

# Presentation Skills for Technical Professionals



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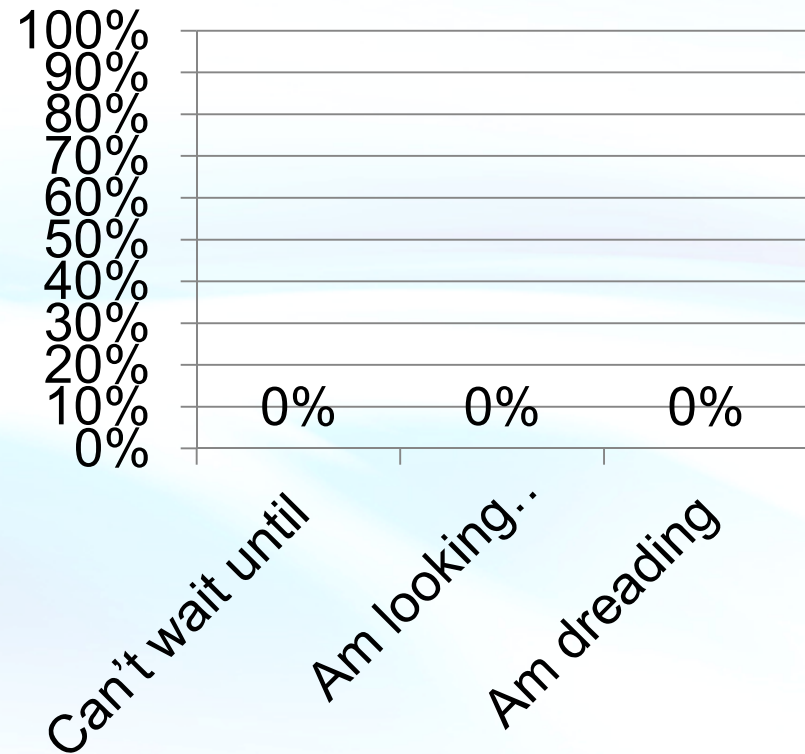
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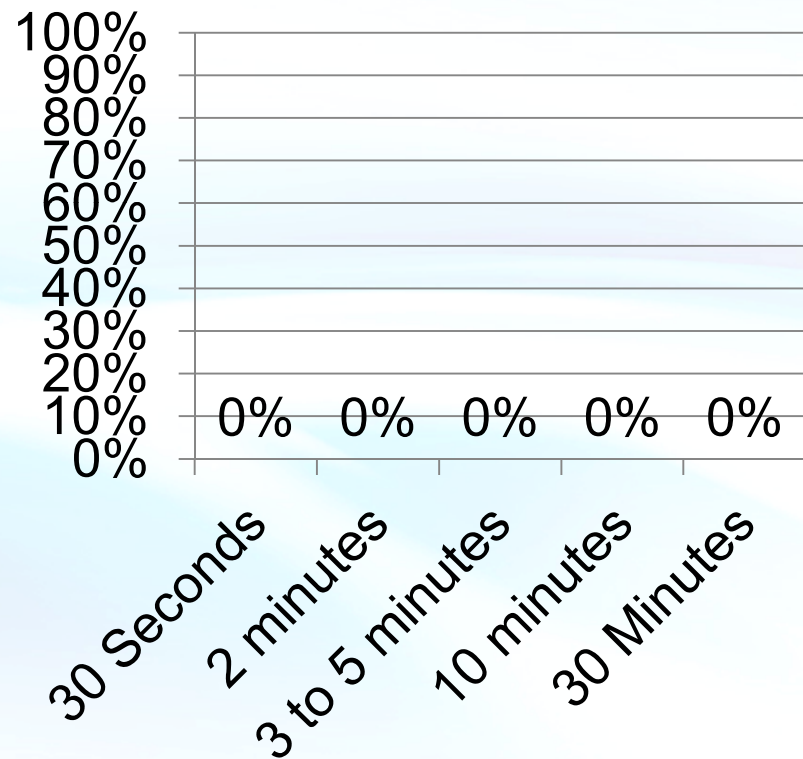
# I \_\_\_\_\_ my next presentation

1. Can't wait until
2. Am looking forward to
3. Am dreading



# People draw conclusions about the presenter in \_\_\_\_\_

1. 30 Seconds
2. 2 minutes
3. 3 to 5 minutes
4. 10 minutes
5. 30 Minutes



# Course Objectives

- Identify the ten things needed to analyze the audience
- Simplify technical jargon to increase audience understanding and acceptance



# Course Objectives Continued

- Avoid common presentation mistakes
- Make the audience remember the main points of the presentation
- Learn how to prepare effectively to ensure professional and confident delivery



# Aristotle on Persuasion

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself. Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided.

