Presentation Techniques[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Prepared by: Romie F. Littrell**

**IBW-Fachhochschule Aalen, Germany, 2002**

**(Now at National Research University Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg, The Russian Federation)**

**[Offered only as a help to students, summarising information compiled from various sources, sometimes directly quoted without standard acknowledgement; check Internet link sources for more information.]**

|  |
| --- |
| COPYRIGHT NOTICE. This copying and distribution of any copyrighted material is done for an educational purpose under the New Zealand Copyright Act 1994 No 143 (as at 07 July 2010) and subsequent amendments. The printed, copied, or electronically distributed or appended document(s) is/are copyrighted material or may contain copyrighted material. You may not copy or distribute verbatim any substantial part of this material to any other person. Where this material is provided to you in electronic format you may only print from it for your own use. You may not make a further copy for any other purpose. Failure to comply with the terms of this warning may be copyright infringement and hence illegal. Exceptions to these restrictions may be granted by documented permission of the copyright holder indicated on the original version of the material. |

First edition: 28. Sep. 2001, Revised 2019

Prior to switching my career to university teaching, I worked for several decades in sales, marketing, and systems engineering support for information technology companies, including owning and managing a small IT sales and marketing business, and working for IBM, Xerox, Unisys, Docutel/Olivetti, and InterContinental Hotels Group. In every one of these companies I had at various times, career-critical assignments that required making a convincing formal business presentation involving locating, accessing, and reading sources of information, analysing and synthesising the information, summarising, drawing conclusions, and making plans and recommendations. The "Presentation Techniques” guide is intended to help you prepare for this kind of presentation

**INTRODUCTION**

IF YOU LEARN NOTHING ELSE FROM THIS GUIDE:

1. PPT OVERHEADS LOOK DIFFERENT PROJECTED IN A BRIGHT ROOM ON TO A LARGE SCREEN, COMPARED TO A COMPUTER MONITOR FROM 20CM AWAY; TEST YOUR PRESENTATION ON A PROJECTOR IN A LARGE ROOM.

2. VERIFY THAT YOUR EQUIPMENT WORKS AND YOU KNOW HOW TO USE IT PRIOR TO THE PRESENTATION, NOT DURING IT.

3. NOTE: IF YOU ARE PRESENTING AT AN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE, IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN YOUR LITERATURE REVIEW, THEY’LL READ YOUR PAPER.

IN PRESENTATIONS: PRESENT:

* WHAT YOU’RE STUDYING, YOUR POPULATION AND SAMPLE,
* WHAT AND HOW YOU MEASURED
* WHAT VARIABLES, WHAT DIFFERENCES YOU FOUND (IF ANY),
* YOUR INTERPRETATION OF WHY THESE DIFFERENCES EXIST;
* SO WHAT?—WHAT VALUE ARE YOUR RESULTS

General introduction video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msm1uTaGdgk>

Some very annoying habits:

***Reading from notes:* Great communicators (e.g., Winston Churchill, as opposed to Barak Obama) do not read from scripts, notes, or PowerPoint slides. While it's acceptable to refer to notes from time to time, reading directly from prepared notes is a no-no. It breaks down the rapport between listener and audience.**

There are four basic reasons to include visual aids in your speech: <http://www.myspeechclass.com/visual.html>

1. To hold the audience’s attention – by getting the audience involved visually as well as orally, you are more likely to keep their interest.
2. To serve as a memory aid or learning device – people learn in different ways, some people easily recall spoken information, others written information. No matter what style they prefer, the more you expose your audience to the information, the more likely they are to remember it.
3. To replace your speaking notes – This doesn’t mean reading directly from your visual aid. However, a PowerPoint presentation or slide show will have keywords that you can use to structure your extemporaneous speech.
4. To help indicate transitions – When you switch slides, for example, it reinforces the transitions between the two ideas indicated on the slide.

**An entertaining presentation on presentations using PowerPoint:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbSPPFYxx3o>

**Analyse And Avoid Annoying *Speech Noise* Interjections:** If you continually use speech interjections your audience quickly starts to ignore the information you’re trying to convey, and starts noticing how many times you use the interjection:

**Speech noise:**

USA: “you know”, “like”, “uh”

Germany: “um”, *so* /zoː/, *tja*, and *eigentlich* ("actually")

New Zealand: “yeah”

Chinese/Mandarin: 这个 *zhège* ("this") or 那个*nèige* ("that"), 就 *jìu* ("just/precisely").

Singlish: “lah”

Afrikaans, *ah*, *em*, and *eh*

Arabicيعني *yaʿni* ("I mean")

*French*, *euh* /ø/ is most common; other words used as fillers include *quoi* ("what"), *bah*, *ben* ("well"), *tu vois* ("you see"), *t’vois c’que j’veux dire?* ("you see what I mean?"), *tu sais*, *t’sais* ("you know"), and *eh bien* (roughly "well", as in "Well, I'm not sure"). In the French colonies, other expressions are *t’sais veux dire?* ("you know what I mean?"), or *allez une fois* ("go one time").

Hindi: *matlab* ("it means") and "Mah" are fillers.

Italian: "*tipo*" ("like"), "*ecco*" ("there") and "*cioè*" ("actually")

Japanese: *eetto*, *ano*, *sono*, and *ee*.

Russian: *слова-паразиты* ("vermin words"): *Э-э* ("eh"), *это* ("this"), *того* ("that"), *ну* ("well"), *значит* ("it means"), *так* ("so"), *как его* ("what's it [called]"), *типа* ("like"), and *как бы* ("[just] like").

Spanish: called *muletillas*: Some of the most common in North American are *e* /e/, *este* ("this"), and *o sea* (roughly means "I mean"); in Spain the previous fillers are also used, but *¿Vale?* ("right?") and *¿no?* are very common too.

Etc.

Rehearse your presentation with your team or a partner and have them listen for speech noise.

**Voice Trailing Off:** Many speakers let their voices trail off at the end of every sentence. The audience can hear the first part of their sentence, but they have no idea what pearls of wisdom might be lost in the whispers at the end.

A good document from Penn State University on presentation:

<https://www.e-education.psu.edu/styleforstudents/c7_p4.html>

**BROWN’S EIGHT QUESTIONS**

Robert Brown suggests these 8 points for preparing for writing; they are equally valid for business and academic oral presentations:

Author: Robert Brown <robbrown@mail.ipswich.gil.com.au>

**Brown’s First 7 points, adapted for presentations:** Answer these questions and you are well on the way to sorting out your presentation:

1. The working title of your presentation
2. Authors
3. Anticipated (audience/s)
4. *Name 4-6 potential readers, give their names and why they would be interested in this presentation.*
5. What is the central question your presentation will pose? (approx 30 words)
6. What is the answer it will provide? (approx 30 words)

If your readers had only one sentence to summarise your article, what should it be? (Approx 25 words)

***Focus on the outcomes from the work not the inputs.***

1. Why are you making this presentation? (approx 70 words)

a. Briefly outline the problem you are tackling and why it is important.

b. What did you do? (Approx 70 words)

c. Briefly outline the methods you used to gather evidence.

d. What happened? (Approx 100 words)

e. Briefly outline the key results. Focus on outcomes.

f. What can you add to theory/knowledge/practice? (Approx 70 words)

What will your presentation contribute? Think about how your results and conclusions will change how people see the world.

g. What can you add to practice? (Approx 70 words)

Superior research also has practical consequences. What are the consequences of your work? Think about how your results and conclusions might change what people do.

1. What remains unresolved? (no word limit)

The following is more for your own benefit, but will provide some guidance for your audience and some of it may be useful in your discussion.

The speaker needs to keep in mind that:

* At best, only 70% of spoken words is actually received and understood. Complete understanding can come through repetition and redundancy in speech.
* Usually people perceive problems from their perspectives.
* Convey ideas so that they are interpreted with the least expenditure of energy.

The amount of variability in the insight obtained by listening to technical presentations of the same material by different speakers is truly amazing. Given that, the listener's ability is the same in both cases, the natural question is then, what structural features of the presentation make for a delightful lecture in one case and a disaster in another?

It is perhaps tempting to waive these differences away by saying that this is all an art, and be done with it. However, recent developments in multi-media technology force us to look into these matters more closely and formally. Armed with an understanding of the fine structure of presentations, one should be able develop tools based on the new technologies so that even those not endowed with a liberal dose of the required artistic talent can make presentations of reasonable quality.

For long live presentations, consider showing something visual every now and then, that says something about you on a personal note or invites short conversation off the topic. This will break up the information and give you an opportunity to add some of your personality to your presentation.

