

PRESENTING WITH POWER

Generating Audience
Participation

TOP EXPERTS SHARE THEIR SECRETS



[Download the Complete *Presenting with Power* eBook](#)

FOREWORD

At ClearSlide, our vision is to power valuable, genuine business conversations for our customers. We want to blend technology with natural human interactions so that sales professionals and customers can connect more seamlessly and have the best possible experience.

Most companies constantly seek ways to increase the productivity and impact of their sales team. Given the cost investment in people, if your company can increase its sales team's productivity and effectiveness by any meaningful percentage, that increase can have dramatic impact on your business. That's what ClearSlide does. ClearSlide is a sales engagement platform that accelerates revenue performance.

To make the best use of a service like ClearSlide, sellers need to know how to pitch with impact. This e book is about the softer skills—the art of presenting your content with confidence, conviction, and influence.

Regardless of whether you're in sales, we think you'll find the advice in this e book powerful and game changing in your every day life as you communicate and connect with others.



Al Lieb,
CEO of ClearSlide

Open clearslide. Close More Deals.

RING IN MORE SALES

ClearSlide is the **leading sales engagement platform** that transforms the way salespeople engage customers—on the phone, through email or in person, from any device.

MEET THE EXPERTS ON PRESENTATIONS: *PARTICIPATION*



**GAVIN
MEIKLE**

“The secret to effective audience interaction is to believe that your audience will do what you ask.”



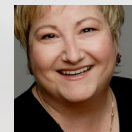
**LISA
BRAITHWAITE**

“When the audience gets excited enough during your presentation to start talking to each other, it means you’ve got a hot topic.”



**GEETESH
BAJAJ**

“You may hear all sorts of advice about how you can become a successful presenter, but it all starts with honesty.”



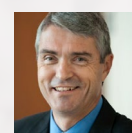
**LORI
RICHARDSON**

“Lead with an interesting point, question, or statement that has a good chance of catching the audience’s attention.”



**JILL
KONRATH**

“If you can’t quickly capture their attention, they write you off as irrelevant.”



**MARK
HUNTER**

“When it comes to engaging your audience, you have to share stories that vividly back up your points, or your audience will most certainly forget your points.”



**KEN
THORESON**

“Allowing the audience to connect the dots of my program with a related physical activity keeps everyone stimulated.”



**MATT
EVENTOFF**

“Participation typically begets participation.”

MEET THE EXPERTS ON PRESENTATIONS: *PARTICIPATION*



**MAX
ATKINSON**

“If you say something that gets an audience wondering or anticipating what’s coming next, their attentiveness and involvement will increase.”



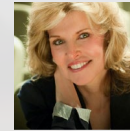
**STEPHEN
SHAPIRO**

“People remember concepts through emotion and experience. Telling people what to do has little impact on behaviors.”



**NICK
MORGAN**

“The secret to making even a speech feel interactive is to wait. Let the audience have time to respond, even if they don’t do it out loud.”



**VICKI
HITZGES**

“Laughter is contagious. If people sit too far apart, it doesn’t ‘contage.’”



**RIC
BRETSCHNEIDER**

“A great presenter arrives early and leaves late.”



**VIVEK
SINGH**

“No information should be given without making the audience feel the need for it.”



**SIMON
RAYBOULD**

“Consider replacing your single 20-minute presentation with four five-minute presentations, segued together.”



HOW TO GIVE A GREAT PRESENTATION (SERIOUSLY)

HOW TO GIVE A GREAT PRESENTATION (SERIOUSLY)



MITCH JOEL

President of Twist Image

Mitch Joel is President of Twist Image – one of the largest independent Digital Marketing agencies in North America (although he prefers the title Media Hacker). Back in 2006 he was named one of the most influential authorities on blog marketing in the world. He has been called a marketing and communications visionary, interactive expert and community leader. He is also a blogger, podcaster, passionate entrepreneur and speaker who connects with people worldwide by sharing his marketing and innovation insights on the state of business.



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You're doing it wrong.

People hate it when someone says, “*you’re doing it wrong,*” but trust me... you’re doing it wrong when it comes to how you prepare for a public speech. I’m sure this will upset many people, but let’s walk through the typical scenario of how someone is asked to speak and what happens next:

- **Step 1:** someone gets asked to present on a specific topic.
- **Step 2:** the presenter agrees to present.
- **Step 3:** the presenter puts it in the back of their mind that they must prepare for this event, but because speaking in public is so nerve-wracking, they put it off for the last possible moment.
- **Step 4:** in the week leading up to the presentation, the speaker starts writing down notes and building a PowerPoint deck. It could be more severe than this. Sometimes they write up the speech that they are going to read to the audience (please don’t do this).
- **Step 5:** a day or two (but mostly likely, the night before), the speaker runs through the slides and (if they’re really keeners) will practice it formally in front of a mirror a few times.
- **Step 6:** they deliver their presentation to an unsuspecting crowd.

Sound familiar?



