullet points on their laptop that they have truly lost sight of the ancient art of communication and interaction.

Why is PowerPoint considered professional, but the art of relating facts verbally is no longer considered professional? Why is sitting in a dark room with the whirl sound of a computer clicking considered captivating, but looking your audience in the eye is not?

Have you ever noticed that no matter how proficient someone is with PowerPoint they always spend time fooling around with something that always always always goes wrong with PowerPoint? The audience sits patiently and waits while the techies are hurriedly trying to solve the PowerPoint crisis of the moment.

No one likes PowerPoint except the people who use it. I bet if you surveyed an audience and asked them which type of presentation they prefer, the old fashion kind or the new fangled PowerPoint? You may be surprised. Newer is not always better. Just because everyone is jumping on the bandwagon with PowerPoint does not make PowerPoint remarkable.

**PowerPoint presentations are as tired as cell phone users and palm pilot aficionados.** These people belong in a category of being oblivious to their surroundings. No one wants to hear your end of a conversation. No one wants to sit in a meeting and watch half the participants tapping away at their palm pilots and no one wants to suffer through your PowerPoint seminar. If you don't have something interesting to say, please don't say it and whatever you do please don't put it on your laptop and make me read it. There I said it, and I'm not sorry.

*EDITORS NOTE: Rants are not the norm in Great Speaking Ezine, but this one goes along quite well with my overall opinion that **technology does not make you a great speaker.** There is nothing inherently wrong with PowerPoint. My beef is that it makes people think they are going to be dynamic speakers because they use it and then they don't practice. I dare you to throw away your PowerPoint for just one of your next ten speeches. You pick which one. I guarantee you that you will improve your speaking because you will be forced to find ways to be interesting and to make your point without your electronic crutch.*

# TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

Christine Thibault

1. Thou shalt not hang onto the lectern for dear life. Use your hands for gestures.
2. Thou shalt stop for breath from time to time. In fact pauses add drama and suspense to your speech.
3. Thou shalt smile. It takes fewer muscles to smile than to frown.
4. Thou shalt use some vocal variety. Thou art not a robot.
5. Thou shalt look at thine audience and not thy feet.
6. Thou shalt not talk too long. Often less is more.
7. Thou shalt not remain in one spot for 5- 7 minutes. Thou might take root.
8. Thou shalt not use "ums", "ahs" and "you knows." If there are too many, people will start to count them rather than listening to your speech.
9. Thou shalt ask yourself "Would I want to listen to this speech?"
10. Thou shalt not read thy speech word for word. Thou might put thine audience to sleep.