Remember that people prefer to receive information in different ways. Some prefer visuals. Some are auditory learners. Some pick up more from nonverbal facial and physical clues. The best presentations use a combination of visual, verbal, musical, and facial/physical clues.

|  |
| --- |
| *Important:*  *HOWEVER,* Bartsch and Cobern (2003) compared the effectiveness of overheads, basic PPT (text only), and expanded PPT (with graphics and sounds) and also found (at the end of the semester) that students perceived that they learned more via PPT lectures than those without. Interestingly, in Bartsch and Cobern’s study, students scored significantly better in the basic-PPT condition on content recall and scored 10% worse in the expanded- PPT condition. These latter findings are buttressed by other reports of a detrimental effect when instructors use unnecessary embellishments in their PPT presentations (e.g., irrelevant pictures and sounds; Blokzijl & Naeff, 2004; Mayer, 1997; Voss, 2004). Irrelevant effects are distracting and have been found to overload students’ cognitive processing capabilities (Mayer, 1997).   * Bartsch, R. A., & Cobern, K. M. (2003). Effectiveness of PowerPoint presentations in lectures. *Computers & Education*, *41:* 77-86. * Blokzijl, W. & Naeff, R. (2004). The instructor as stagehand. *Business Communication Quarterly*, *67:* 70-77. * Mayer, R. E. (1997). Multimedia learning: Are we asking the right questions? *Educational Psychologist*, *32:* 1-19. * Voss, D. (2004). PowerPoint in the classroom: Is it really necessary? *Cell Biology Education*, *3:* 155-161. |

**Adjusting Your Presentation Style To Achieve Maximum Impact Across Cultures**

Trompenaars & Hamden-Turner (1998: 76) note that a major cross-cultural communication problem arises from tone of voice. The Figure 6.3 from the book, below, shows som typical patterns of voice volume variation patterns for Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and East Asian languages. We see that the East Asian societies tend to have a mono-tonal delivery, called a monotonous style. In European and American societies, meanings of *monotonous* are , 1. dull and tedious, especially because of repetition (repetition of the same tone of voice), and 2. unvarying in pitch or cadence. While in Asian cultures low monotonous speech may inicate being self-controlled and showing respect, in other societies it is viewed as poor public speaking technique. As an example of the problem Trompenaars & Hamden-Turner relate an anecdote concerning a British manager posted to Nigeria. He found it was very effective to raise his voice for important issues; his Nigerian subordinates saw this unexpected exposion of speech by a normally self-controlled manager as a sign of extra concern. He was later posted to Malaysia; shouting there leads to loss of face; his colleagues there did not take him seriously; he did not recognise the problem and adapt and it was necessary to transfer him to another post.

In Latin societies animated speech idicates that the spaker has his or her heart in the matter and believes what she is saying, and that it is imporant to say. If you speak in a monotone in a Lating society, you may be dismissed as not believing in what you are saying.

As the British manager was transferred for failing to adapt his communicaiton style, you as a speaker need to adapt your presentation style to your audience, particularly as some or all of your audience is assessing your presentation and assigning a grade to it.

Note from lecturer: I grew up and received much of my education in North America; I have been admonished by parents, teachers, and friends since I made my first presentation, “Don’t speak in a monotone.” Even though I am experienced working and teaching in many cultures, I still have an ethnocentric prejudice against speakers who speak in a monotone.

**The Following is adapted from material by www.dialogin.com member**

**Richard Cook**

[**richardcook@global-excellence.com**](mailto:richardcook@global-excellence.com)

Giving a presentation is a basic business skill often learnt early on in a person's business life. This subject deserves a closer look from a cross-cultural perspective.

How we present, with or without PowerPoint assistance, is culturally defined. Let me give you an example.

Some time ago, an American academic was invited to a Swedish University to address faculty and guests on techniques for transferring educational technology to developing nations. The presenter structured the presentation in the classic U.S. style: first, you tell them what you're going to tell them, then you tell them, then you tell them what you've just told them.

To add some spice and to provide encouragement for the question and answer period after the presentation, the presenter planned to make several provocative statements for which he refrained from providing proper foundation in the body of his address. The talk proceeded according to plan, with one exception.

The audience did not ask any questions during the time the presenter had allotted for audience participation. As an experienced speaker, he tried many ways to get the audience to make a comment or ask a question, but nothing he did drew a verbal response.

Upon attending other sessions where foreigners were the featured presenters he found the same silence occurring during the question and answer period. The frustration for some of the speakers was so great that they became angered at the total lack of audience response and berated them for not "getting involved".

What happened? The presenter assumed that a presentation is the same all over the world. In other words, he assumed that the U.S. style would work regardless of the culture of the audience.

Why did it not work with the Swedes? For Swedes, to ask questions or make comments at the end of a presentation may be extremely impolite. Such behaviour would imply that the speaker had not been clear in the presentation.

How would a Swede organise a presentation? They might present their material and then end by asking a question with a twist. This question is meant to suggest a possible application of the speaker's main idea or argument. A well-crafted question at the end of a presentation is very much appreciated by a Swedish audience because it leaves the audience something to think about. So in fact, there may be no question and answer period at all. If anyone is interested, it is always possible to email or approach the speaker later in order to discuss his or her ideas further.

|  |
| --- |
| *Lecturer’s note: I find this desire for one-on-one interaction rather than public discussion to be “hoarding information” to gain advantage; if you have a question, so may several others; overcome your ethnocentric biases that hinder learning and development of knowledge for yourself and others.*  *--RFL* |

There are then, clearly major differences in the approach, style, and execution of a presentation across different cultures. Some of the variables that are worth considering are: Do we have a Q & A session at the end? Can we use a rhetorical style? Do I need to know all the references to the data that I mention? Should I attempt to use 'humour' in some form or other to break the ice at the beginning or to close the presentation? Is it acceptable to use cartoon style graphics to illustrate my slides or will this be seen as being inappropriate by my audience? There are many more questions like these.

As an example, great differences can be seen between the northern and the southern countries of Europe. Compared in terms of their core presentation styles, according to Marie-Therese Claes, they look something like this (based on research by Marie-Therese Claes):

Northern European style is characterised by: a pragmatic attitude; inductive reasoning, based on facts and figures; monochronic organisation; respect for time and sequential tasks; explicit communication: importance of verbal language and conciseness of messages; orientation 'to do'; weakly hierarchical: strategic leadership; specialization and achievement-oriented status.

Southern European style is characterised by: an ideological attitude; deductive reasoning; concepts come first; polychronic organisation; flexible time and simultaneous tasks; implicit communication: relative importance of the unsaid and of non-verbal language; orientation 'to be'; strongly hierarchical: power orientation; bureaucratization; and ascription-oriented status

An Anglo-Saxon presentation: The Anglo-Saxon presentation aims at 'putting across information' and is consequently more 'static', whereas a Latin presentation aims at 'convincing' and is thus more 'mobile'. For this reason, an Anglo Saxon presentation is audience-orientated, stressing the structure and the facts, without the speaker getting involved personally; this is a 'matter of fact' presentation.

A Latin Europe presentation: However, the Latin presentation is speaker-orientated, with intuition playing a role, and the speaker becoming involved and possibly even passionate. This speaker wants to convince and his loose structure will follow the mood and the response of the audience. The mode of reasoning of the Latin presentation is agreement-centred, intuitive, and aiming at harmony. The Anglo Saxon mode of reasoning is more direct and confrontation centred; it wants to be rational and aims at practical empiricism.

All these are of course, general tendencies, and should be considered as such. Very often we are, in fact, dealing with mixed characteristics but clearly then, this has implications for all business people working across European cultural boundaries.

For those delivering sales presentations, monthly reports, delivering training programmes, speaking at conferences - in short, in almost any situation where information is conveyed to a live audience via the spoken word, with or without slides, this is important information to consider.

Here is a 3-step process to adjust your presentation style across Europe or other multicultural environments. Ask yourself the following questions when preparing to deliver presentations to multicultural audiences:

1. What are the cultural values, needs, and constraints on your audience?

With groups that are predominantly using an Anglo-Saxon model in terms of norms and expectations a more pragmatic, fact-driven and briefer presentation may be desirable. If the audience is complex in its cultural mix then a more 'mixed' style may be the answer.

2. What is the lingua franca of the group?

How many of the group are native speakers of the language you are going to use as the lingua franca? Are you a native speaker of that language or are you using it as a second language? What issues may arise concerning misunderstandings, confusion, or variable language levels in the group that need to be noted?

3. What will work, what won't work?

You need to ask yourself what types of arguments and evidence (one/two sided? emphasis on problem solving? argument to recommendation or vice-versa?) will gain the most favourable reaction from the audience. Conversely, what types of arguments and evidence will gain an unfavourable reaction? Then plan your remarks accordingly.

Finally, remember that although the US Anglo-Saxon model is predominant and the one commonly adopted by global MNC organisations, to have the edge in a competitive business world, it is worth adapting and adjusting your style to fit the expectations of the audience in order to get your message across with the most impact.

To get in touch with the author, Richard Cook, email him on:

[richardcook@global-excellence.com](mailto:richardcook@global-excellence.com)

# VISUAL AIDS – COLOURS

Remember, if you develop your presentation on a computer screen, you need to test it at the site of the presentation if possible. What seems bright and clear (particularly concerning text & background colour) from 40 to 50cm in front of a monitor screen on a computer may be nearly invisible in a brightly sunlit room. The level and source of lighting in a room will affect the perceived brightness and colour contrasts in a projected presentation. Sunlight through uncovered windows can “wash out” displays from overhead and screen projectors.

See, e.g.: <http://www.colormatters.com/optics.html>

The human eye can see 7,000,000 colours. Certain colours and colour relationships can be eye irritants, cause headaches, and wreak havoc with human vision. Other colours and colour combinations are soothing. Consequently, the appropriate use of colour can maximize productivity, minimize visual fatigue, and relax the whole body.

Which colour is the worst offender? Yellow, pure bright lemon yellow is the most fatiguing colour. Why? The answer comes from the physics of light and optics. More light is reflected by bright colours, resulting in excessive stimulation of the eyes. Therefore, yellow is an eye irritant. Babies cry more in yellow rooms, husbands and wives fight more in yellow kitchens, and opera singers throw more tantrums in yellow dressing rooms. Be careful how you use it. In practical application, do not paint the walls of a critical task environment yellow. Also, do not use yellow paper writing pads (however, it will give you a jolt and temporarily wake your brain up), **and do not use bright yellow as a background on your PowerPoint slides.**

**On the other hand, since yellow is the most visible colour of all the colours, it is the first colour that the human eye notices. The most easily readable overheads are black background with yellow text (however, the lighting in the room can AFFECT the visibility of colours):**

**Gold, Yellow, and Yellow-Orange:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goldenrod Text** | **Shades of Gold & Yellow** | **Shades of Gold & Yellow** | **Shades of Gold & Yellow** | **Shades of Gold & Yellow** | And White |

Yellow can also be used to attract attention, such as a yellow background with black text, **briefly displayed**. Notice the difference between a yellow of the purest intensity and a softer tint. In addition, the size of the area that any colour occupies determines the colour effect. For best results, use softer tints of the hue. A little bit of colour goes a long ways.