HOW TO GIVE A GREAT PRESENTATION (SERIOUSLY)



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This is, without question, the worst way to ever give a public presentation, and yet this is how the vast majority do it. Why? Because the first time that the speaker is ever going to give this presentation will be the most important time and - possibly - the last time as well. Ultimately, you are taking this material for a test drive when, in fact, that audience is the grand prix. When you are asked to present, the material should already have been road tested, tweaked and perfected (as much as possible). It sounds like a lot of work, doesn't it? Well, that's the point. Most presentations suck because the presenter didn't put in the work. Trust me, as much as you may like U2, you do not want to be there when they first try out a song together for the first time. It takes a lot of work to get that song to the point when it is ready for an album or live show.

This is how to really prepare for a public speech.

Setting the Stage for Success



Someone gets asked to present on a specific topic.

- ✓ Don't agree to speak unless you have enough time to prepare and test the content out live in front of a few real audiences (this can be a simple lunch and learn at your office, joining your local Toastmasters or asking some friends to endure it over some beer and pizza).
- ✓ Don't agree to the topic that is being requested. Let the people who are asking know that you will get back to them in 48 hours with some thoughts on what the topic should be.
- ✓ Spend the next day thinking about what you would like to present and how it will come together. Jot down some simple notes and top line thoughts on the subject.
- ✓ Get confirmation and finalize the speaking topic – to your satisfaction – with the event organizers.

MORE THOUGHTS ON SETTING THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS:

“The key—and it’s my secret to ensuring an awesome presentation — is the passion I have for my topic.”



ANDREA WALTZ

“When people understand that they have a problem, you have a receptive audience.”



JOBY BLUME

“Your audience wants to hear stories—namely, your story.”



ANTHONY IANNARINO

“Of the three key elements in any presentation—the audience, the content, and the presenter—the presenter is the least important.”



JONATHAN FARRINGTON

“The goal is to make the adoption of your product or service as safe and easy as possible.”



GUY KAWASAKI

“One of the first questions we should ask ourselves when preparing a high-stakes presentation is, “Who should deliver it?”



SIMS WYETH

Build a Plan to Ensure Success



Work backwards from the date of the event, and make sure to include every step.

Your plan needs to include:

- ✓ Time to prepare your content.
- ✓ Rehearsal time.
- ✓ Time to present and get feedback from colleagues.
- ✓ The event date.

“In most cases, the single biggest challenge in developing PowerPoint presentations is that there’s never enough time.”



MARSH MAKSTEIN



Your First Draft



Craft your outline and start building your presentation.

- ✓ Build an outline for your presentation. If you have never done this before, check out the work of [Nancy Duarte](#), [Nick Morgan](#) and [Garr Reynolds](#). All three of these presentation masters have tons of free content on how to structure a solid presentation.
- ✓ Build your presentation. Have no more than three areas of focus.

MORE THOUGHTS ON YOUR FIRST DRAFT:

“Visuals make your story multisensory. Whenever you set the scene, think about the sights, sounds, smells, and textures they can evoke.”



ANASTASIA PRYANIKOVA

“If you say something that gets an audience wondering or anticipating what’s coming next, their attentiveness and involvement will increase.”



MAX ATKINSON

“Details are exit ramps out of the conversation, so make sure all details are necessary.”



ANNE WARFIELD

“I decide what I want my audience to take away from my presentation upfront and focus on building a story around that.”



ARDATH ALBEE

“A presentation should describe a problem-solving process— otherwise, why bother?”



ALEXEI KAPTEREV

“If you don’t get the audience to see why your message is relevant to their life or situation, they will pull out their smartphone, tablet, or laptop and find something more interesting.”



DAVE PARADI

“Lead with an interesting point, question, or statement that has a good chance of catching the audience’s attention.”



LORI RICHARDSON

“No matter how rational we like to think we are, we take action based on deeper triggers, and then rationalize the decision afterward.”



GAVIN MCMAHON

Getting Feedback and Practicing



If you don't think that your presentation skills are up to snuff, please enlist some help. Again, Toastmasters is great, a local presentation skills coach or even a local stand-up comedian can best help you massage the content and build proper presentation skills. You will be amazed at what you can learn in just a couple of hours.

- ✓ Rehearse on your own.
 - ✓ Rehearse in front of the smaller audiences.
 - ✓ Ask them for candid feedback.
 - ✓ Integrate the feedback that makes sense.
 - ✓ Rehearse in front of another smaller audience.
 - ✓ Ask them for candid feedback.
 - ✓ Integrate the feedback that makes sense.
 - ✓ Ask one of your presentation coaches for their feedback once you have integrated everything from all of your test-run speeches.
- ✓ Integrate your coach's feedback.
 - ✓ Practice some more on your own, and watch speakers that you would consider to be great (YouTube is amazing for this). Think about what they're doing that wins you over. Try to integrate those lessons into your own presentations.
 - ✓ Step away from the content for a few days.
 - ✓ Step back in and keep practicing.

MORE THOUGHTS ON GETTING FEEDBACK AND PRACTICING:

"Consider replacing your single 20-minute presentation with four five-minute presentations, segued together."



SIMON RAYBOULD

"No information should be given without making the audience feel the need for it."



