

LESSON-24

Secrets of STAR presenters and orators

Whosoever hath a good presence and a good, fashion carries continual letters of recommendation. - Francis Bacon

Lou worked very hard preparing his speech. He selected a good topic that he really cared about. He researched and developed his topic carefully and found many good examples to use in his presentation. Despite all of this good work, Lou's speech fell flat. Within the first minute of his presentation he had lost most of his audience.

The trouble began when Lou opened his mouth. His voice did not project the energy and enthusiasm that are necessary to capture an audience's attention and make them want to listen. He spoke in a monotone, never varying his pitch or loudness. He looked down at his notes or up at the ceiling, never making good eye contact with his audience. His soft, hypnotic voice almost lulled them to sleep. Unfortunately, Lou's oral presentation suggested that he was not really interested in his topic or trying to communicate. Little wonder that his listeners found their daydreams more interesting and that his worthy speech never really had a hearing that day.

Successful public speaking involves both *what* you say and *how* you say it. In this chapter we turn our attention to "how you say it," or presentation. We consider what makes a presentation effective, the major methods of presentation, adapting for video presentations, responding to audience feedback, handling questions and answers, developing an effective speaking voice, using your body to communicate, and how to practice effectively.

The presentation skills you learn in this class should help you in other communication settings. They will be useful in job interviews, meetings, and even social occasions. Once you gain a sense of presence, it tends to stay with you over the years. It allows you to carry what Francis Bacon called "continual letters of recommendation."

WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION?

An effective presentation allows you to share your message with your audience. The words *community* and *communication* both stem from the Latin word for *common*. An effective presentation makes it possible for the speaker and audience to hold ideas and feelings in common, even when they come from different cultural backgrounds.

An effective presentation begins with your attitude. You must be committed to your subject and want to share this commitment with your audience. You must want to enlighten listeners, move them, perhaps change the way they think about the topic, or even encourage them to act. The way you speak should convey your enthusiasm, giving

energy and force to your speech. Your attitude should assure listeners that you really care about them and your topic.

An effective presentation does not call attention to itself or distract from your message. You want your listeners to focus on what you are saying, not how you are saying it. Consequently, you should avoid pompous pronunciations, artificial vocal patterns, and overly dramatic gestures. Your presentation should be readily intelligible and loud enough to be heard in all parts of the room.

Finally, an effective presentation sounds natural and conversational as though you were talking *with* your audience, not *at* them. Talking with people instead of at them helps reduce the psychological distance between yourself and an audience. It brings you closer together with your listeners. In this time when we are used to media presentations that bring speakers up close and personal, audiences expect - even demand - such a style. Television has changed the rules of the game. Immediacy is a term that describes the sense of closeness experienced between speaker and audience in successful communication.² James McCroskey, a specialist in the study of immediacy, has written:

Immediacy increases the audience's attentiveness; it reduces tension and anxiety for both speaker and audience; it creates greater liking between speaker and audience; and it increases the probability that the speaker's purpose will be accomplished.³

Immediacy relates to the likableness dimension of ethos that we discussed in Chapter 2. It encourages listeners to open their minds to you and to be influenced by what you say.⁴

How, then, can you encourage immediacy? You can often reduce psychological distance by reducing actual distance and by removing physical barriers between yourself and listeners. Step out from behind the lectern and move closer to the audience. Smile at listeners when appropriate, maintain eye contact with them, use gestures to clarify and reinforce ideas, and let your voice express your feelings. Even if your heart is pumping, your hands feel a little sweaty, and your knees feel a bit weak, the self you show to listeners should be a person in control of the situation. Listeners admire and identify with speakers who maintain what Ernest Hemingway once called "grace under pressure."

Your goal should be a speech characterized by an expanded conversational style, which we discussed in detail in Chapter 1. An expanded conversational style is direct, spontaneous, colorful, and tuned to the responses of listeners. Such a style, however, is a bit more careful and formal than everyday conversation.

Warmth

Many audiences perceive presenters who stand squarely in front of the audience to be more formal and less friendly than those presenters who stand at a 45-degree angle to the audience. If you are looking to create a little more warmth with your audience, try integrating the 45-degree stance into your presentation delivery.

Are You Ready for Your Audience?

Plan ahead. Make sure you familiar yourself with the room in which you will present and minimize any logistics issues! Don't lose your audience because no one can hear you over the air conditioning system!

Use the Right Technology

Don't fall into the technology trap! Before you develop your electronic presentation, think about what technology you really need in your presentation. For example, if you were speaking at an internet conference you would need an advanced electronic presentation with clip art, sound clips, video clips, and even links to the internet. However, if you were speaking at a small informal staff meeting, those elements may not be necessary. Remember, keep it appropriate to the audience and venue!

Successful Q & A

Getting the Session Started

- Walk toward the audience. The question and answer period of a presentation can often be the most informal. Show that you are open to truly answering questions by walking toward the audience.
- Raise your hand. When you ask "who has a question" - raise your own hand. This creates a mirror response in the audience.
- Expect a response. Show your audience that you expect them to ask questions. If possible, choose an individual or a group to question. For example, move to the appropriate side of the room and say "I know that someone in Engineering wants to discuss . . ."
- Steer clear of "yes" and "no" questions. Begin your appeal to the audience with "why" or "how". Try something like "How did the sales forecast look to you?" This type of question begs for an explanation while a simple "Did the sales forecast make sense to you?" begs for a simple yes or no.
- Wait for a reply. Give your audience enough time to respond. A good pause will not hurt anything.