These displays should give you an idea of visibility of the colour for fonts on black and white backgrounds. Remember, if the lights in the room are on (as they usually are), low contrast background/font combinations become almost impossible to see.

|  |
| --- |
| White **Blue Primary Colour**  **Blue-Violet 75% / 25% mix of Blue and Red**  **Violet 50%/50% mix of Blue and Red**  **Red-Violet 25% / 75% mix of Blue and Red**  **Red Primary Colour**  **Red-Orange 75% / 25% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Orange 50%/50% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Yellow-Orange 25% / 75% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Yellow Primary Colour**  **Yellow-Green 75% / 25% mix of Yellow and Blue**  **Green 50%/50% mix Yellow and Blue**  **Blue-Green 25% / 75% mix of Yellow and Blue** |

On white:

|  |
| --- |
| **Black**  **Blue Primary**  **Blue-Violet 75% / 25% mix of Blue and Red**  **Violet 50%/50% mix of Blue and Red**  **Red-Violet 25% / 75% mix of Blue and Red**  **Red Primary**  **Red-Orange 75% / 25% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Orange 50%/50% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Yellow-Orange 25% / 75% mix of Red and Yellow**  **Yellow Primary**  **Yellow-Green 75% / 25% mix of Yellow and Blue**  **Green 50%/50% mix Yellow and Blue**  **Blue-Green 25% / 75% mix of Yellow and Blue** |

# Motion

Since inanimate objects don’t move, and animate objects do, the importance of perceiving and recognizing motion has led to strong evolutionary development of the ability of humans to see and have their vision attracted to motion. **If motion is not critical to your PPT slide, don’t use it.** I recently was subjected to a presentation where all the bullets were ornate and had rotary motion. I spent most of the presentation thinking: “Why are the bullets rotating?” and, “This student must have recently discovered the PRESET ANIMATION button on the PPT toolbar.” Then the student started using the TYPEWRITER option in PRESET ANIMATION, where the letters are displayed one at a time, and the overheads taking aeons to finally complete the display. Don’t do that.

Use motion only when it adds to your presentation.

**Using Audio and Video in Presentations**

Pre-prepared audio and video content can be interesting and effective in a presentation. To make it interesting and effective carefully select your AV content to be closely related to your presentation content. **Don’t leave your audience wondering, “Why did he/she/they show that?”**

**Following content cut and pasted from:**

<http://www.thinkoutsidetheslide.com/articles/using_audio_and_video_slides.htm> by Dave Paradi, MBA, co-author of "Guide to PowerPoint"

More and more presenters want to add audio and video segments to their presentation slides to increase the impact that their message has – and even if you aren’t wondering how to do this, you probably want to know if it is worth it. Any item on a presentation slide should be there for one purpose only – to increase the impact of the message being delivered. Once you have decided that an audio or video segment will add to your message (and you aren’t adding it just because you like it), here are some ideas to consider.

**Preparing Quality Audio Segments**

If people can’t understand what is being said on an audio segment, then there is no point in using it. The quality of an audio segment is magnified – for better or for worse – when it is amplified through a sound system. A good quality audio segment sounds clear and crisp, and a poor quality audio segment sounds even worse and more distorted when it is amplified. One of the biggest factors that determine the quality of the audio segment is the sample rate of the recording. The sample rate refers to the number of times that the audio signal is sampled as it is recorded into digital form. The higher the sampling rate, the better the quality of the sound. CD quality sound has a sampling rate of 44,100 while the telephone uses a sample rate of 8000 (measured in Hertz). You want to get as high a sample rate as possible on the original recording because increasing sample rate through conversion is very difficult to do. Another factor in quality is whether the recording is in stereo (both channels recorded) or mono (only one channel recorded). A stereo recording has better sound because it is closer to sounds in the real world where we hear in both ears. A higher quality sound recording will create a larger file on your recording device and a larger audio file on your computer, so this may be a trade-off you need to keep in mind if you are distributing the file on a format such as diskette or CD. If you are recording the audio segment yourself, keep these factors in mind when selecting the sound quality and consult an audio recording professional if you need further assistance.

**Audio File formats**

Once you have the audio file recorded, you need to store it. If you are going to store it on your computer, you need to choose which audio format to use. The most popular file formats are WAV (a file format created by Microsoft), MP3 (a compressed format used mostly on computers), RA or RAM (the RealAudio format created by Progressive Networks) and AIFF (Audio Interchange File Format, used primarily on Macintosh computers). Each file format has its reported advantages, but each seems to satisfy most users needs if the quality of the recording is sufficiently high. You can also choose to store your audio file on tape or CD format, in which case you will probably play the audio from a piece of equipment other than your computer. Today, the best choice is to store your audio in a digital format so that the quality is maintained over time, the older analog format (used on regular audio tapes) deteriorates as it is played over time.

**Playing Audio in the Presentation**

Once you have chosen the file format, you will need to play the file during the presentation. The most direct way is to incorporate the file into the presentation file and have the presentation software play the file either automatically or at a specified time. To insert the file into the presentation software package, it must be compatible with the formats supported by your software. If your file is not compatible, or you don’t want to insert it into your presentation file, you will use a sound system to play your file from usually a tape or CD format. This requires coordination of the presentation equipment and the sound system, but the audio equipment to play a tape or CD is available almost everywhere. Either way you choose to play the audio, test the quality at a volume level that will be used for the actual presentation. What sounds fine through headphones may sound very different when amplified to fill a large room.

**Preparing Quality Video Segments**

The quality of the video file is primarily dependant on the resolution that you use to record the video. Changing resolutions on video files is far more difficult than changing sample rates in audio files, so you want to record at the resolution that you need for your presentation. If possible, record the video using a digital video recorder because the quality does not deteriorate as the tape is played to edit or play back. Most video is not recorded directly to a computer, so the original quality of the video segment is usually quite good if the lighting and camera work has been good. The quality issue comes when the video segment is converted to a compatible digitized version for the computer. You will need the proper equipment to do this, the basics being a video converter board and the correct cables to connect the video source to the video converter board. Video editing also requires a powerful computer, so it is not something everyone wants to take on. In many cases, it is best to get a professional involved to convert your video to a digital format for your computer. Many presenters choose to keep their video segments on a videotape format because of the challenges involved in using digitized video.

**Video File Formats**

Digitized video can be stored in a number of different formats, the most popular being QuickTime (from Apple computer), RealVideo (from Progressive Networks), Windows Media Format (WMF files from Microsoft), AVI (Audio Video Interleaved format) and MPEG (Moving Picture Experts Group compressed format). The quality and size of the video file will be determined by the resolution you select when converting the video to a digital format. The higher the resolution, the better the quality of the video and the larger the file size. You will want to select the resolution based on the ability to show a large enough picture on the screen that people can clearly see it from the back of the room.

**Playing Video in the Presentation**

If you have recorded your video onto videotape, playing the video during your presentation is a matter of switching the display from your computer to a video machine and playing the video segment. It does require you to carry or arrange for the video equipment, but most standard video equipment is widely available. Practice the transition between the two input sources so it is seamless to the audience. If you have digitized your video, you can insert it into your presentation file and have it automatically play or play when you specify. Make sure that the size of the video is large enough so people at the back of the room can clearly see the video – test this so you know for sure. With either method of playing the video, you will need to send the audio part of the video segment to the sound system so that people can hear the audio part as well as see the video part. As with an audio segment, test the volume of the audio part of the video segment to make sure everyone will be able to hear it clearly.

**Obtaining Permission to Use Audio or Video Segments**

If you or your organization did not create or do not own the audio or video segment, you must have permission to use the segment from whoever does own it. For audio segments, you will likely have to contact the person who is speaking, the publisher of the product or for music, an association that has permission to grant rights to the work. For video segments, you will likely have to contact the producers of the video to discuss fees for usage. In many cases, you need to state how you will use the segment and depending on the type of use and number of times you plan to use it, the fees will vary. If you do not obtain permission, you run the risk of legal action that will ruin your reputation. It is important to be clear about your obligations when licensing audio or video segments and it is usually a good idea to obtain legal advice on this subject.

Audio and video segments can add impact to your presentation if they are high quality segments and used properly.

Did you find this article helpful? If so, [click here](http://www.thinkoutsidetheslide.com/resources.htm) to check out some great learning tools to help even more!

© MMIII Dave Paradi

# Presenting to a Camera

The key is to remain natural and relaxed. Speak in a normal conversational tone of voice.

There is a tendency to speed up presentation in a televised presentation. Concentrate, and remember that pauses, rhetorical questions, small jokes as appropriate in the televised environment as in a conventional classroom or in-person meeting.

It has been said that ninety percent of communication happens in the face and eyes. To establish eye contact with remote participants, you must look into the camera. By "talking to the camera" you treat the distant participant as if they were there.

**Try these techniques:**

Try to vary vocal pitch, volume, and flow of delivery. As in a conventional classroom, such techniques can eliminate monotony and can be very effective in emphasizing important information.

Envision the camera as one of the audience sitting in front of you.