VIVEK SINGH

"Feedback is an adventure of discovery into yourself."



TERRY GAULT

Delivering Your Presentation



Present at the event... and knock 'em alive!

People are in the audience for two (main reasons):

1. To learn.
2. To be entertained while learning.

MORE THOUGHTS ON DELIVERING YOUR PRESENTATION:

“Create natural breaks by asking the audience to join in.”



LISA B. MARSHALL

“The secret to effective audience interaction is to believe that your audience will do what you ask.”



GAVIN MEIKLE

Laughter is contagious. If people sit too far apart, it doesn't “contage.”



VICKI HITZGES

“True professionals work the entire stage like a rock star.”



DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

“I always try to get to know my audience beforehand. I'll walk around, introduce myself, talk to them for a bit, and thank them for coming in.”



ALEX CEQUEA

“Asking questions and responding to them is a great way to establish a closer connection with your audience.”



GARY GUWE

“Participation typically begets participation.”



MATT EVENTOFF

“The secret to making even a speech feel interactive is to wait. Let the audience have time to respond, even if they don't do it out loud.”



NICK MORGAN

“Fire is contagious and captivating. When your audience experiences your energy, they'll naturally be engaged and eager to listen, and most important, they'll act on your message.”



ANGELA DEFINIS

“You go up to the center of the stage and stand there, stock still, not moving a muscle or saying a word, until the entire room hushes, wondering if you've gone catatonic. Wait one instant longer, then throw your arm out and say your line.”



CHARLES H. GREEN

“We each have our own personality and our own way of speaking. Some are flamboyant; some are professorial; some incorporate lots of humor; some are soft spoken. The list goes on. The important thing is not to try to be someone you're not.”



JOHN ZIMMER

HOW TO GIVE A GREAT PRESENTATION (SERIOUSLY)



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Sounds like a lot of hard work, doesn't it?

It is. Great public speakers make it look easy. While it feels like they're presenting the content for the very first time, most of them have practiced, nurtured, tweaked and road-tested their material. They look comfortable because they are comfortable and familiar with the content.

Sadly, most presenters are so unprepared that their only goal is to either get to the end of their slides in their allotted time or read their pre-written speech from the podium without wetting their pants. What most presenters fail to realize is that nobody cares about you getting to the end of your slides or if you survived reading a document in public.

No matter how serious the event is, people don't want to be sitting all day and be bored listening to people reading from slides or reading from their printed out Word document.

So, the next time you're asked to present, don't just say "yes", unless you're willing to commit the serious time, effort and energy to do it right.

Why? Because if you don't take it seriously, you're just perpetuating a world where all of us have to endure another slew of painful meetings and presentations.

Who wants that?

GENERATING AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Engaging Your Audience.....	16
The Honest Truth.....	17
A Night at the Improv: Using Improvisation to Teach Effective Sales Skills.....	18
Making It Happen: Building a Program to Your Engagement....	19
Using Audience Chatter to Your Advantage.....	20
Leading Your Audience: Making Your Talk Relevant.....	21
Backing Up Your Points with Stories.....	22
Ensuring Participation in Your Presentations.....	23
Increase Your Audience's Attentiveness with Rhetorical Questions.....	24
Waiting for an Answer: Giving Your Audience Time to Respond.....	25
Arriving Early, Staying Late.....	26
Pointing the Way: Using Signposting to Keep Your Audience On Track.....	27
Get Buy-in from the Heart First, Then the Head.....	28
Amazing Secrets for How to Get People to Participate.....	29
No Unnecessary Information.....	30

ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE



GAVIN MEIKLE

Presentation Skills
Trainer and
Professional
Speaker

Gavin Meikle is an engaging presenter and trainer who has a wealth of interpersonal communication and presentation skills training experience. He also blogs extensively about presentation skills and related topics. Gavin recently released the first in a series of bite-sized business books called *The Presenters Edge* on Amazon Kindle. He runs a small communication skills training consultancy in Southampton in the United Kingdom. When not speaking or coaching, Gavin loves to walk by the sea.



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Website



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think the secret to effective audience interaction is to believe that your audience will do what you ask.

Some years ago, I was standing for election as an international officer in JCI. There were 24 candidates; each had to make a five-minute speech to 3,000 delegates, and I was drawn 15th. Listening to the preceding speakers, I realized that I would need to do something different. With five minutes to go, I “got an idea” and tore up my speech.

I walked confidently on stage and asked everyone in the audience to stand and stretch. When everyone did I was delighted. Then, I asked them to remain standing and to sit down only if they could answer “yes” to the question, “Have you been a member for less than one year?” I went on to ask several other questions that were designed get more and more people sitting until only I was left standing. Finally, I concluded by saying, “Now you have a good idea of my experience, and if you like my style, vote for me.” And you know what? They did! I was told afterwards that the audience interaction was the key.

“The secret to effective audience interaction is to believe that your audience will do what you ask.”