Answering Questions . . .

- Look directly at the person posing the question. This demonstrates respect and forces you to focus on the question.
- Don't glance at notes or fumble for facts. Acknowledge that you are listening to the question.
- Take your time. Take a breath, pause.
- Compliment the question, if possible. A simple "good question" is often enough.
- Repeat the question. Rephrase the question and at the same time - consider your response.
- Answer the whole group. While one person asks the question, the whole group waits for the response.

Handling Questions

Make sure you are prepared for the question and answer session of your presentation. Make a list of questions you anticipate and formulate answers ahead of time. If possible, bring along facts and figures for reference.

Bonus Tip!

Remember that no presenter has the answer to every question. If you are unsure of answer, don't make something up and risk losing your credibility. Instead, tell the audience you are unsure of the answer but during the next break (or after the presentation) you will find out. Make sure you follow-up with the audience. They will appreciate the extra effort!

Tips for Using Your Voice Effectively

Make sure you speak loud enough for the audience to hear you. Nothing is worse than having to strain to hear a speaker present. So, before you begin a presentation, have someone stand at the back of the room and tell you if you can be heard.

Don't speak in a monotone voice. The easiest way to put an audience to sleep is by speaking in the same voice for a long period of time. Make sure you use natural speech patterns - with highs and lows - instead of a flat monotone.

Alternate the pace of your voice. By speaking at different speech rates for short periods, you can add energy to your speech pattern. Just look at the way you speak in normal conversation. You will notice that sometimes you speak quickly and sometimes you slow down.

Slow down for important points. By slowing your speech rate for key points, you can emphasize important points.

Use the pause. Silence is an excellent exclamation point. By slightly extending a pause, you can add emphasis to a key point in your presentation. All presenters pause naturally, but the best presenters plan their pauses for maximum impact!

Drink water. Before presenting, have a glass of water. Water can prevent potential voice problems during a presentation. You can also use a sip of water as a pause in a presentation.

Bonus Tip!

Check out the national news! News anchors provide some of the best examples of effective voice usage.

The Truth About Laser Pointers

Many presenters like to use laser pointers during their multimedia presentations. In fact, these can be quite useful devices when they perform well. But how reliable are laser pointers?

Have you ever seen a presentation in which the presenter couldn't keep the pointer steady? Your eyes move up and down and you can't concentrate on what the speaker is saying. Or perhaps you have been the presenter? Ever try to juggle the laser pointer, the projector remote and the cordless microphone? All these accessories have value, but they can also hinder smooth transitions and a polished appearance.

The good news is that there is an easier way to highlight what you want without using a laser pointer. Today many multimedia projector manufacturers such as Epson offer "special effects" button on their projector remotes. These buttons allow you to highlight, circle, point, and even zoom on the information you want to highlight. Better yet, you can select the "special effects" that you want and where to place them on your remote.

Highlight what you want to say!

Top Ten Mistakes Made by Presenters

1. No Presentation Objectives

If you don't know what your audience should do at the end of your presentation, there is no need for you to present. Knowing your objectives is the key to developing an effective presentation.

2. Poor Visual Aids

Visual aids are designed to reinforce the main points of your presentation. Without effective visuals, you are missing a key opportunity to communicate with your audience.

3. Ineffective Close

Closing your presentation is extremely important. The close allows you to tie up the presentation and spell out what you want your audience "to do". A weak close can kill a presentation.

4. Mediocre First Impression

Audiences evaluate a presenter within the first 120 seconds of the presentation. Presenters who make a bad first impression can lose credibility and diminish their ability to effectively communicate.

5. No Preparation

The best presenters prepare for every presentation. Those who prepare and practice are more successful in presenting their information and anticipating audience reaction. Practice does make perfect!

6. Lack of Enthusiasm

If you aren't excited about the presentation, why should your audience be? Enthusiastic presenters are the most effective ones around!

7. Weak Eye Contact

As a presenter, you are trying to communicate effectively with your audience. If you don't make eye contact with the audience, they will not take you or your message seriously.

8. No Audience Involvement

The easiest way to turn off an audience is by allowing them to remain uninvolved. Use audience involvement to gain "buy-in".

9. Lack of Facial Expressions

Effective speakers use facial expressions to help reinforce their messages.

10. Sticky Floor Syndrome

There is nothing worse than a speaker who is glued to the floor. While there is no need to wander about aimlessly, natural movement helps hold an audience's attention.

Use Good Color

Research shows that colored presentation materials are much more likely to hold an audience's attention than those in black and white. For electronic presentations, dark colors such as blues, purples, and black make the best background colors. White, yellow and gray make the best typeface colors. Make sure you use a color palette that is simple and "easy-on-the-eyes".

Tailor Your Opening

No matter how many presentations you give, no opening should ever be used twice. Each audience is unique - so you need to develop an opening specifically tailored to the audience. Your audience can smell a canned, insincere opening from a mile away! Remember the opening is your first impression!

Using a Presentation Assistant

Just when you think you are done . . . you have finished writing your presentation, you have created fabulous slides and handouts, you have analyzed room conditions and more . . . What could possibly be left to do? In some cases, it may be time to ask yourself if your presentation would be helped by a "presentation assistant". The more complicated a presentation, the more likely a presentation may prove helpful.