If you are being televised and also have a live audience, as you scan the live audience during your presentation, an occasional glance at the camera will emphasize your acknowledgment of the distance members.

Look at the camera when giving directions. Eye contact is important in encouraging involvement.

Don't forget to talk to your on-site audience as well. Vary your focus from the camera to the live audience so that no one is left out.

# TIPS

Know Your **PAL**. Before preparing any presentation for one person or thousands, know your **Purpose** (inform, persuade, entertain), know your **Audience** (demographics, attitudes, hot buttons), and know your **Logistics** (time allotment, number of people in the audience, time of day for presentation, room arrangements).

Pay attention to timing. A good strategy for a straight presentation is to plan, prepare, and practice for 75% of the allotted time. If you end early, no one complains. Ending late is poor planning. If you expect audience involvement, plan on 50% of the time for the presentation and 25% for interactive facilitated sessions.

Preparation: All presentation material is not created equal. When preparing your speech, consider the must know, should know, and could know. Limit your material based on time or audience interest.

Hitting the emotional buttons will create more impact and action than pure data. Include stories, analogies, and metaphors to reinforce the key points.

Create user-friendly notes. As Winston Churchill said when he was asked why he carried notes but seldom used them, "I carry fire insurance, but I don’t expect my house to burn down." Use bulleted points instead of sentences. Make the type easy to read (use a broad felt tip pen for flip charts, or ***minimum*** 18 point type, boldface, if typed). For flipcharts, only use the top 2/3 of the page to avoid looking down. Use highlight pens or different colours to indicate the must/should/could know information.

Practice aloud saying it differently each time you say it. Peter Drucker says, "Spontaneity is an infinite number of rehearsed possibilities." Doesn’t Tiger Woods still practice golf?

Stage fright is a negative term for excitement. No winning coach tells the team to be calm. Channel the adrenaline into enthusiasm. You can control the physical symptoms by breathing from the diaphragm, positive visualization, talking to yourself, and by being prepared and practiced.

Deliver with passion; it’s amazing how contagious enthusiasm is. If your voice is expressive and your gestures animated you will appear to be confident and passionate.

The question and answer part of the presentation may be more important than the actual presentation. Think ahead to try to imagine all possible questions that might be asked — particularly the ones that might throw you. **IMPORTANT:** Remember to paraphrase the questions for all the audience before answering them, and take into account the motivation of the questioner. When answering the questions, look at all audience members — they may have had the same question. Avoid complementing some questions and not others. Treat all questions and questioners with courtesy and respect.

Remember — speaking is an audience-centred sport. Avoid speaking out of ego, appearing too cocky or unprepared. As long as you stay focused on the audience — in preparation, delivery and during the Question and Answer — you should be successful as a presenter.

TIPS:

**STEP ONE:**

Be prepared: It is very important that you are well prepared before you give a presentation. Knowing what you are going to say and how you will deliver the presentation, is essential.

Write down what you want to say (like a script): it’s best not to read straight from a script so break it down and write short paragraphs on small cards (these are called prompt cards)

Don't try to memorise big chunks. There's nothing worse than forgetting your lines! Have notes available.

If you are using slides these are usually good for prompting your memory

How you deliver a presentation depends on your own preference, here is a list of options:

1. Slides for use over an overhead projector
2. Using a computer package interactively which is projected onto a screen (PowerPoint is generally used for this)
3. Prompt cards with no visual aid
4. From memory with no visual aid (not recommended)

* It is not necessary to use any of the above; you can, if you like, just do it off the top of your head. But be warned the audience need to be kept amused, if they are just looking at your pretty face they might get bored!
* So, in summary, know what you are going to say and choose an appropriate presentation technique.

**STEP TWO:**

* Format: The way you deliver the information must be done in such a way that people will understand it. This step concentrates on the format of the presentation:
* First, introduce yourself! Then give an introduction (tell the audience what you are going to talk about) next talk about what you want to say once you've talked about your subject you should conclude
* You should say what you are going to say, say it and then say what you've said
* This makes it a structured talk and therefore your discussion will be clear to the audience listening.

**STEP THREE:**

Using slides: If you aren't using PowerPoint or an overhead projector then ignore this part.

If you use slides, (either on PowerPoint or overhead projector) you will need to do the following:

1. Use bullet points and/or short sentences instead of long paragraphs
2. Don’t put too much information on one slide (but not too little either)
3. Make sure writing is large enough for back seat audiences to see
4. Conversely, don't include anything too small
5. Don’t get your hard copy slides mixed up - have them in the order you want to present them

**STEP FOUR:**

* Presentation: The way you actually give the presentation is the most important factor. Someone who doesn't use visual aids has nothing to hand out to the audience and just stands at the front talking, may give a better talk than someone who has got lots of visual aids.
* It depends on how you deliver the talk - here are some do's and don’ts:

**DON'T**

- Mumble (after all that preparation and no one can understand you)

- Fidget (the audience won't concentrate on your talk if you sway from side to side)

- Look at one person (it will distract the rest of the audience)

- Make silly jokes (the audience might not laugh)

# DO

- Speak clearly

- Keep still

- Look around the room

- Make silly jokes (the audience might laugh; basically use your discretion)

The best advice is that if you mess up - DON'T PANIC, no one knows what you are going to say, so you can sometimes bluff!

Finally, remember everyone is going to be in the same boat, so however you feel; everyone else will be feeling it too and will be on your side.

## DESIGNING SLIDES FOR A PRESENTATION

* The “OPTIONS” selection on the toolbar allows you to specify rules for your slides. The default rules work fine, but you may have to turn them on.
* Open up a new file in PowerPoint and choose a blank slide presentation
* For each slide you want to show, you will need to open a new slide
* To open a new slide go to INSERT on the tool bar and then select NEW SLIDE.
* On each slide you can type in the text you wish to present. Bullet points are usually used to present pieces of information (there is an icon on the tool bar that will automatically put these in for you). You can design your slide's background and colour:
* On the tool bar go to FORMAT then SLIDE COLOUR SCHEME or CUSTOM BACKGROUND
* A window will appear and you can choose what sort of background and colours you would like to use
* You can also insert pictures from your own library of graphics or from 'Clip Art':
* On the tool bar go to Insert then Clip Art.
* A window will appear and you can choose what sort of picture you would like to use
* However, remember that if you are using an overhead projector, using too many colours and pictures might not look very clear to the audience.
* If you want to view your slides:

Select View from the tool bar

Select Slide Sorter to see all of your slides

- In this mode you can copy, delete, and move slides around

- If you double click on any slide it will take you back to it

Select Slide Show to see a full page of each slide

- Click your left mouse button or page down to view the next slide

Press Esc on your keyboard to exit

* You can copy any text and images onto the slides by selecting the object and using cut and paste.
* **Printing:** If you are using an overhead projector for your presentation, then you will need to print the slides off. To do this go to the File option on the tool bar, go down to Print, and press OK. Do make sure that you have checked your slides BEFORE you print. If you don't want to use PowerPoint for your presentation you will need to print your slides onto paper and copy them onto overhead transparencies or use directly printable overhead foils. If you are not going to display overheads in colour, develop the presentation in black and white.
* Important Note: For the purposes of using the overhead projector, it is important to note that if you don't leave a border of free space around the slide, then you may find some of your wording or imagery will be left out of the projection.

## DELIVERING A PRESENTATION VIA POWERPOINT

Using PowerPoint via a computer projector:

# Building Slides

* For each slide you have you can 'build' a presentation.
* This can be done by manipulating the text or pictures within each slide and choosing how you want each slide to appear next.
* **Stage One**
  + Select the object, picture, text or word you would like to build
  + From the menu bar choose Tools then Animation Settings
  + A new window will appear:
* Ensure that in the 'Build Options' you choose either All at Once or By 1st Level Paragraphs (this will enable you to build); you may choose any other effect you wish and press OK

# Stage Two

* Select the object, picture, text or word you would like to build from the menu bar choose Tools then Slide Transition a new window will appear; you may choose any effect you wish and press OK.

# Delivering your presentation

To deliver your presentation, it is the same as viewing the slide show:

* Open the file that holds your slides
* Select View and then Slide Show
* Your presentation is ready to start. By clicking on the LEFT mouse button each build that you created will be presented. You repeat this action until all your slides have been shown.

**PowerPoint Presentation Evaluation**

| **Possible**  **Points** | **3=Good** | **2** | **1=Poor** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mechanics** | **Grammar, spelling, punctuation are correct. No errors.** | **Includes 1 - 4 grammatical errors, misspellings, punctuation errors, etc.** | **Includes more than 4 grammatical errors, misspellings, punctuation errors, etc.** |
| **Capitalization** | **Capitalization guidelines are followed.** | **Includes 1 - 4 capitalization errors.** | **Includes more than 4 capitalization errors.** |
| **Content** | **Covers content completely and in depth.** | **Includes most of the essential information.** | **Includes some of the essential information.** |
| **Technical Requirements** | **Includes at least 4 graphics, 8 or more animations, and slide transitions on all slides. Graphics were resized appropriately. Animation effects enhanced the flow of the presentation and were present on titles, text, or graphics.** | **Includes 3 graphics, 6 or 7 animations, and several slide transitions. Most of the graphics were resized appropriately. Most of the animation effects enhanced the flow of the presentation and were present on some of the titles, text, or graphics.** | **Includes less than 3 graphics, 5 or fewer animations, and no slide transitions. Graphics were resized appropriately. Animations were not applied.** |
| **Text Summarization** | **All slides contain only 1 concept and phrases are summarized using parallel structure.** | **Includes 1 - 3 slides that contain more than 1 concept or phrases that are not summarized using parallel structure.** | **Includes more than 4 slides that contain more than 1 concept or phrases that are not summarized using parallel structure.** |
| **Content Per Slide** | **Each slide contains between 5 - 7 words per line and between 5 - 7 lines.** | **Includes 1 - 3 slides that contain more than 8 words per line, and more than 8 lines.** | **Includes more than 4 slides that contain more than 8 words per line and more than 8 lines.** |
| **Oral Presentation Skills** | **Communicates ideas with enthusiasm, proper voice projection, appropriate language, and clear delivery.** | **Communicates ideas with proper voice projection, adequate preparation, and some enthusiasm.** | **Some difficulty communicating ideas, due to voice projection, lack of preparation, or incomplete work.** |

# Presentation Techniques IN Business

The art of speaking and delivering presentations is a skill that is only second to the knowledge and product you have to sell to the client.