KEY LESSON

- AUDIENCE INTERACTION IS THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION.**

THE HONEST TRUTH



**GEETESH
BAJAJ**

Principal / Owner

Geetesh Bajaj has been a Microsoft PowerPoint MVP for 13 years. He has been designing and training with PowerPoint for 15 years and heads Indezine, a presentation design studio and content-development organization based out of Hyderabad, India. Geetesh believes that any PowerPoint presentation is a sum of its elements, including abstract elements like concept, color, interactivity, and navigation, and also slide elements, like shapes, graphics, charts, text, sound, video, and animation.



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Website



Blog

You may hear all sorts of advice about how you can become a successful presenter, but it all starts with honesty. And by *honesty*, I don't just mean that you have to be honest with your audience. You must also be honest with yourself. Sometimes, that may be difficult, but this is one of those things that you just have to do.

I remember traveling to another city to do a training session. The organizers had assured me that the audience wanted to learn advanced skills in slide design, and they were all aware of the basics. I felt that there was something wrong around five minutes after my session began, however. The audience was looking blank—and this was even before I started engaging them.

The solution was easy: Start by asking them about basic slide design skills. That was enough to realize that I would have to start from the beginning, but the problem was that the audience was promised a completely different set of skills!

It was time to be honest—with the audience and with myself. So, that's what I did. I told them that I could get started with the basics, and, depending on how much they learned, I would try to cover all skills promised to them, but we wouldn't rush them with these skills. The audience agreed.

Fortunately, this was a two-day session, and we were able to cover lost ground. The audience was with me all through those two days, because they supported my honesty. So, that's how we made a hopeless situation end up as a win-win result for all of us.

“You may hear all sorts of advice about how you can become a successful presenter, but it all starts with honesty.”

KEY LESSON

- 1 BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF AND YOUR AUDIENCE.**

A NIGHT AT THE IMPROV: USING IMPROVISATION TO TEACH EFFECTIVE SALES SKILLS



JILL KONRATH
CEO

Jill Konrath is the author of *AGILE SELLING*, *SNAP Selling and Selling to Big Companies*. Using fresh strategies that actually work with today's crazy-busy buyers, she helps sellers create new opportunities, sell more to existing clients and speed up sales cycles. Jill's blog is read by more than 125,000 salespeople globally, and she's a frequent speaker at sales kick-off meetings and conferences. Her expertise has been featured by ABC News, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *The New York Times*, *Entrepreneur* and *Inc.*



I live in fear of being boring. I speak to a tough audience—experienced sales pros. If you can't quickly capture their attention, they write you off as irrelevant.

That's why I've taken to using improvisation early in my presentations. I have a fake office set up on stage, complete with a phone and computer. The scenario? A morning in the life of their targeted prospect, who just happens to be me. I rope in five people from the session to play my colleagues, each of whom gets just one minute to prep for their role.

The improv begins with me giving a quick overview of what I'm working on that day. Then, one by one, my colleagues come into my office with a problem. I deal with it the best I can, and they quickly move on. By the time they've all visited me, my schedule for the day is ruined.

What happens? First of all, everyone has a good time with the improv. It's edgy, and no one knows what's coming next (me included). Plus, it's their buddies on stage. That's fun. But more than that, it makes a key point: Today's crazy-busy prospects have no tolerance for blathering, ill-prepared salespeople.

Now, they're ready to listen to my ideas!

“If you can't quickly capture their attention, they write you off as irrelevant.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 USE IMPROVISATION EARLY IN YOUR PRESENTATIONS.**
- 2 USE THE IMPROVISATION TO MAKE A KEY POINT ABOUT THE AUDIENCE MEMBERS' TARGET FOR SALES.**

MAKING IT HAPPEN: BUILDING A PROGRAM TO YOUR ENGAGEMENT



KEN THORESON

Founder

During the past 15 years, Ken Thoreson's consulting, advisory, and platform services have illuminated, motivated, and rejuvenated organizations throughout the world, and Ken is recognized as an expert in sales execution, revenue generation, compensation, forecasting, recruitment, and training within the sales function. In addition to three books based on his *Sales Management Guru* series, Ken's blog has been rated in the top 10 sales blogs in the United States.



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Engaging the audience is always the secret of a successful keynote, whether it's emotional or a physical act where attendees are actively involved with your program. Obviously, platform work is involved, body language, voice inflection, but to increase the power of your program, I believe you need to build to your engagement.

In my program, *Gourmet Living: Creating a Menu for your Life*, I discuss various aspects of creating a more successful life—both professionally and personally. The talk is based around my hobby of cooking and life experiences; I show a variety of food pictures and tell a variety of stories. During the session, I discuss the three ingredients that I believe lead to a gourmet life and discuss the need for life balance—then, I bring out a Personal and Professional Pizza for each attendee, each pizza having eight slices.

(In reality, the pizzas are in paper format.)

I then ask each person to score him- or herself personally and professionally by each of the eight categories (slices of life) so the attendees can see where they are in balance and where they need to focus to create a gourmet life. Each person leaves with this assessment and a recipe card that they can use to remember the event and begin a life enrichment program.

Allowing the audience to connect the dots of my program with a physical activity that is related keeps everyone stimulated—with memory.