When we speak about an assistant, we speak of someone who can provide an extra set of hands, who knows how to juggle the balls you don't have time to . . . A presentation assistant can pass out handouts, advance slides, or assist with group exercises.

Tips for using a presentation assistant

- Select an assistant with whom you can work: someone you know and trust.
- Select an assistant who is familiar with your presentation or who can get that way. Set up a meeting and walk through your entire presentation, several times. Identify points at which the assistant should go to the next slide, turn up lights, or pass out appropriate handouts.
- Work out unobtrusive signals for communication.
- And most importantly, when you deliver the presentation, make sure to introduce your assistant.

Using Multimedia Projector Remote Controls

Today many multimedia projector companies have developed projector remotes that allow you to integrate all of your audiovisual controls into one remote control. Whether it's running a corporate video, highlighting a key point in a PowerPoint presentation or turning up the sound volume, you may very well need only one remote control.

Below are typical features you may find in today's multimedia projector remote controls.

Source

This feature allows you to switch input sources on the fly. For example, if you were giving a PowerPoint presentation and wanted to show a video clip to highlight a main point, you would need to “switch the source”. Using a new remote control, you could simply push the source button on your remote to switch from the computer source to the video source automatically.

Special Effects

Most projectors, such as the Epson Powerlite Series, allow you to use special effects in PowerPoint presentations. For example, you can highlight a main point on the fly with a simple click of a button. You can pre-program your remote control with the desired special effects you want to use. It’s that easy!

Mouse

There is no need to stand next to your computer and use the mouse to click through slides in a presentation. Most remote controls come with a built-in mouse that allows you to control your computer from anywhere in the room.

Projector Controls

All remote controls should allow you to make some adjustments to the projector. Whether it’s changing the volume, correcting the focus, or adjusting the sync, you probably don’t have to go to the front of the room and fiddle with the projector.

Always carry at least one set of extra batteries for your remote control in your projector carrying case.

Working with Room Layout

Perhaps surprisingly, room layout affects all aspects of a presentation. Just the physical arrangement of chairs can create a feeling of intimacy and cooperation or authority and hierarchy. If possible, you should try to select the room layout that works best for you, depending upon audience size, presentation content, and visuals. Below are common room layouts and tips on how and when to use them.

Room Layout Tips

- Preview the room. You can avoid most pitfalls with room layout if you visit the venue in advance of your presentation. If possible, speak with the venue staff to make sure that your space is adequate and that they can accommodate all of your presentation needs.
- Be sure to plan for visuals. When planning your room layout, make sure you accommodate for your visuals and visual equipment. Leave adequate room to maneuver around all equipment. Test distances for viewing from all angles in the room.
- Use a Photo. Take a photo of a room set-up that you like. When you speak with the venue staff, give them the photo to use as a guide when setting up the room.

Theater Style

This layout is primarily used for large audiences. It is also the layout you are least likely to have any control of - chances are, the space is set up for you. Given the size and formality of this layout, it is especially important that you be sure that your audience can see you and your visuals from all areas of the room.

Classroom Style/U-Shaped Style

These layouts tend to be the most effective for educational and training presentations. Classroom style is primarily used for larger audiences, while the U-shaped style is preferred for more intimate training classes. Both of these layouts allow audience members to take notes and participate in group activities. The challenge for the presenter is keeping movement possible - without causing a great deal of disruption. Try to ensure a large adult can walk through any aisle.

Meeting Style

The most popular room layout for small groups is meeting style. The layout allows the presenter to be as formal or informal as he/she wants. In addition, the presenter has a high degree of interaction with the audience. It is important however, that the presenter still be the focus of attention. So, even in an informal setting, the presenter should sit at the “head” of the table or occupy another position of prominence. This is most important when using visual aids.

Avoid the Blank Screen!

Traveling to Any City, to give a presentation? Save yourself a lot of pain and agony by always having a backup of your presentation on disk AND a printout of your presentation. This is the most important thing you can do to ensure that your presentation makes the trip with you!

After the Draft: Editing Your Content

When you have finished writing your presentation draft, you will surely edit it for misspellings and grammatical errors. But those revisions come later . . . Before you ever get to that state, take a look at your work to make sure it packs the punch you want it to. Try the following tips:

- Use descriptive words Consider the following passage:
We are pleased to announce that our team finished the project ahead of schedule. Though the project seemed like it would certainly be delayed, thanks to the efforts of Jim Daxton, it was not.

This passage provides the facts, but the fire is missing. The descriptions that make people want to “sit up and listen” are curiously absent. Consider the revised passage:

We are thrilled to say “WE DID IT!” Against what seemed like a mountain of obstacles, we finished the project 4 days ahead of schedule. Special kudos are in order to Jim Daxton who contributed Herculean effort to push this thing out the door.
- Use active voice

The battle between active and passive is commonplace. The key to powerful writing is using the active voice the majority of the time.

o Passive:

The results of last quarter's sales have been compiled and are to be presented at the next sales meeting.

o Active:

We have compiled last quarter's sales figures and will present them at the next sales meeting.

- Avoid jargon

Corporate America is currently besieged by the need to use jargon and double-talk. Boardrooms around the country spin with terms like leverage, multi-task, facilitate, utilize, etc. These words turn the simple into complicated and the clear into muddled. Perhaps you need to toss around these terms at times, but **THESE WORDS HAVE NO PLACE IN PRESENTATIONS**. Resist the temptation to use ambiguous jargon when straightforward diction will do.

