

Focus for this issue: **Presentation Skills**

## Make More Impact With Your Presentations

The Evolve "How to" Guide

### THE 10 DEADLY SINS

#### 1. Death by PowerPoint

PowerPoint is nothing more than a visual roadmap for your presentation. Less slides with more context from the speaker is the way to go. Avoid the over use of slides.

#### 2. Reading from the slides

When you read from the slides you give the perception that you are unfamiliar with your content. Refer to notes and don't read from the slides.

#### 3. Lack of context

Your content should always be relevant to your audience – anything less is disrespectful to your audience. Generic presentations don't work. Always use appropriate context.

#### 4. Too many messages

Fact! If you are presenting for 30 minutes your audience will only remember three or four of your points. Go for a quality message as opposed to a quantity one.

#### 5. No W.I.I.F.M.

Your audience is only interested in one aspect of your presentation. That is "What's In It For Me". Link your agenda to theirs and you'll have a recipe for success.

#### 6. The last word!

Many presenters finish at the wrong place. The wrong place is after Q and A! There should always be a recap followed by a conclusion or call to action.

#### 7. Lack of logical structure

Every story has a start, a main body and a conclusion. A presentation is no different.

#### 8. Not researching the audience.

Fail to prepare for your audience – then prepare to fail with your presentation.

#### 9. Not using speaker notes

What have all great speakers got in common? They all work from a prepared set of speaker notes! When you know what you want to say, then you can focus on how you will say it!

#### 10. Not doing a dress rehearsal

The more you prepare – the better you will be. Practice!

### Speak to move people towards action - not to inform them!

Making business presentations is a regular part and parcel of being a modern business manager or executive. The impact your presentation makes can impact your sales figures, your business results and even your personal reputation. We find some presenters are engaging, inspiring, and motivational, whilst others prepare poorly, read from their slides, and just "show up and throw up" far too much information in the time allotted to them.

Fundamentally, every presentation is an opportunity to move your audience towards an action as opposed lecture them.

Many of you reading this newsletter will have attended presentation skills training in the past. The purpose of this newsletter is to build on your previous training and experience and challenge your thinking about the way you prepare for, script and deliver your presentations. We believe we have peppered this edition of 'Executive Briefings' with tips, thoughts, and practical take aways that will help you make more impact with your presentations, help you move your audience to action, and ultimately help you become a more inspiring and engaging speaker.

We hope you find the tips useful.

*The Evolve Consultants*





## How can you increase the likelihood that people will take action after your presentation?

### 1. Be direct! Tell people exactly what you want them to do.

In their book "Switch", Chip and Dan suggest the best way to get action from your audience is to be direct. The Heath's site an example of school students in South Dakota who wanted to help revive the local economy. The students worked out that if residents spent more of their disposable income locally it would make a difference. Interestingly they directly asked residents to spend ten percent more of their disposable income in their local stores and businesses. They calculated that this would boost the local economy by \$7 million. A year later, the amount of money spent in their local community had increased by \$15 million. So as you conclude your presentation be specific about what you want members of your audience to do.

### 2. Make people accountable

There are a number of ways you can set this up for a presentation. You could ask people to pair up with another person and commit to keeping each other accountable. Or you could ask audience members to email you by a certain date with the action they've taken.

### 3. Give written instructions

Consider taking people through the detailed steps they'll need to take and give them all the information they need to carry through via written instruction / handout.

### 4. Provide mental triggers

People who create action triggers for themselves are far more likely to take action. An action trigger is a mental plan you make about when and where you will do something or what you will do in a certain situation. For example, I use action triggers when I am going into a sales meeting with a new sales prospect. Don't just ask people to do something, get them to make a mental plan of when and where they will do it and what it will look like when it is happening. Do this during your presentation.

### 5. Appeal to their values system

People often do things, but because the action conforms to their view of themselves. For example "As people who live in this community and want to see your families flourishing here in a safe environment, therefore I need you to support the "Slow down – speed kills" driving campaign in the housing estates close to schools and colleges."

## 10-20-30 ..... Be radical!

You've just been asked to give a presentation on a new product development project to the executive management team at their monthly meeting. You start thinking to yourself ..... 'how long should I speak for? How many PowerPoint slides should I use? How much information should you include on my slides?