“Allowing the audience to connect the dots of my program with a related physical activity keeps everyone stimulated.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 BUILD YOUR PROGRAM TO YOUR ENGAGEMENT.**
- 2 GIVE THE AUDIENCE A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY THAT IS RELATED TO YOUR TALK.**

USING AUDIENCE CHATTER TO YOUR ADVANTAGE



**LISA
BRAITHWAITE**

Public Speaking
Coach

Lisa Braithwaite started performing at the tender age of three, when, confronted by her mother about why there was Comet cleanser all over the bathroom, she responded, “Out, damn’d spot! Out, I say!” She’s been traumatized by bathrooms ever since. Lisa’s philosophy of public speaking: That it’s fun, that it’s an awesome way to express yourself creatively, and that passion and enthusiasm are worth more than a thousand techniques. See her site at coachlisab.com/coachbio.html for more information.



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Website



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A lot of speakers find it disruptive when the audience starts murmuring and talking amongst themselves while the speaker is trying to pontificate or make an important point. If this is something that flusters and annoys you, reframe it as an opportunity rather than a bother.

When the audience gets excited enough during your presentation to start talking to each other, it means you’ve got a hot topic. This used to happen to me a lot when my primary audience was teenagers. So, I learned to make the most of this opportunity by harnessing that energy and my audience’s desire to share their experiences in the moment.

First, stop talking. Then, tell the audience that you’d like to take a few moments for discussion. Break them up into small groups or pairs, and ask them to informally discuss the topic for two or three minutes. Then, come back and have one person from each group or pair share what was discussed.

Ideally, you will already have audience interaction built into your presentation. This tip is for those times when you’re caught off guard! View this distraction as a way to channel your audience’s enthusiasm and put it to work for you. They will be more engaged if you treat them as collaborators rather than troublemakers.

“When the audience gets excited enough during your presentation to start talking to each other, it means you’ve got a hot topic.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 USE AUDIENCE CONVERSATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY RATHER THAN A NUISANCE.**
- 2 USE THIS CONVERSATION AS A CHANCE FOR DISCUSSION.**
- 3 USE SMALL GROUPS OR PAIRS, AND HAVE AUDIENCE MEMBERS SHARE WHAT THEY DISCUSSED.**

LEADING YOUR AUDIENCE: MAKING YOUR TALK RELEVANT



LORI RICHARDSON

Revenue Generation Expert

Lori Richardson helps sales professionals at mid-sized technology companies grow revenue by uncovering opportunities and finding creative answers to age-old issues. She has published three books on selling and is the author of an award-winning blog. Lori is also president of the group Sales Shebang for top women B2B sales experts.



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W

hen was the last time you sat in a ridiculously boring presentation? If you're like me, it happens far too often. Combat this business affliction by helping create better presentations yourself.

Focus on what is important to the audience in front of you, and attempt to pique their curiosity.

Because I present to multitasking sellers who are often participating more as “prisoners” than willing participants, there is no time for long, drawn-out, self-focused talking. Right from the start, I’ve found that a two-fold strategy is critical. I must admit that I’m far from perfect but seem to get better as time goes on, because the real key is in understanding your audience. My audience is much more specific now than it used to be. Hence, I’m starting to “get” them.

First, you must lead with an interesting point, question, or statement that has a good chance of catching the audience’s attention. Here’s an example from a Webinar to new inside sales professionals:

“Did you know that four out of five new sales positions are for inside sales and that you have the opportunity to grow sales quicker (and make more money) than your outside counterparts?”

Start off strong, talking about them, not you. If you talk about you, have it relate to them. Next, work to incorporate something of interest—something challenging or amazing.

If you do this, chances are the rest will fall into place.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOUR AUDIENCE.**
- 2 **LEAD WITH AN INTERESTING POINT, QUESTION, OR STATEMENT.**

“Lead with an interesting point, question, or statement that has a good chance of catching the audience’s attention.”

BACKING UP YOUR POINTS WITH STORIES



MARK HUNTER

Founder

Mark Hunter helps companies identify better prospects, close more sales, and profitably build more long-term customer relationships. Since 1998, Mark has conducted thousands of training programs and keynotes in sales. He is best known for his ability to motivate and move an organization through his high-energy presentations.



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You must share stories that drive your points home if you want to engage your audience and get them to participate.

For example, when I talk about the importance of listening, I always share an experience I had when I went with a client on a sales call so that I could better understand the client's industry. This particular sales rep was calling on physicians' offices. As she approached the front desk, she asked for a certain physician.

The receptionist said, "The doctor is not here. He is *in* the hospital." The sales rep did not listen well and instantly assumed that what the receptionist meant was that the physician was at the hospital making rounds, so she asked when he would return.

The receptionist had said, though, that the physician was in the hospital. He had actually had a stroke and was not expected to regain consciousness. Understandably, the sales rep was embarrassed by her poor listening skills. Sharing this story was an incredibly effective way to illustrate my point about listening skills.

When it comes to engaging your audience, you have to share stories that vividly back up your points, or your audience will most certainly forget your points.

"When it comes to engaging your audience, you have to share stories that vividly back up your points."