Brainstorming with Sticky Notes

You know your topic, your audience, and the "call to action". You have tons of great ideas for your presentation. Now it's time to crank up the PowerPoint and get this presentation done . . . Well, not exactly.

Many presenters fall into a classic mistake: they don't adequately develop the presentation content before they begin to make their slides. By no means do you have to flush out every detail, but you should have a solid outline (including opening, key points, closing, and "call to action") before you begin to worry about slides. If you don't have enough information, before you worry about visuals, you may end up concentrating too much effort on background colors and not enough effort on the meat of the message.

Have you ever heard the phrase "throw it on the wall and see what sticks"? Well one of the easiest ways to organize your thoughts is by doing just that. Follow the steps below and you'll be organized in no time!

- Grab a stack of "sticky" notes, a marker, and the nearest blank wall.
- Use your sticky notes to brainstorm all of the points/issues/ideas you want to cover in your presentation.
- Don't worry about what they are or if they fit in. Just be sure to keep one idea per "sticky" note.
- After you have finished brainstorming, organize all your thoughts on the wall. Some notes will fall into categories rather easily, while others won't. Some may not even fit at all.
- Each category will probably turn out to be one of your main points.
- When you are finished, check your main points against your "call to action". If any point is unrelated to the direct action, get rid of it.
- Just crank up the PowerPoint and create that winning presentation!

Closing Presentations Well

The closing of a presentation is often the most important part. This is the final chance to reiterate the call to action and make a lasting impression. Following are four different types of presentation closings. Select the type of closing based on your presentation content and audience.

Matching Close

This closing is designed to sell the function, features, benefits, and advantages of a product or service. The opening of the presentation defines the desired characteristics. The body demonstrates that the product or service meets those characteristics. And the close summarizes the key characteristics and moves the audience to the product or service with the matching characteristics defined in the opening. By getting audience “buy-in” of the defined characteristics in the opening of your presentation, the closing is a “no-brainer” in moving your audience to purchase your product or service that meets the defined characteristics.

The Matching Close

Opening

Define characteristics desired

Body

Demonstrate characteristics of product/service

Closing

Relate how product features/benefits match desired characteristics

Pyramid Close

Many times a presenter has a substantial number of points to make in a presentation. Unfortunately, audiences only remember three to four main items. By creating a series of “key point” pyramids, presenters can categorize and weight which points are most important. Using a pyramid close, key points are listed at the top of the pyramid and remaining points are listed below. The opening should mention the key points and the body should define the key points in detail. The closing should reinforce/reiterate the key points and move the audience to the call-to-action.

The Pyramid Close

Opening

Define key points to discuss

Body

Describe key points in-depth using defined subpoints

Closing

Summarize key points and relate call-to-action to those points

Solution Close

The solution close is designed to show an audience how to solve a complicated problem/issue. This type of closing breaks down a large problem or issue into subcomponents. The presenter’s goal is to demonstrate to the audience how each one can be addressed, thus solving the overall problem. The opening of the presentation should define the problem or issue. The body should break down the issue into subcomponents

and provide solutions to each. The close should wrap all of the mini-solutions together. This organization demonstrates that addressing the subcomponents of a problem can solve the main one.

The Solution Close

Opening

Define key problem/issue

Body

Define components of issue

Provide Solutions to components

Closing

Summarize how implementing solutions to components solves overall issue/problem

Future Close

Predicting a successful future can be an excellent way to close a presentation. People like good news. By showing an audience where they are at present, the factors that will affect the future, and how you can help them succeed in this future, you can effectively reach your audience and make a powerful close. The key to this approach is being realistic in what you predict for the future.

The opening of this type of presentation should define where the audience is at present. The body of the presentation should outline the facts, figures, and strategy options. The close should make predictions for the future based on the facts and strategy selected.

The Future Close

Opening

Define current situation

Body

Outline facts, figures, and strategy options for the future

Closing

Summarize future predictions based on selected strategy

The 4 Key Components of Content

Action

Before you ever begin writing a presentation, you need to answer this question: What do you want your audience to do? Whether it's selling your product, securing a new business client, or promoting your favorite organization, every presentation is based upon moving an audience to perform an "action". At times, the action may simply be gaining enough information to enable them to do something else. In any case, every presenter should be able to write (in 15 words or less) what he wants the audience to do as a result of his presentation. It is important to keep this action to 15 words or less to truly define and narrow the action.

Body

Once you have determined the "audience action", the next step is to construct the main points of your presentation. These points should promote and convince your audience to perform the desired action. Because audience members typically only recall a few key points of a presentation, it is a good idea to limit content to 5 key points. And each of these key points should relate directly to the desired action.

Conclusion

The conclusion should summarize your key points, and, most importantly, tell your audience what “action” they need to perform. Make sure the ending is clear, concise, and to the point.

Opening

The opening should grab your audience’s attention and get them excited about your presentation. In addition, the opening should tell your audience why they are there, why they should listen to you, and what they will gain from your presentation.

Bonus Tip!

Once you have developed your content, it is important to go back and identify the areas of the presentation that would benefit from visual aids.

Speak to Your Audience

When speaking to your peers, the best way to present is to “relate” and “share” information. Avoid lecturing. Your peers won’t buy it!