**Introduction**

As a consultant you will be called on to talk in every possible situation. After all, talking is primarily what you are paid for, unless you are particularly technical like a programmer. During the selling phase of a project or assignment you are usually given more time to prepare a formal proposal or demonstration. Here you have the ability to prepare your presentation and make sure you are ready to communicate clearly. However, within the depths of a project you will be called on more and more to speak spontaneously on topics within and outside of your skill area. One day the inventory controller from down the hall may ask informally for some information, which you might deliver while sitting on the edge of her desk. The next day you may be presenting a business case to a large group of hostile managers and executives via videoconference. Every situation requires effective and professional communication of the information that you sell. Knowing your topic may make you a great source of information, but so is a book. Until you can communicate that information in a way that serves your client and achieves your objective, you run the risk of being unemployed.

**Assess your situation.**

When called upon to make a presentation or lead a meeting, assess the situation you will find yourself in. Decide up front what the purpose of the presentation is. Are you trying to convince your client to adopt a solution of yours or are you merely communicating the weekly status of the project. Every situation requires a different communication method. Broadly speaking, you can divide your verbal communication into two categories, one that is informative, and one that is persuasive.

An Informative presentation or meeting is the process through which the client learns from you as you communicate your knowledge. One of the most important things to realize, in order to make informative communication effective, is that everyone learns via different means. As examples, people may learn through listening, seeing visuals of words and numbers, studying handouts, asking questions, through repetition and re-writing their own notes. So, if you have a small select group to talk to it would be best to ask what their preferred learning method is. You will find that most people will have a strong opinion on this and request that you conduct your meeting one way or the other. Therefore, if the request is to work through examples rather than discuss the topic verbally, then that should be your approach for the day.

In the situation where you have a large audience where you are sure to have every possible learning preference, the best approach is to try to cater for <cater to> as many of these preferences as possible. By using a combination of visuals, handouts, discussions and working sessions, you will increase your chances of communicating effectively to the entire room.

Persuasive speech is where you are trying to win the hearts and minds of the audience and have them see your way of thinking and buy into it. To do this effectively, try this strategy. Firstly, start by reducing the tension and setting everyone’s mind at rest that there is not going to be a fight. If the client or audience thinks that you are going to bully them into your way of thinking, they will retreat into their shell or even worse pull out their heavy artillery and chase you away. Start your presentation with a sense of, “your position is fine and mine is fine too, just different". Make sure that you both agree on the basic goal. Let us say you are trying to convince them that one of their processes is out of date and needs reengineering. Try to get them to agree that their aim is to be as efficient and cost effective as possible. Then slowly bring in your point of view and turn their own agreement against them by proving that to be efficient, they need to look at your idea. Then watch for subtle signs of agreement like more relaxed body language and slight nodding and appreciation for your idea. Once you feel they are warming to your proposal start pressing for an agreement, a decision, and a close on the topic

# Analyse your audience

Knowing your audience is key to a successful presentation. This is very important when you are doing a one-on-one presentation. Based on Pfeiffer & Co.'s Social Styles Inventory, there are four main personality types. Being able to identify these will help direct the approach you take in these meetings.

Firstly, there is the ***Analytical*** person. She needs facts and figures to understand your position. She also needs time to absorb what you are telling her and time to formulate the questions she wants to ask you. So be prepared to endure spells of silence if you are in a one-on-one as she processes your information.

Then there is the ***Driver*** who is on the run and needs the short version of your presentation. Don’t try to hold her down while you labour through your full presentation. Cut to the chase and give out the highlights, focussing on benefits and costs, or the core information that will interest her.

The ***Expressive*** personality is typically smart and a quick thinker. He has his own good ideas and may even end up convincing you that his idea is better than yours. Either way, be sure to keep him on track with your presentation. He will be inclined to go off on a tangent to allow his ideas to be expressed rather than listen to yours.

Finally, the ***Amiable*** person will sit patiently through your presentation and try to avoid any conflict. She won’t ask questions unless you encourage her. The discussion will be limited and she will leave once you have finished, leaving you with no real input or reaction.

Presenting to senior management needs a little more care than most audiences do. They carry a set of principles with them, says Rae Cook, in his essay entitled, "To woo senior management, respect their principles." He lays out these rules to help avoid violating their principles.

1. Respect their deadlines and present with a sense of urgency. They are under more time pressure than most and will appreciate you understanding that and presenting appropriately.
2. Present the core information to them and avoid the nice to haves. They are hardened to the sales pitch and are especially concerned about getting the job done. You need to tell them what they need to know in order to get the job done.
3. Do your homework and know their business. You won’t be indulged if you spend more time asking them questions about their company than giving them information.
4. The only way executives will buy into what you are telling them is if you focus on how they can get more for less. The economics are of interest to them. They want the big picture with the short answer to solving their problems and make their business more profitable.
5. Show them that you understand what you are talking about. Place yourself as a counterpart rather than just another consultant trying to get buy in. If they believe you know your stuff, they will respect you for that and accept your information with ease.
6. Do the dirty work for them. Do all the analysis up front and give them the summary data to base a decision on. Remember they don’t gather data; they study results and make decisions. It is your job to get that data for them to study.

# Logistics and room set-up

Just as a picture frame makes the picture, so does the room make the presentation. Don’t underestimate the impact the correct room configuration and atmosphere can have on your presentation. Even though the room probably belongs to your client, this is your home away from home and you should adapt it to suit your needs. It is your responsibility to make sure the room and its equipment are exactly as you want it.

**Don’t rely on the in-house technical support to test your audiovisual equipment or even overhead machine. You need to make sure you have tested everything yourself. Blaming the in-house technical department for any failure during your meeting is not going to buy you any support from the client.**

Some tips for getting the best out of you room include making sure you, as the speaker, are well lit. If they can’t see you well enough, all the work you put into your non-verbal expression as hand gestures and facial expressions will be lost. Secondly, make sure that as much of you is visible to most of the audience as possible. A podium may be necessary to raise you up to a visible level when you are talking to larger groups. The more of your body they can see, the easier it will be to communicate with them. So avoid lecterns at all costs because they hide you from the neck down.

Make sure your visuals are projected larger enough for all to see well. **To test this, stand back 8 feet/2.5m from your computer and make sure you can read the text on the screen to test the adequacy of the text size.**

Move seating around to suit the audience size. If the room is designed to accommodate a lot more people than you will have attend, then take some chairs out to try and concentrate your audience a little closer together, and closer to you.

Before you travel half way around the world to sit in the same room as your client for an hour meeting, consider video conferencing. This media is becoming more popular as technology improves and irons out the inherent problem associated with it. Price, speed and compatibility were the main issues surrounding this technology in the past years. The price issue has been resolved when you consider that 10 years ago you would have paid $40,000 for a meeting room set up and now you would pay less than half that, with additional features. The desktop systems have dropped from around $5000 to under $1000 in less than 5 years as well. SKYPE is not good, but it is adequate for non-critical presentations.

Test your systems, finding out that yours won’t talk to your clients system can lose you the contract.

Speed is the final obstacle to overcome, and with the growth of the Internet, this may become a non-issue sooner than we think. The standard interface used to be a dial up connection, system to system, via an ISDN phone line. This connection was not routed through your Internet service provider, but rather through your telephone company. Now with the introduction of Internet Protocol (IP) packets via the Internet there seems to be hope for a higher frame per second (fps) video quality.

# If You Are a Consultant: Research your topic

The consulting industry has an unwritten rule that dictates you stay at least one "page" ahead of the client. In the past it was fairly easy not to give that "page" to the client until you had already read it. However, today we have the Internet to blame for making that "page" freely available to your client. In short, don’t presume that you are presenting new information to them. You need to be fully versed in your topic to avoid being upstaged by someone in the room. Project team members are selected from the organization because of their ability to adapt to and absorb new ideas and approaches. Project members are normally smart people who will find a few hours before your presentation to sit in front of the Internet (which they can now do from their desk) and study up on the topic you plan to present. Upstaging a consultant can earn an employee great respect from his managers and peers is done in a tasteful way, so beware of the closet consultant in the room.

# Organize and prepare your presentation

Every piece of literature I found on the topic of speech making and presentations emphasize the need to **prepare and then prepare some more**. If you are well prepared, you will lower the risk of anxiety and stage fright because the fear of failure is alleviated. When preparing your presentation there are a few basics to keep in mind that will help you achieve a comfort level you need to present successfully.

Firstly, write your speech as you would say it, using words from your own vocabulary. Using words that are not yours will make you and your audience feel uncomfortable. **Never memorize your words or read from a script or text. This is sure way to put people to sleep.** You need to know your topic well enough to be able to talk from your heart and focus on the passion you have for the topic, rather than trying to remember your lines.