KEY LESSONS

- 1 SHARE STORIES THAT DRIVE YOUR POINTS HOME.**
- 2 OFFER STORIES THAT VIVIDLY BACK UP YOUR POINTS.**

ENSURING PARTICIPATION IN YOUR PRESENTATIONS



**MATT
EVENTOFF**

Founder

As the owner of Princeton Public Speaking, Matt Eventoff has conducted communication and public speaking training for clients in the United States and abroad, including Central America, the Middle East, and Asia. Matt has been cited by *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *Forbes* and has lectured about communication, messaging, and public speaking at universities. He is the professional advisor to the Princeton University student organization, Speak with Style.



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Website



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In any presentation, a key to audience participation is establishing a connection with members of the audience. I'm a firm believer that you can establish a connection before you even begin to formally present!

A presentation can begin before an individual takes the stage or reaches the front of the room. A presentation begins the first time an audience member encounters the speaker. And this can be used to your benefit the next time you speak.

So, how can you establish this connection and the participation that follows?

Introduce yourself before your presentation is scheduled to begin. "Hi, I'm Matt Eventoff. It's a pleasure to meet you."

Whether speaking to 30 or 300, I try to arrive as early as possible and position myself at the entrance of the room in which I'm presenting and introduce myself. If that isn't possible and I am already in the room, I try to meet the few people surrounding me. This changes the mood in the room immediately, as now I am no longer speaking to a room full of strangers. There are now at least a few friendly faces and a few folks on whom I can count to participate—and participation typically begets participation.

"Participation typically begets participation."

KEY LESSONS

- 1 ESTABLISH A CONNECTION WITH THE AUDIENCE BY INTRODUCING YOURSELF BEFORE YOU BEGIN TALKING.**
- 2 ARRIVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, AND GREET PEOPLE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE ROOM IN WHICH YOU'LL BE SPEAKING.**

INCREASE YOUR AUDIENCE'S ATTENTIVENESS WITH RHETORICAL QUESTIONS



MAX ATKINSON

Founder & proprietor

Max Atkinson is a British communications researcher and consultant who runs courses, coaches speakers, blogs, and writes books on presentation and public speaking, further details of which can be found on his Web site and blog.



The more you use key rhetorical techniques like contrasts, three-part lists, and rhetorical questions, the less likely you are to bore your audience. If you say something that gets an audience wondering or anticipating what's coming next, their attentiveness and involvement will increase.

But it's not always quite so easy to find an example that provides a clear demonstration of how a rhetorical question actually works—until television editors come to the rescue, as happens [in this clip from the speech](#) by U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron at his party conference.

When Mr. Cameron pauses at the end of his three-part rhetorical question, the camera cuts away to the audience, where a woman on the left of the screen nods in agreement with his anticipated answer. You don't have to be an expert lip-reader to see that she says, "Yes," about two seconds before the same answer from Cameron triggers a more generalized display of agreement (applause).

It's also worth noting that there are people like this woman who respond more visibly than others in most audiences—and very useful they are, too, because they provide a continuing barometer of how well (or badly) you're doing.

"If you say something that gets an audience wondering or anticipating what's coming next, their attentiveness and involvement will increase."

KEY LESSON

- 1 USING RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES KEEPS YOUR AUDIENCE ENGAGED.**

WAITING FOR AN ANSWER: GIVING YOUR AUDIENCE TIME TO RESPOND



NICK MORGAN, PH.D.
President

Dr. Nick Morgan is one of America's top communication theorists and coaches. A passionate teacher, he is committed to helping people find clarity in their thinking and ideas, and then delivering them with panache. He has been commissioned by Fortune 500 companies to write for many CEOs and presidents and has coached people to give congressional testimony and to take on the investment community. Nick is a former Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.



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hat's the difference between a conversation and a speech? Everyone wants to have conversations, but how many people want to sit through a boring one-way speech during which the speaker dumps information on captive listeners until they yearn for death?

So, the right question to ask yourself if you don't want to be boring is, how can you make your speech into a genuine conversation with your audience? The answer is surprisingly simple. There is a secret, and you can put it into practice with your next speech.

Here's how it works. Many speakers begin their talks with some lame variation of, "How are you today in (NAME OF LOCALE)?" They're trying to make conversation, but it doesn't feel like a real one. Why? Because they don't wait for the answer. They're caught up in their own adrenaline, pumped up or terrified to be standing in front of the audience. So, they ask they question and plunge on in a nanosecond, without waiting for the audience to respond.

The secret to making even a speech feel interactive is to wait. Let the audience have time to respond—even if they don't do it out loud. Wait to see the recognition in their eyes or in their body language. Only once they have responded to your questions, comments, and insights should you continue. If you let the audience in by waiting for them, you will make even a speech feel like a conversation, and you won't be boring.

"The secret to making even a speech feel interactive is to wait. Let the audience have time to respond, even if they don't do it out loud."