Bonus Tip!

Draw peers into your presentation by asking them to share their expertise and experiences.

Exercise Your Message

Use group exercises to help an audience get your message! Group exercises can be a powerful tool in educating your audience about new topics, motivating your audience to perform specific tasks, and focusing on your audience on key messages of your presentation . . . Not to mention they are a great way to add a little fun!

Giving Your First Public Presentation

Your boss just told you that you will be speaking next week at a luncheon meeting of the local professional marketing association. She said your topic should relate to the award-winning marketing campaign you just completed, but she didn’t elaborate on details. You are excited but very nervous. You have never given a presentation before a large group and you don’t know where to start. Have no fear! The following checklist should help you get the background information you need to develop an effective presentation.

General Information

1. Who will be attending?
2. How does your topic relate to the attendees?
3. Does this group understand the technical/industry language you may use in your presentation?
4. How long do you need to speak?
5. What is the preferred style to present?
6. Will there be Q&A?
7. What is the name of the sponsoring organization and key contact information?

Audience Information

1. What is the audience size?
2. What are the basic demographics of the audience (age, gender, race, religion, education level, socioeconomic level, etc.)?
3. What are some of the related interests of the audience?

4. What will the audience be wearing (audience attire)?
5. What will be the disposition of the audience (friendly, supportive, neutral, hostile)?
6. What is the knowledge level of the audience regarding your presentation topic?

Once you have the basic information about your audience, you need to get more information about the logistics of your presentation. This information is critical. You don't want to get caught preparing an hour-long presentation to later find you were to appear on an expert panel for Q&A.

Venue Information

1. When is the presentation (time/date/location)?
2. What information exists regarding the event?
3. What is the venue for the presentation?
4. What is the room setup?
5. If you need A/V equipment, can the staff supply the equipment you need?
6. Will there be other speakers? In what order will they speak? What are their topics?
7. Will someone introduce you? What is his/her contact information?
8. Will there be press coverage?
9. Who is responsible for travel and hotel arrangements/expenses?

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Bottom of Form

Sat. June 5, 2004

Don't Forget a Presentation Agenda

A presentation agenda is one of the items that many presenters forget to create. An agenda is an important tool for a presenter because it enables the presenter to control the flow of the presentation. It also provides the audience with an overview of the activities to be completed and helps them anticipate and retain information.

Agendas can be especially helpful for interdepartmental meetings or long training sessions. If audience members are privy to an agenda prior to a meeting, they can attend the sections of the presentation that specifically relate to them. They can also delegate attendance if unable to attend certain sections themselves. Consider the following tips for presentation agendas.

Agenda Tips

- Distribute an agenda before the meeting, whenever possible
- Always have the meeting date, starting time, and meeting location at the top of the agenda
- Provide an overview of key sections
- Assign specific time frames to each section
- Allow a few extra minutes for each section

Sample Presentation: Creating Web Site Draw

This presentation was submitted by a marketing professional who specializes in new media. Mr. Cuomo needed to create a presentation to discuss "web site draw" - what

brings people to web sites and why. He was to deliver this presentation to a group of his marketing peers, most of whom are coming up to speed with new media.

This presentation is worthy of note because it does several things quite well: it contains a powerful opening, it is well-organized, and, despite its reliance upon text only, it is visually appealing.

The Power of a Single Word

This presenter gave much thought to the opening of the presentation. He knew he would have the opportunity to be in the conference room before any of the audience members. People would file in over the span of fifteen minutes. They would shuffle around and socialize. He wanted a way to pique the audience's interest before he began to speak. So, he projected this simple slide.

Following is actually the last slide in the presentation.

Following is the first slide.

The sheer simplicity of the question intrigues.

The purpose of the title slide is to get audience members wondering as they waited for the presentation to begin. The presenter then introduced himself and posed the question "why do people visit web sites? - the answer is all about ME." "Me" is the very core of the presentation: the key to successful web site draw is realizing the very special relationship that a site shares with its visitors.

Solid Structure Enhances Learning

Like most presentations, this one benefits from a strong outline. Notice the following:

- Slide 4 (the first "real" slide) provides the tenet on which everything else is built.
- Slide 5 states a clear goal for the presentation and establishes expectation for the audience.
- Slide 6 introduces the audience to the web site examples they will view throughout the presentation.
- Slide 9 introduces the four key areas flushed out in Slides 10-18.
- Slide 19 repeats Slide 9 - both identify four key areas of a successful Internet marketing plan. However, Slide 19 is an application of the knowledge presented in Slide 9. Audience members received a sample Internet marketing plan they could modify as per their circumstances.
- Slides 1 and 24 are identical: repetition reinforces learning. These slides reinforce the message that web site draw is all about the INDIVIDUAL.

Text Can Be Powerful

At first glance, this presentation may appear to be visually lacking. It contains text and no real graphic images. However the presenter planned it this way . . .

The presenter illustrated his point with examples from existing web sites - live sites. He used www.elliottdickens.com, www.joiboxer.com, www.kraft.com and www.llbean.com to illustrate his points. For example, when speaking about the portal experience of Generation III web sites, he showed the Joe Boxer web site. The presenter wanted the

live web sites to have maximum visual impact - so he purposely restricted the rest of the presentation to text, powerful, artistic text, but nonetheless, text.

In conclusion

So, are there any areas of the presentation that need work?