# Speaking Effectiveness

- Being good at anything is like figure skating - *the definition of being good at it is being able to make it look easy*. But it never is easy. Ever. That is what the stupidly wrong people conveniently forget.

***Hugh MacLeod***



# Speaking Effectiveness

- A good presentation
  - Inspires confidence
    - Team
    - Customers
    - Leadership
  - Shows you are in control of the situation





# Characteristics Of A Good Presentation

- The audience knows exactly what is expected of them as a result of the presentation
- The speaker displays the right amount of enthusiasm, concern, and emotion
- The presentation is an appropriate length

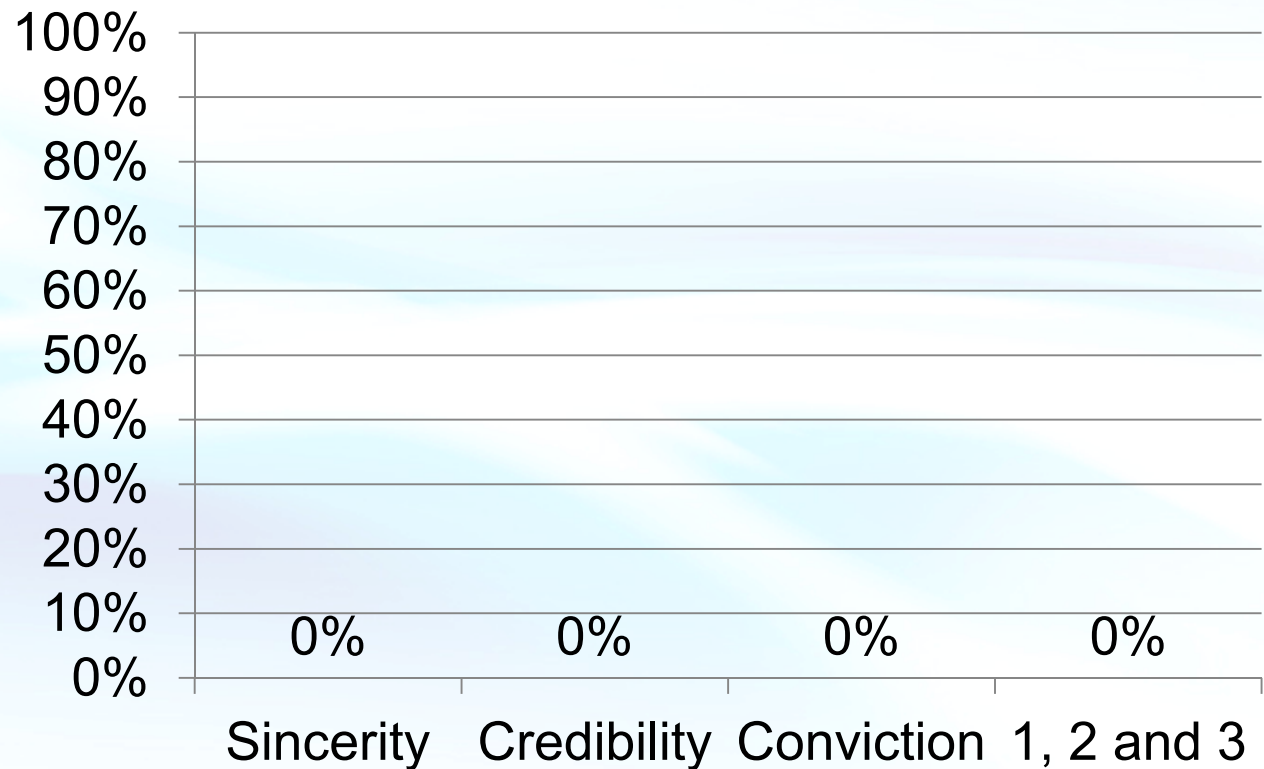
# Characteristics Of A Good Presentation Continued