KEY LESSON

- 1 ASK QUESTIONS, THEN GIVE YOUR AUDIENCE TIME TO ANSWER IT RATHER THAN RUSHING ON.**

ARRIVING EARLY, STAYING LATE



**RIC
BRETSCHNEIDER**

Bon Vivant
Consultant

Ric Bretschneider is a technologist and problem solver whose interests outstretch his available time by a significant magnitude. Currently, he consults, making the world a safer place through better presenters. Ric spent 17 years on the Microsoft PowerPoint team, building features you love and fear. After leaving, Microsoft awarded him PowerPoint MVP status, and he's been active in that program for four years. Ric blogs at ricbret.wordpress.com.



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A great presenter arrives early and leaves late. Be sure not to mix that up. Arriving early, go out into the audience and greet them. Don't chat with management, the show organizers, or other presenters. Your audience is more important.

Talk to as many as you can, and get to know them. What's their name, their background? Why are they here today? What do they need to get from your presentation?

Be sincere: This is not a trick. Believe that you're going to make their lives better. For every person you chat with, 10 to 20 others will notice and listen in. It's surprising how much empathy and support you can gather this way.

I recently spoke before a group of administrative assistants from 30 city offices in the Bay Area of California. For the most part, my knowledge of them was abstract, from some summaries I'd received. In the few minutes before the presentation, through a half-dozen conversations, I had relevant backgrounds that I used to compose targeted questions and suggestions. Our interactive dialogue went smoothly, with tremendous participation.

When people know you understand them, they open up more.

And stay late, past any formal Q&A, to take additional direct questions. Not everyone feels comfortable talking in front of an audience. A hallway contact can lead to more opportunities.

"A great presenter arrives early and leaves late."

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ARRIVE EARLY AND LEAVE LATE.**
- 2 **MAKE A POINT TO TALK TO AUDIENCE MEMBERS BEFORE AND AFTER THE PRESENTATION.**

POINTING THE WAY: USING SIGNPOSTING TO KEEP YOUR AUDIENCE ON TRACK



**SIMON
RAYBOULD,
PH.D.**
Director

Dr. Simon Raybould is one of the United Kingdom's leading presentation trainers. He earned his Ph.D. in statistics, where he realized that the problem most people have is that although their content might be *really* interesting, if they can't convince people of that, nothing they do matters!



Presentations are about engaging your audience. If you don't do that, you're better off sending a memo. One of the big problems is the audience's ability to concentrate.

Here's a trick.

Consider replacing your single 20-minute presentation with four five-minute presentations, segued together. Think of them as clearly marked chapters, with titles and blank pages—just like a book. And also like in a book, each chapter naturally leads to the next, but each is independent and can be read on its own.

Before you get carried away, though, remember that (just like in a book) your audience needs a table of contents before you start to know what the overall story is. Give your audience the structure!

Ask yourself what signposting you can use to help everyone know where they are in your “story”: Slides with chapter titles are useful (and black slides can be even better). Changing medium is good, too, as is just moving from one side of the stage to another.

To help the audience keep track of the “chapters,” I've used almost every trick for signposting under the sun, including having an assistant bring real signposts on to the stage. (Hat tip to Clare for being both slick *and* funny when she did it.)

“Consider replacing your single 20-minute presentation with four five-minute presentations, segued together.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 THINK OF YOUR PRESENTATION AS A BOOK WITH CHAPTERS, AND DIVIDE YOUR TALK INTO SHORTER PRESENTATIONS (THE CHAPTERS).**
- 2 PROVIDE THE AUDIENCE WITH A “TABLE OF CONTENTS” FOR THE TALK.**
- 3 INCLUDE SIGNPOSTING TO KEEP THE AUDIENCE ON TRACK.**

GET BUY-IN FROM THE HEART FIRST, THEN THE HEAD



STEPHEN SHAPIRO

Innovation Evangelist

Stephen Shapiro is an innovation evangelist who has spoken to more than 450,000 people in 44 countries. He is the author of five books, including the award-winning *Best Practices Are Stupid: 40 Ways to Out Innovate the Competition*, which has been featured on ABC News, CBS Interactive's BNET, and more. Stephen's clients include Nike, Microsoft, Staples, GE, NASA, BP, Johnson & Johnson, Pearson Education, and Bristol-Myers Squibb.



Tell them what you will tell them, tell them, and tell them what you told them." For years, this is the approach that many speakers have used. From my perspective, it's bad advice. Instead, I prefer to follow Aristotle, who suggested, "Ethos, pathos, logos"—credibility, empathy, logic. His belief was that the best way to engage people is first to establish your credibility and build an emotional connection. Only after you have that do you give people the solution or logic.

I speak about innovation. Instead of telling audiences up front how to innovate (logos), I start with examples. Only when I have a strong emotional (ethos) buy-in do I tell them the point. For example, when I speak about problem definition, I start with an example of a company that used a common innovation technique . . . and failed. I then use a second example that seemed like a good idea but again had unintended consequences. Next, I use a third example that apparently addressed the issues of the first two failures but in fact went terribly wrong.

At this point, there is a lot of nervous laughter in the audience. I've talked about all of the things most companies do when they innovate. The pain has been created, and everyone wants to know how to do it properly, but I don't give the solution just yet. Instead, I share several examples of companies that got it right.