Proof! Proof! Proof Again!

You will lose instant credibility if you have spelling or grammatical errors in your presentation. Have a friend or coworker review your presentation. Credibility is hard to regain after it has been lost!

Corporate Presentation Templates

Many larger companies have established presentation standards that make it easier for you to prepare your presentation. Be sure you consult with your graphics department to review specific design standards. The last thing you want to do is waste time jazzing up your presentation only to find out later you can't use it.

Establishing Your Credibility

The second major function of an effective introduction is to establish yourself as a competent, trustworthy, and likable person with whom the audience can identify. People tend to form first impressions of speakers that color their later perceptions.²¹ In Chapter 2 we discussed the importance of the impressions you make on listeners in terms of your competence, integrity, likableness, and forcefulness - your ethos. As you make later presentations, you will carryover some of the initial ethos you established with your first presentation and from your interactions in class. You must confirm or strengthen this initial ethos in the introduction of your speech.

The most important thing you must establish is that you are qualified to speak on your subject. Establishing credibility is often difficult for beginning speakers. As we noted in Chapter 2, you can seem competent only if you know what you are talking about. People listen more respectfully to those who speak both from knowledge and personal experience.²² As we noted in Chapter 5, the perception of competence can be fortified by selecting topics you already know something about and by doing research to qualify yourself as a responsible speaker. In your introduction you can *allude* to your research to reinforce your credibility:

I was amazed to learn in psychology class that research does not support a strong link between exposure to persuasive communications and behavior. This discovery led me to do more reading on the relationship between advertising and consumer activity. What I found was even more surprising, especially when you consider that, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, companies were willing to pay 1.3 million dollars for a thirty-second spot commercial during the 1996 Super Bowl telecast.

Here the specific reference to the *Wall Street Journal* article suggests that you_ have done the research needed to make a responsible speech. Throughout the rest of your speech you can cite other respected sources to confirm this impression as you introduce

your supporting materials. It would not be effective, however, to simply announce baldly at the beginning of your speech:

The information for my speech comes from my psychology textbook, two articles from the *journal of Applied Psychology*, and a feature story in the *Wall Street journal*.

That would seem forced, awkward, and artificial. It would interrupt the “ natural flow of your introduction.

Your perceived competence will be further strengthened if your speech is well organized, if you use language ably and correctly, and if you have practiced so that your presentation flows smoothly.

To create a perception of integrity you must come across as an ethical and honest person. Convince listeners at the outset that all of your rhetorical cards are on the table. Audiences are more receptive when speakers are straightforward, sincere, and concerned with the consequences of their words.²³ You can enhance your integrity by showing respect for those who hold different opinions while still maintaining your personal commitment to your topic and position.

You should also present yourself as a likable and forceful speaker. Likable speakers are pleasant and tactful. They treat listeners as friends, inspiring affection in return.²⁴ Likable speakers also share their feelings and are able to laugh at themselves. To come across as a forceful speaker, you must project self-confidence. Although some communication anxiety is natural, as we noted in Chapter 2, you must train your butterflies to fly in formation. Your introduction should also display enthusiasm for your message. A smile and direct eye contact signals listeners that you want to communicate.

When you establish favorable ethos at the outset, you also create the grounds for one of the most powerful effects of communication: identification between yourself and listeners. Identification occurs when people successfully overcome the personal and cultural differences that separate them and share thoughts and feelings as though they were one.²⁵ When you seem likable, sincere, competent, and forceful, your listeners want to identify with you, and your effectiveness as a communicator is magnified.

Focus and Preview Your Message

The final function of an introduction is to focus on your thesis statement and preview the body of your speech. The thesis statement, as we noted in Chapter 5, signals the message of your speech in concentrated form. It is a one-sentence version of the speech. The “preview foreshadows the main points you will cover and offers your listeners an overview of the speech to come. It follows the thesis statement near the end of the introduction.

Martha Radner offered the following thesis statement and preview for her speech on campus security problems.

This campus will be a much safer place if we adopt my plan to improve campus security [thesis statement]. First, I want to show you how dangerous our situation has become. Second, I'll explore the reasons why current security measures on our campus are ineffective. And third, I'll present my plan for a safer campus environment [preview].

By informing her listeners of her intentions as well as her speech design, Martha helped her audience listen intelligently.

Selecting and using introductory techniques

There are no hard and fast rules for determining exactly how you should open a speech. As you review your research notes, look for material that would make an effective introduction. The following guidelines may help you make a wise selection.

- Consider your audience. Use your introduction to tie your topic to their needs, interests, or well being.
- Consider the mood you want to establish. Some topics will mandate a light touch, while others may call for more solemnity.
- Consider your time constraints. If you are to speak for seven minutes, you can't get bogged down in a five minute introduction.
- Consider what you do best. Some people are effective storytellers, and others are better using striking statistics or quotations. Go with your strength!

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE CONCLUSION

Many beginning speakers end their presentations awkwardly. "That's all, folks!" may be an effective closing for a film cartoon, but in a speech such conclusions violate the audience's need for closure. Saying "That's it, I guess" or "Well, I'm done," accompanied by a sigh of relief, suggests that you have not planned your speech very carefully. The final words of your speech should stay with listeners, remind them of your message, and, if appropriate, move them to action.