Guy Kawasaki was one of Apple's original team responsible for marketing the 'Apple Mac' and is referred to as one of the prime 'Apple communication evangelists'. He is also a venture capitalist, author and a radical presenter. In his own words he says that "Every month I listen to hundreds of people trying to pitch potential investments to me and most of the time they lose they can't present their ideas to me in a compelling and easy to engage with format". Guy evangelises a technique called the 10-20-30 format. We thought we'd be different and radical and introduce you to the format. It might just inspire you to do something differently next time you present.

### What is the 10-20-30 Rule for PowerPoint?

Guy frames his 10-20-30 rule for PowerPoint as:

- **10 slides** are the optimal number to use for a presentation.
- **20 minutes** is the longest amount of time you should speak.
- **30 point** is the smallest font size you should use on your slides.

**Ten slides.** Ten is the optimal number of slides in a PowerPoint presentation because it's difficult for people to comprehend more than ten concepts / issues / points in a meeting.

**Twenty minutes.** Is the optimal period of time you should be speaking for? Even if you have an hour time slot, in a perfect world, you give your pitch/ speech in twenty minutes, and you have forty minutes left for discussion.

**Thirty-point font.** Here at Evolve, the majority of the presentations that we see have text in a twenty point font or smaller. This is so the presenter can jam as much text as possible onto a slide. The slide becomes a script and the presenter merely reads every line on the slide word for word. However, as soon as the audience figures out that you're reading the text, they begin to read ahead of you or worse still if you have given them a handout of your slides they start to jump ahead of you. The result is that you and the audience are out of sync.

The reason people use a small font is twofold: firstly, that they don't know their material well enough; secondly, they think that more text is more convincing. Use bigger font! Your slides are supposed to be a high level visual road map outlining major intersections they are not supposed to be a detailed ordinance survey map! If "thirty points," is too radical, then we suggest you use the "gambler's alternative": find out the age of the oldest person in your audience and divide it by two. That's your optimal font size.

Here at Evolve, we applaud Guy Kawasaki's efforts to use his influence to challenge the presentation *status quo*. But remember, the 10-20-30 rule shouldn't be viewed as hard and fast. It's a sound guideline which you should always consider, but make your choices based on your audience, your message, and your own personal style.

# Showtime!

## Tip 1: Entertainment value counts

It does not matter where you are speaking, what you are speaking about or who you are speaking to – you must have energy, enthusiasm, and excitement. When you present you can't just read from a set of notes or PowerPoint slides - you are going on stage. The best speakers understand that having appropriate content is taken as a given, but the delivery style and format will determine how memorable and how much impact your presentation makes.



## Tip 2: The Frank Sinatra rule.

When "Old blue eyes" played a concert with a new orchestra he always had a pep talk with them during their warm up session. Sinatra would always tell every orchestra the same thing – "You are here to support me. You are not here to take over. I am the main attraction – they are paying to hear and see me sing". The Frank Sinatra Rule of presenting states that PowerPoint slides are only there to support the presenter – they are not the main attraction. Just like a good orchestra they will accompany the words as delivered by the presenter. The presenter is the main attraction. Never forget this.

## Tip 3: Reduce the PowerPoint – tell memorable stories instead

Many presenter's over load presentations with slides. In fact the slides often become the presentation. I suggest you lose the PowerPoint (or at least use far fewer slides) and use context, example, and compelling stories to carry your message. It's far more powerful.

## Tip 4. Get the audience involved

What is the difference between a lecture and a good presentation? A lecture is when a speaker dictates information to an audience. A presentation is where a speaker engages with an audience. A speech without any audience interaction is a lecture. A lecture has very limited long term impact.

Find ways to get your audience more involved in your presentation at various stages and not just at the Q and A stage.

# pathos, ethos and logos

## The three key's to persuasion in a speech

Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, is often regarded as the "godfather" of the modern business presentation. He believed the objective of every speech was to motivate or persuade your audience members in some shape or form.

Fast forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> century; nine times out of ten when you get up to speak you are also hoping to move people to action. You've got a company message to sell to your staff, or an idea for process improvement to sell to the board, or maybe it's a new service or concept you want to sell to a sales prospect.

