



Opening doors
to new business

High Impact – advancing your presentation skills. By Elizabeth Clark

Presenting is a necessary evil – whether you're speaking to an internal meeting, selling to clients or training a room full of people. Staggeringly, more people fear speaking in public than death itself, and sadly for all this angst, the vast majority of presentations we are subjected to are less than inspiring. This article is for anyone who has endured a presentation where they would rather have eaten their own head with boredom, or for anyone who gives presentations and wonders, as the audience stares back blankly, whether they would rather be eating their own heads.

I have one client who releases webcasts as part of its internal communications. When they monitored the viewing stats they found an anomaly. One particular presenter was getting far more viewings than everybody else, on further investigation it turned out that people were downloading it as he was a superb presenter, not because his message was more important or useful than the other directors. This is the point that stops every average presenter from being an advanced presenter – **it's not what you say, but how you say it that has the maximum impact.**

Key facts about presenting:

- In communication, 7% of the effect is the words that we use – that's why chat up lines have always been so ineffective chaps.
- 38% is the tonality of the voice – it's not what you say, but how you say it!
- and a massive 55% is attitude and appearance – you've got to look and act the part.
- Over a period of 24 hours the retention of the presentation by the audience stands at a tiny 10%, i.e. only 0.7% of the wordage being retained. Hence keep your messages clear and simple. Repetition is key to retention.

To have maximum impact and to make your presentations come alive, you have to aim for the following....

The 4 goals of an Advanced Speaker are to:

1. Awaken interest
2. Guide Understanding
3. Create Impact
4. Incite Action

We had one client, an MD of an IT company, who requested coaching for an important industry conference with 1000 strong audience. I asked him to bring his preparation with him to work on. He arrived with a 60 page PowerPoint presentation with each page crammed with bullet points and so much PowerPoint wizardry it would wear the battery out on your clicker trying to keep pace with it. Surprisingly, he was as baffled by it as me. The client had delegated the preparation to his Sales Director, who as it transpires, had delegated it to someone else who was considered a PowerPoint whiz. Nobody had considered how the audience was going to react to slides crammed full of information, popping up every few seconds, with enough flashes and dazzles to provoke an epileptic episode.

We started by establishing a profile for the audience, what their expectations were of the conference and presentation, what the key messages were that he wanted to impart to them, and what action he wanted the audience to take as a result. Once we'd defined our advanced presentation strategy we worked on his technique and dispelled his fears and limiting beliefs by working on his technique. We used key flirting tools like; grounding for calming nerves, making eye contact with every section of the audience to keep them engaged, good use of the platform space available, the use of anecdotes (rather than PowerPoint stats) to make the key points, developing his tonality to make it sound more interesting and draw the audiences attention to key action points, eliminating detracting body language sins, the use of positive body language to give stage charisma and reinforce various key parts of the presentation and even a little bit of audience participation to make key issues more memorable. We scrapped the PowerPoint extravaganza and replaced it with a few images for him to use as memory triggers for the various points of his presentation.

He stood out from the other presenters because he hadn't subjected the audience to death by PowerPoint, his presentation was crafted for the audience and he left the audience with a clear message to act on. **As a result he was approached at the conference by several major clients with enquiries – result!**

At the end of the day, people buy people. Stand out for the right reasons and the world is your lobster. Presenting is an inevitable part of business these days, so make your life easier, your business more profitable and your presentations high impact, by following the simple advice above.

Alternatively we'd be delighted to help you in person, either with one of our bespoke courses or on an open course (with a special Training zone offer of a £225 discount, for places booked before 27th July 2007, on our open course, at a great value price of £345 - only run twice a year so places are limited). Visit our website for details of this and our other services.

http://www.rapportunlimited.co.uk/presentation_skills_training.php

About Rapport Unlimited



Flirt Guru, Elizabeth Clark, is the founder of Rapport Unlimited and an International Speaker and Trainer. Our work is featured regularly on Radio, TV and Press, from BBC1 to Living TV, and The Times to Grazia Magazine. Elizabeth is the author of 'Single to Settled' and 'Flirt Guru', and a columnist for the award winning 'Start Your Business' Magazine. Rapport has a European Client base of blue chip clients from PricewaterhouseCoopers to Microsoft.