- There is detail only where necessary
- The presentation is interesting
- There is a clear call for action



# Reading a presentation makes you seem like you don't have \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Sincerity
2. Credibility
3. Conviction
4. 1, 2 and 3



# Preparation

“By the time I’ve gotten to trial, I know as much about what I’m doing as people know about the things they are most used to talking about...All I have to do is get out of my mind the idea that it has to be structured in an artificial way. All I have to do is talk to people the way you would talk to people if they were in your living room.”



David Boies

# Preparation

- Preparation makes delivery easy
  - Preparation results in shorter presentations!
- Knowledge of the subject is...
  - Critical
  - Necessary
  - The basis for everything else
    - Great gumbo requires great roux



A member of the cabinet congratulated [Woodrow] Wilson on introducing the vogue of short speeches and asked him about the time it took him to prepare his speeches. He [Wilson] said: **"It depends. If I am to speak ten minutes, I need a week for preparation; if fifteen minutes, three days; if half an hour, two days; if an hour, I am ready now."**



# Ten Things to Know When Analyzing the Audience

1. Your relationship to the audience
2. The length and strength of your relationship to the audience
3. The audience's willingness to accept your idea, proposal, or information
4. The audience's level of knowledge about the subject

# Ten Things to Know When Analyzing the Audience

5. Whether the audience has pre-existing opinions or biases toward the subject
6. Whether the audience has pre-existing opinions or biases toward you or your organization
7. The real and perceived positive and negative impacts of the presentation on the audience



# Ten Things to Know When Analyzing the Audience

8. Why they are attending the presentation and whether they have any specific expectations
9. The kind of information or methods that will maintain audience attention
10. Whether there are any potential negative reactions from any of the information you plan to reveal

# Organizational Expectations

- Tradition or Culture Matters
  - For the venue
  - For the type of presentation
  - For the decision maker(s)

# Presentation Openings

- Gain the audiences attention and interest
  - ☐ Analogy
  - ☐ Quotation
  - ☐ Story
  - ☐ Example
  - ☐ Direct Statement
  - ☐ Critical Statistics



# Presentation Openings

- Define Your Objective
  - Prioritize if multiple
  - Complete sentences
- Understand your objective in the terms of the audiences objective
  - Prioritize the audiences objectives
- Rewrite your objectives in terms of the audience objectives

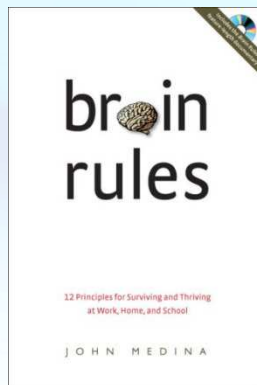


# Presentation Openings

- **If my objective is to**
- Get \$10,000 additional for my project to mitigate a risk
- **And the decision makers objective is to**
- Meet the cost targets of the third quarter at 20 percent less than last quarter.
- **The rewritten objective is as follows:**
- Authorizing \$10,000 to mitigate the risk will allow the project to make its planned contributions to the 20 percent cost target savings for the third quarter.

# Increase Retention

- What comes first is most remembered
- Remember to repeat, repeat to remember\*
- Use a variety of means
  - Facts
  - Pictures
  - Graphics
  - Statistics
  - Examples
  - Analogies
  - Stories