Aristotle suggested three key ingredients to delivering a persuasive speech were: Pathos – Ethos – logos (Logos)

Pathos stands for the energy, enthusiasm and emotion you put into your presentation. All too often we see speakers, glued to the lectern, reading their slides word for word, their mouths are stating that they are passionate, but their body showing us that they are not. Remember energy and passion transfers regardless of whether it's positive or negative.

Logos stands for the logic of both your speech you're your argument. Your argument must have sufficient example and context to support the points you are making. You must layout your message in a logical format that makes sense to your audience. Your story must have a start a middle and an ending. Every point you make must be introduced, elaborated upon with context, supported with evidence and appropriate example, and linked to the overall theme of your presentation.

Ethos is all about your presence, credibility and integrity. Whilst you could argue that these traits are learned over time, there are some things you can do to fast forward them into your repertoire.

- (a) Prepare for your Q & A session
- (b) Facts & figures: Be able to reference supporting data (from recognized / relevant authorities)
- (c) Always be ethical.
- (d) Be honest when you don't know
- (e) Be more passionate in the way you present.

Remember becoming a persuasive speaker requires, planning, practice and perseverance. Or as Aristotle puts it - "We are what we repeatedly do".



# LANGUAGE SECRETS OF THE GREAT PRESENTERS

We all have our favourite speakers. Speakers whom we admire, speakers who move us, and speakers who we would like to be able to replicate. You might be surprised to learn that most of your iconic public speakers all use the same magic formulae. They might be saying different things, to different people, during different times – but they all use the same language devices and skills.

Here are 6 language secrets of the great and the good that you can use straight away.

- **Three is the magic number!**

Julius Caesar declared [*I came, I saw, I conquered*]; the Catholic Church followed this with [*The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*] and [*the three wise men with their gifts of frankincense, and myrrh*].

Politicians soon worked out that the rule of three was a powerful way to influence, persuade and inform. The French gave us [*“liberty, equality and fraternity”*], Abraham Lincoln gave us “*Government of the people, by the people, for the people*”, and JFK followed with [*“We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy - but because they are hard! Because that challenge is one we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone and one we intend to win!”*]

Hollywood then gave us [*“The good, the bad and the ugly”*], and the people behind Mars bars tell us [*“A mars a day will help you work, rest and play”*].

The idea behind the rule of three is simple: lists of all kinds of things, qualities, actions, and examples tend to come across most powerfully when they contain three items.

- **Repetition**

Repetition is one of the most useful tools available to the presenter. Repetition allows you to hammer home a key concept, idea, or message that make it easier for your audience to connect with or remember your point. Repetition is used to accentuate a point or points that the speaker wants the audience to remember. A good example of this can be found in Martin Luther King, [*I have a dream*] speech at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

By skilfully repeating your key points in various ways and at various stages, the audience will have them imprinted on their minds without being bored. Just like Martin Luther King you can do this by having a theme running through your entire speech. Your theme will contain a key thought or phrase. Make sure you elaborate on those key words during your presentation. Keep linking your material back to your theme or title so it runs like a thread that holds your presentation together.

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- **Rhetorical questions**

Asking questions to which you already know the answer is a more engaging way of presenting simple statements as it involves the audience and gets them thinking. Example: [*“I’d like you to put your hand up if your business has changed in some, shape, or form?”*] A pause after the question creates anticipation and ensures people listen to the answer

- **Alliteration**

The repetition of the first consonant sound in a group of two or more words draws attention to that specific phrase. For example, when [*“People, price, product, and promotion”*] is mentioned in a marketing presentation, the audience instinctively picks up this phrase and can recall it better at a later time.

- **Pause for effect**

Include 5 second pauses at key moments – it creates great dramatic effect. You’ll find that it brings the audience into your speech as if they were actually experiencing it.

- **Use short sentences.**

We all suffer from attention span deficit. Consider using action orientated sentences with fewer than ten to twelve words. Look at any JFK speech.

## Who are Evolve Consultants?

Founded in 1998, Evolve Consultants are one of Ireland’s leading training and development practices. We specialise in helping organisations’ adapt the right personal and management behaviours for their business strategy. We offer a blended approach of consulting, training and coaching to help them get there.

- Management development & executive coaching
- Personal development
- Sales strategy, training and coaching
- Creativity & innovation

Our methods are practical and bespoke. Fundamentally, we believe we can help clarify your issues, focus your activities and most importantly help you significantly improve your business results.

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