Don’t try to fool your audience – they will catch you out. If you don’t know the answer to a question, firstly admit it and ask if anyone in the group could offer an answer, if not, promise to find out yourself. If you do promise to follow up, be sure to make a note of the question right then and there. Writing it down makes it seems a lot more plausible that you are genuine in your intent to follow up, even if you never actually get around to it.

Never use the audience as the butt of your joke. This is never appreciated and sure to alienate you from them and force them to group together in an attempt for self-preservation.

Never go over the time limit for your meeting or presentation, unless at the request of the majority of the audience. I say majority because it is easy to get side tracked on a topic that is only of interest to a few vocal members, which causes you to run over time. If this happens be sure to take the topic "off line" after the meeting.

Be aware of copyright infringement when pulling material together for presentations (see the disclaimer at the bottom of p. 1 of this guide). In particular, the Internet has been a focal point for new copyright infringement. Because the material is so easy to download or copy and paste from the web to your desktop, and because it is free and easy to get to, people are being presumptuous about these laws. The U.S.A. Copyright Act of 1976 deems that copyright protection comes into effect when a "work is first fixed in a tangible medium of expression", so any clipart, photo, WAV audio files, or articles posted to a web site, although free to the public to read, is protected under the 1976 Copyright Act. Another misconception is that there needs to be a statement of copyright protection on the work. This is not true; in fact, an email that you may send to a friend is protected under this act. Facts themselves are not protected, but these facts presented with your personal expression are. The U.S. Act protects work for 70 years from the date it was created and only then does it become available to the public.

The New Zealand act has a relatively liberal interpretation for reproduction of copyrighted material done for an educational purpose under the New Zealand Copyright Act 1994 No 143 (as at 07 July 2010). The act is short; I suggest you read it for now and future reference.

Learn to speak the audience's language. Every business has its own set of acronyms and terminology and it will serve you well to pick up this terminology as you go along and use it. The use of their words helps them understand you and helps bring you closer to them. You look less like a consultant from the textbook and more like a seasoned businessperson. Unfortunately many consultants try to impress their clients with their own jargon and the latest buzzwords, but they achieve no more than alienating the audience and not being fully understood. The only exception to this rule is when you are helping to implement or re-engineer a new business process or new software that has it own set of words. You are the interpreter as well as the language teacher. In the early days of the project you need to use the client’s old terminology and as time goes on, start referring to both the old and new word, encouraging them to start using the terminology that will ultimately help them understand the new system. An example of this may be clients referring to a work order and the new terminology is production order, Department versus Cost centre, or Site versus Plant.

Beware of Information overload when presenting informative type presentations. Elliot Essman, an author and public speaker, recommends a ratio of 5% information and 95% presentation. By repeating a few key points and hammering them home, you achieve a lot more than overloading them with information and leaving them with nothing more that confusion. Studies have shown that most people don’t remember many facts after a presentation anyway, so focus on your main message and succeed in communicating that.

# Pre-presentation preparation

If you are set to give a presentation before a group of people you have never met before, be sure to try and meet and talk to as many as possible just before the start of you presentation. This will take your mind off the task at hand and make you feel more comfortable once you begin, knowing part of the audience.

Get to the venue early to allow time to prepare your visual equipment and to familiarize yourself with the venue, podium, and organizers. Do not go over your notes just prior to the presentation. If you need to do this, you have not prepared properly, and this may only unsettle you.

# Deliver your presentation

**Stage Fright**

Tad Simons in his essay entitled, **Scared speechless - Understanding and conquering stage fright**, explains the concept of stage fright. When the body perceives imminent danger it reacts on a very primal level and releases both adrenaline and cortisol to the blood stream. These stimulants move through your body and cause your heart rate to increase and your body temperature to rise. It supplies extra blood to your muscles to aid any extra energy you might need in case of an attack or flee from the threat. It also considers the stomach a soft spot for attack and decreases the blood from that area causing the sensation known as butterflies and perhaps causing nausea.

To get more oxygen to your blood you begin to breathe faster and your mind begins to race. Your primal concern is to figure out a way to fight off this threat or to run from it, and consequently the brain shuts down the portion that governs any rational thought, allowing for instinctive thought to be fully armed. So the common result of stage fright, which is to forget your speech or feel like you can’t remember anything, is a result of the rational thought function being shut down. The heavy breathing and sweating experience by many just before a presentation is a result of the extra blood supply being supplied to your body.

Luckily, though, the threat in the case of standing up in front of people is not real. That is to say, you are never (or at least rarely, depending upon your audience) in any real physical danger. Therefore, with some coaching and counselling it is possible to rid most people of this reaction to the perceived threat.

**Dress**

The way you present yourself to your audience is very important too. Consider how you dress. You should dress appropriately for the situation and circumstances. Find out prior to the meeting how the audience will be dressed and dress similarly. That way you will feel comfortable and they will too. If you are over dressed, you may be perceived as condescending and if you are under dressed, you might not be taken as seriously as you would like.

**Posture, Gestures, Eye Contact, Voice**

Your posture is important too. You need to feel comfortable in order to appear comfortable. Small children, while reciting poems at school, are told to put their hands behind their back and stand still. This rule does not apply to you in presentations. If you audience senses your discomfort, they will feel it too.

Gestures are probably second in importance to the verbal delivery of your presentation. Use hand and body gestures to add effect to your delivery. Not only does it help you to explain and demonstrate certain points, but also it adds a dynamic that will help liven up your meeting.

Be careful of eye contact. This is a dead give away if you are nervous or uncomfortable with your topic. In the same way as signing a contract with someone who can’t look at you in the eye, the participants will distrust you or again feel embarrassed for you as they feel your discomfort.

Use your voice to add emphasis and variety to your talk. Monotone is not recommended in post lunch meetings. Executives tend to slump down in their chairs and nod off.

**Maintaining Control**

Take control of the meeting and make sure you are not left standing up in front of a room full of company employees involved in an in-house debate. It is your meeting and they need to respect that. Besides, they are probably paying for your time and you wouldn’t want to be ripping them off!

Finally, realize you are the expert in the room. They wouldn’t be there if they didn’t feel they could benefit by listening to you. As a consultant you will find that there is an inherent trust in what you say, based purely on you being a consultant. You will be believed very easily, so be careful what you say!

## Tips

# Pre-presentation preparation

* What is your objective?
* Identify the audience.
  + Develop the presentation.

Tell them what you are going to tell them.

* + Tell them.
  + Tell them what you told them
  + Give them something to do.
* Practise, practise, practise.

# Giving the presentation

1. Get the audience’s attention
2. Hold their attention

* Eye contact
* Delivery
* Repetition

***Sure Ways to Kill a Presentation***

* No eye contact with audience.
* Tell them the facts -- ALL the facts.
* No excitement -- Keep it boring -- Do not use any body language.
* Monotone voice and no smile.
* Ask for action

**Tasks**

1. Pre-presentation

Rehearsal

Relaxation techniques

Visualize success

Arrive early

Prepare and set out handouts

2. Keep Audience’s Interest

Visuals

Humour and stories

Handouts

Fill-in

Refer to

Questions

Ask audience

Encourage from audience

3. Improve presentation

Feedback sheets. Ask:

What did I do well?

What can I improve?

Self-evaluation

Video presentation

Make notes

**Tips:**

# Objective

Every presentation should have an objective. The speaker main objective is to deliver the message (objective) to the audience. The objectives may vary from one talk to another. To identify the real objective one needs to ask the following question: "If everything goes perfectly, what I intended to achieve?" One also should realize who are the audience and their educational level. The time in most cases is limited. It is of utmost importance to keep within scheduled time some question/answer session. For this detailed planning is required. Different tools could be used in the presentation such as, slides, models, transparencies, audio-visual, and web. Make sure if more than one medium is used, time to shift is accounted for. One easy way to see effectiveness of presentation while in a team is for one to play the role of the speaker and the rest of the team as the audience and possibly play the devil’s advocate.

# Oral Presentation - Obstacles

To sell your ideas to others, you should first be convinced that your ideas will accomplish the task. Oral presentation requires high degree of creative ability. Recall that humans resist changes though they announce that they welcome it. Humans like familiar methods. Changes require additional effort that humans in general resist. Some usual quotes one hears:

* We tried that before
* It is too radical a change
* We have never done that before
* Get back to reality
* We have always done it this way
* I don't like the idea

## Oral Presentation Dos and Don’ts

1. Know your audience thoroughly. Deliver an extempore+prepared talk

2**. Never read from notes, a sheet or directly from an overhead projector**

3. Bring the audience up to speed, in the first few moments

4. Stay within the time allotted

5. Include relevant humorous stories, anecdotes, or joke (Only if you are good at it)

6. Avoid using specialized technical jargon. Explain the terms if you feel the audience may not know.

7. Understand your message clearly. The whole goal is to clearly communicate the message

8. Practice-practice-practice, you may like to memorize introduction and concluding remarks

9. The dry run is a dress rehearsal. Use it to iron out problems in delivery, organization and timing.

10. Avoid mannerisms; speak confidently but not aggressively

11. Maintain eye-to-eye contact with some of the audience and keep shifting that contact to other people through the talk.

12. Never talk to the board or to empty space

13. Present the material in a clever fashion, but not in a sensational fashion. Be genuinely sincere and professional

14. Logical presentation order is much more critical in oral than in written presentation

## Oral Presentation Techniques

1. Visual aids (sketches, graphs, drawings, photos, models, slides, transparency, web) often convey information more efficiently and effectively than only words. Visual aids permit dual sense of hearing and seeing, apart from helping the speaker.