Summarizing Your Message

Your conclusion should begin with a summary statement of the main points you made in your speech. This summary often functions as a transition between the body and the final remarks. It signals the audience that you are about to finish. The following summary of main points appears in the speech on the greenhouse effect reprinted at the end of Chapter 8:

In conclusion, if you want to know why we 'have a greenhouse effect, listen for the falling trees, watch the industrial smoke darkening the air, smell the exhaust fumes we are pumping into the atmosphere.

The transition "In conclusion" alerts listeners to the summary statement that follows.

Note that the statement does not simply repeat the main points verbatim. Rather, the speaker rephrases these points artfully so that listeners can picture themselves actually experiencing the message.

Concluding Remarks

Although the summary statement itself can offer listeners a sense of closure, to seal that effect you need to provide some concluding remarks that stay with your listeners. Many of the techniques that create effective introductions can also be used to develop memorable conclusions. Using the same technique to close a speech that you used to open it can balance your speech.

Involve the Audience. At the beginning of a speech, you involve the audience by showing them how your message relates directly to their lives. At the conclusion of your speech, you should remind them of what they personally have at stake. In the speech on the greenhouse effect, the summary statement we have just analyzed was followed immediately by remarks that place the meaning of that statement in perspective for listeners:

The greenhouse effect is a monster we all are creating. And if we don't stop, we and our children face more and more drastic climate changes and serious health problems.

These comments tie in to the beginning of the speech, reemphasizing the seriousness of the problem it describes. The reference to “children” underscores the point that listeners are involved very deeply. In persuasive speeches, concluding remarks also often urge listeners to take the first step to confirm their commitment to action and change.

Ask Rhetorical Questions. When used in an introduction, rhetorical questions help arouse attention and curiosity. When used in a conclusion, such questions give your audience something to think about after you have finished. Annette Barrington opened her speech on the use of seat belts with a rhetorical question, “How many of you buckled up on your way to school this morning?” Her final words were “Now that you know what a lifesaver seat belts are, how many of you will buckle up on the way home?” This final question echoed the beginning and served as a haunting reminder to use seat belts. Had she closed with “Remember, seat belts save lives,” the effect would not have been as dramatic and memorable.

When used at the end of a persuasive speech, concluding questions may be more than rhetorical. They may actually call for a response from the audience. During his 1988 presidential campaign, the Reverend Jesse Jackson often used this technique to register voters. He would end a speech by asking:

How many of you are not registered to vote? Raise your hands. No, stand up so we can see you! Is that all of you who aren't registered? Stand up Left me see-you!

Such questioning and cajoling would be followed by on-site voter registration. Evangelists who issue an invitation to salvation at the end of their sermons often use concluding questions in a similar way. To be effective, this technique must be the climax of a speech that has prepared its audience for action.

End with a Story. Stories are remembered long after facts and figures are forgotten. A concluding narrative can help your audience *experience* the essence of your message. To conclude her speech on domestic terrorizing, which she opened with a narrative, Donna E. Shalala told the following story:

Let me conclude by telling you about a child psychologist named Sandra Graham-Berman who took responsibility for doing even more about the problem of domestic abuse]. Several years ago she became aware of a support group for battered women. But she heard that there was no professional support for their children. On her own time and with her own money she began a support group for the children of these battered women. She began to see the girls and boys act out, talk out, and draw out their fears and their frustrations. She helped them learn they are not alone in their pain. And she taught them that when mommy is in trouble - when she is being hurt by daddy - it's possible to get help by dialing 9- 1- 1.

A few years later, a shy 8-year-old girl walked in on a fight. Her father - if you can believe it, a child psychiatrist - was beating her mother on the head with a hammer. Try to imagine that. Try to imagine what you would do. Well, that little girl knew what to do. She remembered the lesson taught to her by a caring adult. And so she went to that phone, picked it up, pressed 9- 1- 1, and saved her mother's life. The father is in prison now and the family's trying its best to build a new life. If that little girl can have the courage to pick up the telephone, surely we can have the courage to prevent such stories from happening.²⁶

Close with a Quotation. Brief quotations that capture the essence of your message make effective conclusions. For example, if one literary quotation opens a speech, another on the same theme can provide an elegant sense of closure. Susie Smith opened her speech on job satisfaction with a quotation from William Faulkner that linked 'work and unhappiness. She closed the speech with a more positive quotation from Joseph Conrad that summed up the meaning of satisfying work:

I like what is in work - the chance to find yourself. Your own reality for yourself, not for others - what no other. . . can ever know.

These concluding remarks put the seal on Susie's message: that the search for work must be much more than finding a job; rather, that we must prepare ourselves for an occupation that will help us find, define, and create ourselves and our world.

End with a Metaphor. A striking metaphor can end your speech effectively.²⁷ As we will discuss at greater length in Chapter 10, metaphors combine things that are apparently unlike so that we see unexpected relationships. As a conclusion to a speech, an effective metaphor reveals a hidden truth about the speaker's subject in a memorable way. Ivlelodie Lancaster, president of Lancaster Resources, used such a metaphor combined with a narrative, as she concluded a speech to the Houston Council of the American Business Women's' Association:

We recall the story of the three stonemasons who were asked what they were doing. The first said, "I am laying brick." The second replied, "I am making a foundation." And the third said: "I am building a cathedral." Let's you and I set our sights that high. Let's build cathedrals of success today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow.²⁸

Consider the many meanings this metaphor might evoke in the minds of listeners. First, the speaker suggests listeners must work as hard as stone masons. Second, she suggests they must work a vision of their goals in mind. Third, the connection with a cathedral suggests they must work with the zeal and dedication characteristic of religious commitment. All these meanings are packed into the metaphor, making it memorable for her audience.