I'm 20 minutes into the topic, and I still haven't given the audience the answer. Only after people have completely bought in (emotionally and intellectually) through six or seven examples do I give them the punch line.

I say, "All of these examples—the successes and failures—make an important point: Don't think outside the box, find a better box." I dig deeper into what that means, how to make it a reality, and why it drives a 10x improvement on innovation return on investment.

People remember concepts through emotion and experience. Telling people what to do has little impact on behaviors. You need to speak to them at a much deeper level.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ONLY AFTER YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED YOUR CREDIBILITY SHOULD YOU GIVE PEOPLE THE SOLUTION.**
- 2 **PEOPLE REMEMBER CONCEPTS THROUGH EMOTION AND EXPERIENCE.**
- 3 **TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO HAS LITTLE IMPACT ON BEHAVIORS.**

"People remember concepts through emotion and experience. Telling people what to do has little impact on behaviors."

AMAZING SECRETS FOR HOW TO GET PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE



VICKI HITZGES

International Speaker

Vicki Hitzges loves people, and it shows. She landed her first job in the front office of the Dallas Cowboys where she was discovered by KTVT, who hired her to anchor the morning news in Dallas. She ultimately left TV to become a publicist. In 2004, Vickie earned the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, the highest designation awarded by the National Speakers Association. Vicki's clients include Chase Bank, New York Life, the CIA, and Microsoft.

You'll enjoy Vicki. (And, if you want to hear fun, behind-the-scenes scoop from her years of reporting about celebrities like singer Bette Midler, comedian Bill Cosby or actor-director Ron Howard...just ask!)



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- Laughter is contagious. If people sit too far apart, it doesn't "contage."
- Get down there with them, but make sure they can see you! If you're too low or you have your back to people, you'll lose 'em.
- Be positive! If you aren't sold on your activities, your group won't be, either.
- Divide people into groups of three instead of four to rev up the interaction. Always add, "Don't leave anybody out!"
- People don't want to look like a goof. If you plan to put anyone on the spot, explain privately what you'd like them to do, and get their permission before you speak.

I have a talk about zapping stress, and as I discuss each tip, audience members do all kinds of stress-zapping activities—many in front of the room.

Because speaking in public alarms most people, one activity requires that I ask three people in advance to come onstage after they hear what I want them to do. To demonstrate that talking relieves stress, I have the three each yell, "You know what *really* makes me mad?" We yell back, "No! What?" Each one rants his or her reply. It's fun and funny to hear what they say.

This activity can be intimidating. By finding live wires ahead of time, there's no resistance, and participants give fabulous answers. Everyone laughs and learns.

"Laughter is contagious. If people sit too far apart, it doesn't "contage."

KEY LESSONS

- 1 BE POSITIVE: IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE, YOUR AUDIENCE WON'T, EITHER.**
- 2 IF YOU'RE GOING TO PUT SOMEONE ON THE SPOT, GET THEIR PERMISSION AHEAD OF TIME.**

NO UNNECESSARY INFORMATION



VIVEK SINGH

Communications
Consultant

Vivek Singh is a communications consultant based in India. He has been working with clients and running a popular blog for more than five years, offering a pragmatic approach to presentation.



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use various techniques (sometimes together) to engage my audience. One, I ask a lot of questions. Two, I challenge the audience to predict what comes next in the presentation. Three, I reward the audience for active participation in exciting ways.

Once, I was presenting to a groups of students about how TV advertisements are made. Most presenters would go step by step and cover the entire subject. I chose a different route in which the audience did most of the talking. I asked my audience to imagine that they needed to make an advertisement right now. How would they do that? What steps would they follow?

I put the audience members in a real-life situation. I kept covering all the steps slowly and asking questions. What will you do now and why? This method worked wonders, and everyone actively participated. I ensured that everyone was involved, challenged, and given a chance to think and contribute.

I follow the advice that no information should be given without making the audience feel the need for it. Ask them questions, and make them realize that they need to know the answer. Make them commit to an answer, and then reveal the correct answer.

“No information should be given without making the audience feel the need for it.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS.**
- 2 **CHALLENGE THE AUDIENCE TO PREDICT WHAT COMES NEXT IN THE PRESENTATION.**
- 3 **REWARD AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION.**

FINAL REMARKS

Dear Reader,

Thank you for reading this book. Did any of the essays spark your imagination? Have you been inspired to try something new? If so, then we've succeeded.

First, I want to thank the good folks at ClearSlide for making this book possible. Their generous support for this project is just one small example of their ongoing commitment to transforming the workplace. I also want to thank each of our presentation experts for taking the time to share their thoughts and insights. Most importantly, I want to thank you for taking the time to teach, share new ideas, and lead people.

Although tools can make a world of difference in how we communicate and work together, it's people like you who are changing our world for the better. I hope the ideas in this book will help you make an even bigger impact.



All the best,
David Rogelberg,
Editor

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Open clearslide. Close More Deals.



CRUSH YOUR NUMBER

Transform the way your sales team engages customers



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In-Person