2. Limit slides to not more than one per minute

3. Each slide should contain one idea

4. First Slide should show the title of your talk and names.

5. Second slide should give a brief outline of the talk

6. Last slide should summarize the message you just delivered

7. If you need to show a slide more than once use a second copy

8. Avoid leaving a slide on the screen if you have finished discussion on that topic; you can add an all black slide when you want the audience to focus on you and what you’re saying.

9. Never read directly from the slide. Spoken words should complement the slides. Prepare notes for each slide and use them during practice.

10. Use graphs to explain variations. Clearly label the axis, data, and title. Acknowledge the source.

11. Every graph should have a message (idea). Colour should enhance the communication not distract.

12. Audiences respond to well organized information. That means,

(a) Efficient presentation

(b) All assumptions clearly stated and justified

(c) Source of information and facts are clearly outlined

13. Never read lists of numbers without giving the audience a view of them with a handout or PPT overhead. If you cannot use handouts or overheads, don’t use long lists of numbers.

14. Begin with the presentation of the problem and conclusion/recommendation (primarily goal)

15. Finish ahead of time and be prepared for the question answer session.

## Question/Answer session

The question answer session is very important. It shows the enthusiasm in the audience and usually shows interest and attention. In the Q/A session you should

1. Allow the questioner to complete the question, before answering

2. Avoid being argumentative

3. Do not let the questioner feel that the question is stupid

4. Adjourn the meeting, if the questions slack off

5. Thank the audience, one final time after the Q/A session

# PRESENTATIONS IN THE U.S.A. – They may fit where you are presenting

# From *BUSINESSWEEK*, GOOD HABITS FOR PRESENTERS

#### TO BE A LEADER, SPEAK LIKE ONE:

From the website: <http://images.businessweek.com/ss/06/05/vocalization/index_01.htm>

* First Key: Vary Your Tone. Dynamic speakers vary the pitch and tone of their words. Dull speakers are monotone, reciting all words in the very same tone of voice.
* Second Key: "Punch" Key Words. Dynamic speakers punch the important words in every sentence to add emphasis.
* Third Key: Raise and Lower Your Volume. Dynamic speakers raise and lower the volume of voice during a talk, something Kennedy did in his speech that I've used as an example.
* Fourth key: Pause for Impact. Dynamic speakers know that nothing is as dramatic as a well-placed pause.
* Fifth Key: Vary Your Speed. Finally, dynamic speakers speed up and slow down, often in the same sentence or paragraph**.**

# Six Keys to Commanding Body Language

# <http://images.businessweek.com/ss/06/04/sb_presentations/index_01.htm>

# The Handshake

Studies show that people size you up in the first two seconds. In that short time, it's not what you say that may matter most but often what your handshake says about you. A limp, clammy, "dead-fish" handshake will leave your listener with little confidence in you and your message.

**What to do:** Nothing fancy required, just a firm handshake with two or three shakes usually does the trick. Avoid squeezing like a vice. The key is to maintain eye contact while shaking hands. Finally, a warm smile adds just the right touch.

Former US Secretary of State Colin Powell stands (or sits) tall -- steadfast and assured. No slumping or slouching for this soldier. A slouching body posture is a sure way to associate yourself with a lack of enthusiasm, confidence, and leadership ability.

**What to do:** Keep your weight balanced on both feet, stand tall, eyes ahead. When sitting, avoid slumping into the fold of your chair or leaning back. Watch as people respond to you differently.

# 

# The Eyes

Eye contact is associated with trustworthiness, sincerity, and confidence -- all the traits we look for in leaders. How do you feel when someone at a trade show is talking to you while looking around the room for someone else, perhaps someone "more important"? Make everyone feel as though you're having a one-on-one conversation with him or her. Draw them in with your eyes. You're talking to them, not at them.

**What to do:** Maintain eye contact 70% to 80% of the time. Make everyone feel included and important. Look at the person you're speaking to you. If you're addressing a small or large group, break the room into three parts. Focus on one individual, make a point, shift your gaze to another part of the room, make a point, and do the same for the rest of the room.

# The Arms

Former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina is a very polished speaker. It's nearly impossible to find a photograph of her with a closed posture. This means there's nothing in between her and her listeners. For example, standing behind a podium is closed -- it adds a block between you and the listener. Crossing your arms is closed as well.

**What to do:** Simply avoid putting anything in between you and the listener. Keep your hands and arms unfolded, don't hold a binder, try to avoid standing behind a podium when possible.

# 

# The Hands

Former President Bill Clinton uses hand gestures to punctuate virtually every point, as does British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Complex hand gestures means using both hands in various positions during the course of a talk or presentation. Complex gestures reflect complex thought, and give us confidence in the listener.

**What to do:** Clients often ask me, "What do I do with my hands?" Use them! Don't try to mimic other people's gestures because you will look contrived. However, feel free to use your hands in a way that feels natural. Videotape yourself speaking to see whether your gestures appear natural and comfortable. You might discover that you use few, if any, gestures. Free yourself!

# 

# The Air of Confidence

Think about the "Austrian Oak," California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. He has an air of confidence. Regardless of the events surrounding him or the criticism he may be facing by any particular group, he conveys a look of being in control. You won't see him wringing his hands, shuffling back and forth, jiggling coins in his pocket, or rubbing his hands repeatedly through his hair. He comes across as someone who won't cower, waffle, or retreat.

**What to do:** Pay attention to small, potentially distracting body movements, like tapping your toes or fidgeting with your fingers, pens, or coins -- all signs of nervous energy. Look and sound more engaged by channeling that energy into face, voice, and hand gestures.

Such a gesture may be genetically programmed in pimaes.

****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Same speech coach?: |  |
|  |  |

# BusinessWeek, Bad Habits for Presenters

# http://images.businessweek.com/ss/06/02/mistakes/index\_01.htm

# Bad Habit #1

## Reading from notes

Great communicators do not read from scripts, notes, or PowerPoint slides. While it's acceptable to refer to notes from time to time, reading directly from prepared notes is a no-no. It breaks down the rapport between listener and audience.

**Do this instead:**

Review your material to the point where you have so completely absorbed the material, you can deliver it without notes. Business Week recently profiled Apple CEO Steve Jobs, whose magnificent presentations are the result of hours of grueling practice.

# Bad Habit #2

## Avoiding eye contact

Great communicators understand that eye contact is critical to building trust, credibility, and rapport. Far too many business professionals have a habit of looking at everything but the audience -- a wall, a desk, or a computer.

**Do this instead:**

Maintain eye contact with your listeners at least 90% of the time. It's appropriate to glance at your notes or slides from time to time, but only for a few seconds and only as a reminder of where to go next. You are speaking for the benefit of your listeners. Speak to them, not the slides.

# Bad Habit #3

## Dressing Down

Great communicators look the part. Have you ever seen Donald Trump dressed in anything less than a classy suit and tie? Even on the golf course, he looks like a million -- okay, a billion -- bucks. Many business leaders tend to dress beneath their position. They show up with a cheap suit, worn shoes, and ill-fitting clothes.

**Do this instead:**

Find a clothing store and salesperson whose recommendations you trust. Always dress appropriately for the culture, but a little better than everyone else.

# Bad Habit #4

## Fidgeting, jiggling, and swaying

Great communicators eliminate small, annoying gestures or mannerisms. Fidgeting with your hands, jiggling coins, or swaying back and forth all reflect nervousness or insecurity. These habits inspire no confidence in the speaker.

**Do this instead:**

The solution is simple. Don't fidget, jiggle or sway! Videotape your presentations or rehearsals from time to time to catch your flaws.

# Bad Habit #5

## Failure to rehearse

Great communicators always rehearse important presentations. Most bad presentations are the result of failing to practice talking out loud.

**Do this instead:**

Take a cue from Cisco CEO John Chambers. He spends hours rehearsing every component of his presentations, from the material to the flow of slides to when and where he's going to walk among the audience. It's preparation to the extreme, but it works.

# Bad Habit #6

## Standing at attention

Great communicators are not stiff. Standing at attention like a soldier waiting for orders might work for the army, but it makes presentations tedious.

**Do this instead:**

Move, walk, use hand gestures. Great speakers are animated in voice and body.

# Bad Habit #7

## Reciting bullet points

Great communicators assume the audience can read. Many speakers read the bullet points on their slides word for word. Slides (or any visual) act as a complement to the speaker, not the other way around.

**Do this instead:**

Don't write too many words on the slide. A good rule of thumb is no more than four words across and six lines down. For slides with more content, do not recite the slide word for word. Include a story, anecdote, example to add color to the content. Trust that your audience can read the slide for themselves.

# Bad Habit #8

## Speaking too long

Great communicators know that leadership requires the ability to articulate a message that's passionate, clear, and concise. Studies show that listeners lose their attention after approximately 18 minutes. Many leaders think that the longer they speak, the more important they sound. Nothing could be further from the truth.

**Do this instead:**

Edit everything you say. Do you spend five minutes saying something that you could otherwise say in 30 seconds? What can you cut out? Be thorough, yet concise in all manners of communication, including phone conversations, emails and formal presentations.

# Bad Habit #9

## Failing to excite

Great communicators grab their listeners' attention right out of the gate. Audiences remember the first thing you say and the last. However, don't worry -- if you're struggling to compose an opening, there is a solution.

**Do this instead:**

Tell your listeners why they should be excited about your content. Give your audience a reason to care.

# Bad Habit #10

## Ending with an inspiration deficit

Great communicators end their presentations on an inspiring note. Most presenters believe the middle of their presentation contains the really important content. It might, but most listeners will walk away from a presentation remembering what was said at the end.