Whatever closing technique you select should satisfy your audience that what was promised in the beginning has now been delivered. Plan your summary statement and concluding remarks very carefully, just as you did with your introduction. Practice it until you are confident you will end your speech impressively. After your final words, pause a moment to let them sink in, then take your seat.

IN SUMMARY

A speech that is carefully structured helps the audience understand your message and enhances the ethos of the speaker.

Good form. *A well structured speech has good form: it is simple, balanced, and orderly. Simplicity can be achieved by limiting the number of main points and using clear, direct language. A speech has balance when the major parts receive proper emphasis and when they work together. The requirement of order means that a speech follows a consistent pattern of development.*

Structuring the Body of Your Speech. You should structure the body first so that you can build an introduction and conclusion that fit well with the principal part of your message. 1.0. Develop the body, determine Your main points, decide how to arrange them, then select effective supporting materials. To discover your main points, prepare a *research interview* of the information you have collected. This summary can help you spot major themes that can develop into main points.

Arrange your main points that they follow natural mental patterns based on the principles of similarity, proximity, and closure. The similarity of objects or events may suggest a *__categorical design* for structuring plain points. *Proximity* suggests that things should be discussed as they happen together” in space or time. If they occur in a time sequence, use a sequential design for your speech. If they ‘occur in physical relationship to each other, a spatial design might be appropriate. The structure of the body satisfies the principle of *closure* when it completes the design it begins. Cause-effect and problem-solution designs require closure in order to be effective.

Supporting materials fill out the structure of the speech and buttress main points and sub points. In an ideal arrangement, you should support each point with information, testimony, and an example or story that emphasizes its human aspects.

Using Transitions. Effective *transitions* point up the relationship among ideas in your speech and tie the speech together. *Internal summaries* remind listeners ‘of the points you have made in one part of Your speech before moving on to another.

Preparing an Effective Introduction. The introduction to a speech should arouse your listeners’ interest, establish your credibility, and focus and preview your message. Some useful ways to introduce a speech include involving the audience, relating your subject to personal experience, asking rhetorical questions, creating suspense, telling a story, using

humor, beginning with a quotation, or startling the audience. As you build credibility, you also make possible identification between you and the audience.

Developing an Effective Conclusion. An effective conclusion should summarize the meaning of your speech, provide a sense of closure, leave the audience with something to remember, and, if appropriate, motivate listeners to act. Techniques useful for conclusions include reenrolling the audience, asking questions, closing with a quotation, telling a story, and ending with a metaphor. Your speech will seem more symmetrical and satisfying to listeners if your conclusion ties into your introduction.

TERMS TO KNOW

good form	Transitions
simplicity	internal summary rhetorical
balance	question identification
order	preview
main points	summary statement
research overview	final reflections
principle of similarity	metaphor
principle of proximity	
principle of closure	

DISCUSSION

1. Working in small groups, share your research overviews for your next speeches. What major themes emerge, and how might these be trained into main points in light of the function and purpose of your speech? Defend your analysis and your selection of main points.
2. Share the organizational plan *of* your next speech with a classmate so that you become ‘consultants for each other. Help each other come up with alternative patterns for the main points, and optional introductions and conclusions. After the speeches are presented, each consulting team should explain the options it considered and why it chose the particular structures used for each speech.

APPLICATION

1. Select a speech from appendix B and write a thorough critique of its structure. Consider the following questions in your assessment.
 - A. Did this speech satisfy the requirements of “good form”? did it meet the needs of simplicity, balance, and order?
 - b. what kind of speech design did it use? Did this design satisfy the principles of similarity, proximity, and closure?
 - C. Was supporting material used effectively to strengthen the main points and sub points?
 - D. Did transitions keep the message in focus for listeners as the speech developed?
2. What kinds of introductory and concluding techniques might be most effective for speeches based on the following specific purpose statements?

- A. To inform my audience of the dangers of tanning salons.
- B. To persuade my audience that it is better to marry than to live together.
- C. To inform my audience of the deigns of domestic abuse.
- D. To persuade my audience that televising trials subverts the system of justice.

3. The following introduction was used in a speech presented at an honor society recognition conference. Evaluate this introduction in light of the guidelines for preparing effective introductions presented in this chapter and explain how you would revise or reorganize this material to make it more effective.

Today's I'm going to talk about the technology of the future. The theme for your conference is "preparing for the 21 st century," and getting a grip on the technological changes ahead of us is the best way to prepare for the next century. I'll also tell you a little about battled [the speaker's company], and I'll make a few predictions about what our world will be like over the next 10 to 50 years. That has me a little nervous, because any time you start making predictions, you hope no one nearby has a tape recorder.

Here's an example of what I mean. At the Chicago Worlds Fair way back in 1893, a group of 74 social commentators got together to look 100 years into the future - at the world of 1993. Here are some of their-predictions. Many people will live to be 150. The government wit! have grown more simple, as true greatness tends always toward simplicity. Prisons will decline and divorce will be considered unnecessary. The Nicaraguan canal is as sure to be built as tides are to ebb and flow and the seasons to change.²⁹