**Do this instead:**

Go ahead and summarize what you just said in the presentation, but leave your audience with one key thought -- something they didn't know that makes their jaws drop in collective awe.

# BEST BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

# Jack Welch, Cutting Out Corporate Lingo

**Former Chairman and CEO**

**General Electric**

The former head of General Electric was legendary for demanding simplicity in written and verbal communications. "Insecure managers create complexity," Welch once said. He was a master at crafting a vision and passionately articulating that vision in simple, broad-based terms that everyone could buy into.

Clutter and jargon had no place in a Welch business meeting. He would ask his managers to pretend they were talking to high school students -- to focus on the basics. Eliminating jargon isn't an option. Great business communicators speak in clear and simple terms.

**Best communication asset: Simplicity**

**Tip: Eliminate jargon**

# Steve Jobs, Real-Life Dramatist

**CEO and Director**

**Apple Computer**

**Chairman and CEO**

**Pixar Animation Studios**

Apple founder and CEO Steve Jobs radiates a charisma that captivates thousands of the "Mac faithful" as well as customers, employees, and colleagues. The key to his success as a communicator: his nearly messianic zeal to change the world. People find it intoxicating. In 1983, Jobs turned to 44-year-old Pepsi President John Sculley and asked: "Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water, or do you want a chance to change the world?" Great business communicators want to make history, and they're not too bashful to admit it.

**Best communication asset: Charisma**

**Tip: Create and articulate a bold vision**

# Meg Whitman, Feedback Welcomer

**President, CEO, and Director**

**eBay**

As president and CEO of the world's largest online marketplace, Meg Whitman has built one of the most trusted, admired, and successful brands in corporate history. Since she accepted the lead role in 1998, Whitman has acted as a strong advocate for soliciting customer feedback. She listens and takes action to improve the experience for buyers and sellers.

*BusinessWeek* once recounted a story about Whitman flying to meet with a veteran seller who had protested a particular policy. After conferring with him for an hour, Whitman took pages of notes and changed the policy two days later. Great business communicators listen before saying a word.

**Best communication asset: Penchant for listening**

# John Chambers, Winning Through Rehearsals

**John Chambers**

**President, CEO, and Director**

**Cisco Systems**

Watching Cisco's CEO give a presentation to employees, investors, analysts, or customers is an astonishing experience. With hardly a glance at notes, Chambers fills his presentations with volumes of information about his company's products, facts, and figures.

He owes it to meticulous preparation. Before a talk, he reviews and rehearses his presentation, memorizing the slides and the flow of content. He even knows when and where he's going to walk into the audience or put his hand on someone's shoulder. Great business communicators prepare diligently for every major meeting, interview, presentation, or speech.

**Best communication asset: Preparedness**

**Tip: Review and rehearse your presentation**

# Michelle Peluso, Reaching Out to Workers

**President and CEO**

**Travelocity.com**

As President and CEO of Travelocity, Michelle Peluso is one of Corporate America's rising stars. Peluso understands that employees will care more about their work when they know their leaders care about them. She makes it a point to respond personally within 24 hours to every e-mail from one of her employees, even if she's traveling or on vacation. It's how she motivates her far-flung staff of more than 5,000 employees spread around the world. Great business communicators respond to employee concerns by answering e-mails, holding lunchtime chats, or sending out weekly companywide correspondence.

**Best communication asset: Responsiveness**

**Tip: Be there for your employees**

# David Neeleman, High-Flying Tales

**Chairman and CEO**

**JetBlue Airways**

When David Neeleman launched Jet Blue in 2002, the ex-Southwest Airlines exec embraced his former employer's model of discount fares but one-upped Southwest by adding perks like leather seats and DirecTV on all flights. Neeleman dedicates himself to finding and keeping the most enthusiastic employees in the airline industry.

He champions the culture by flying JetBlue to a different city each week. He appears at nearly every first-day orientation for new hires and leads sessions titled: "Why are you here?" An excellent storyteller, Neeleman likes to recount anecdotes about employees who exceeded expectations. Great business communicators cultivate an enthusiastic staff passionately dedicated to providing exceptional customer service.

**Best communication asset: Talent for storytelling**

**Tip: Tell tales that inspire**

# Howard Schultz, Percolating Passion

**Chairman**

**Starbucks**

Howard Schultz loves coffee. And the Starbucks founder is fervent about creating a workplace in which people are treated with dignity and respect. He conveys that message to employees, customers, and investors.

"When you're around people who share a collective passion around a common purpose, there's no telling what you can do," he says. Schultz understands that Starbucks' competitive advantage lies in its people. Because its entire organization communicates its values so effectively, Starbucks has built a reputation as one of the best places to work. Great business communicators identify their enthusiasms and convey that enthusiasm through all levels of the organization.

**Best communication asset: Passion**

**Tip: Identify and share what you're passionate about**

# Suze Orman, Debt Detractor

**Author, TV Host**

Financial guru Suze Orman stands out among the more than 650,000 financial planners in the U.S. Orman is on a mission, a crusade to help people avoid the crushing debt and financial problems that caused so much pain for her family as she was growing up.

Orman freely admits that very little of her advice is groundbreaking. "It's not the material that I know, but how I communicate the material I know that sets me apart," she says. She delivers financial information using clear, concise, and direct language. Great business communicators use simple language to discuss complex issues.

**Best communication asset: Clarity of expression**

**Tip: Break down complex information into easy parts**

# Rudy Giuliani, Eye-Contact King

**Chairman and CEO, Giuliani Partners**

The former New York City mayor became a hero for maintaining his composure after the 9/11 attacks. He exhibited courage, stamina, and grace -- everything people look for in a leader. But long before Giuliani became an American icon, he appreciated the emotional connection of a great presentation.

In his book, *Leadership*, Giuliani says he began preparing for his annual State of the City address five months early so he wouldn't have to read the presentation from notes. Great business communicators use eye contact to make an emotional connection with their audience.

**Best communication asset: Ability to make eye contact**

**Tip: Spend 90% of the time looking at your audience**

# John Thompson, Relentlessly Upbeat

**Chairman and CEO**

**Symantec**

For more than six years, Symantec CEO John Thompson has built the company into the leading antivirus software brand, despite competitive threats from Microsoft. Thompson uses big, bold, and optimistic language in his presentations and speeches.

Last year, Thompson pulled off a $13 billion acquisition of storage-software maker Veritas, despite investor criticism. During the acquisition, Thompson said: "We'll prove one more time that our long-term vision is where the industry is going, and what we need to do to respond to it is right." Great business communicators transmit a positive, upbeat vision during times of change.

**Best communication asset: Facility with optimistic language**

**Tip: Employ powerful and positive words**

# Klaus Kleinfeld, Getting Fresh

**President and CEO**

**Siemens**

As CEO of Siemens, Kleinfeld oversees some 460,000 workers. He has impressed many an employee with the way he sets clear goals and communicates his vision. The key: Kleinfeld's insatiable curiosity about his people, his industry, and the world in which he does business.

Kleinfeld feels at ease whether talking about the newest hip-hop star or the latest strategic management theories. His upbeat tone, energy, and curiosity keep him fresh, dynamic, and contemporary. Great business communicators teach their listeners to stay topical and current. By doing so, they leave their listeners with something new.

**Best communication asset: Ability to reinvent**

**Tip: Stay fresh, remain current**

# Larry Ellison, Playing the Anti-Geek

**CEO and Director**

**Oracle**

The billionaire founder of Oracle is no stranger to the media. Whether he's engaging in a hostile takeover of a competitor, risking injury racing yachts, buying up nearly $200 million in Malibu property, or piloting jets, Ellison lives life on a grand scale. When Ellison walks on stage, he looks the part of a successful leader.

Not content to dress in geek chic like many of his counterparts in Silicon Valley, Ellison wears finely tailored Italian suits and walks with commanding body language. Great business communicators know that packaging counts.

**Best communication asset: Looking like a leader**

**Tip: Pay attention to what your wardrobe says about you**

# Richard Branson, Lavisher of Praise

**Chairman**

**Virgin Group**

Whether donning a wedding dress for the launch of a Virgin Brides shop, attempting to fly a hot-air balloon around the world, or building a company to take people to the moon, the billionaire entrepreneur behind the Virgin brand likes to have fun and encourage his staff. Branson believes in lavishing praise on his employees. Like flowers, he once said, people will grow if watered -- but shrivel if left to dry. Great business communicators go out of their way to make sure their employees feel valuable.

**Best communication asset: Generosity with praise**

**Tip: Lavish appropriate praise on employees, customers, and colleagues**

# References

Scott, Michael, D. & Brydon, Steven R. (1997). *Dimensions of Communication*, ISBN 1-55934-442-3.

Tropenaars, Fons & Hamden-Turner, Charles. (1998). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Global Business*. New York, NY, USA: McGraw-Hill.

Some of these are old and may have disappeared:

http://www.abacon.com

http://www.angelfire.com/ab/speakers

http://www.presentations.com

http://www.buildingyourself.com

http://www.stresscure.com

http://www.selfgrowth.com

http://www.balancetime.com

1. The author makes no warranty, expressed or implied, including the warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, currency or usefulness of any material displayed or distributed through this guide for students, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights, and disclaims all warranties with regard to the information provided. Any reliance upon such information is at your own risk. In no event will the author be liable to you for any damages or losses whatsoever resulting from or caused by this document or its contents. DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT: Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement or recommendation by the author. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the author or his employer(s) and shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes. Any reproduction of copyrighted material in this guide is done for an educational purpose under the New Zealand Copyright Act 1994 No 143 (as at 07 July 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)