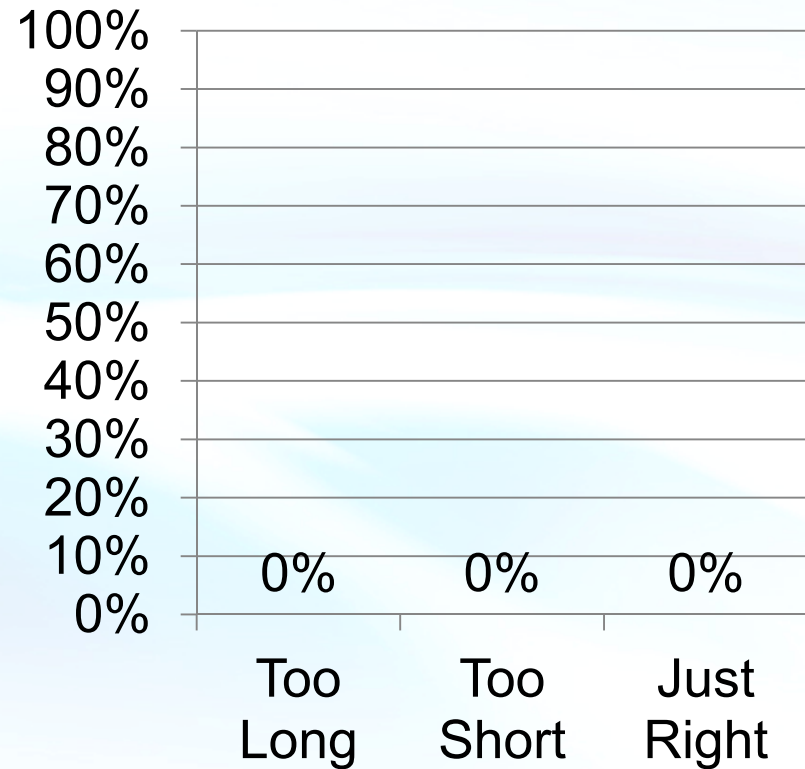
*Brain Rules*, John Medina, ISBN-13: 978-0979777745

# Mental Breaks

- Humans can only pay attention for about ten minutes and then need some kind of reset
  - Use this principle in your presentation structure
- Try to provide a short break every hour
- What difference does it make if people aren't listening

# Most Presentations at my company are...

1. Too Long
2. Too Short
3. Just Right





# Slide Guidelines

- 3 to 5 bullet points
- Meaningful Titles
- Label rows and columns in tables
  - Limit to 3 or 4
- One chart or graph per slide
  - Label axes and key data points or lines

# Slide Guidelines

- Color works great
  - Consider if the color may wash out on the LCD projector
  - Consider if the color provides distinction if the presentation is in black and white
  - Use consistently throughout

# Presentation Timing

- Three minutes per slide as a general rule
  - You must know your own style
- Pay attention to progress at the 25, 50, 75 and 90 percent time marks
  - Have someone discreetly share with you
- Advise the audience how you plan to finish if there is a timing concern

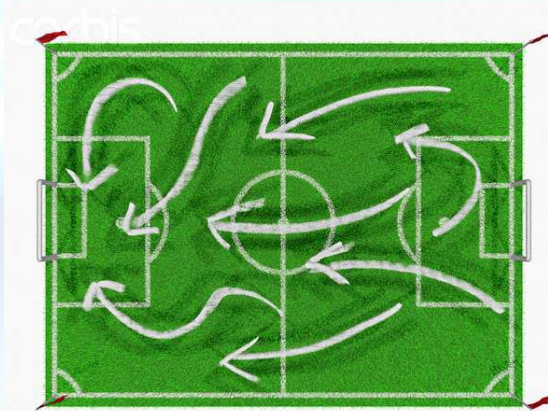
# Levels of Abstraction

- Outdoor equipment
- Fishing equipment
- Fishing rod
- Surf fishing rod
- Bait casting surf rod
- Long distance bait casting surf rod
- Long distance bait casting surf rod tailored for a four ounce load
- Long distance bait casting surf rod tailored for a four ounce load with bite detection tip and parallel butt
- Conoflex Phantom XL with a fixed reel seat, Alconite rings long distance bait casting surf rod tailored for a four ounce load with bite detection tip and parallel butt



# Atmosphere

- Get a feel for the presentation location/space ahead of time
- Sit where the audience sits
- Coordinate what is in your control to your liking
  - Act like everything is in your control





# Atmosphere

- Know what comes before you and what comes after you
  - Emotional carry over is real and must be managed
- Get your energy right before you start
  - Use emotional and sense memory tools
    - Find triggers



# Audience Connections

- Use words\*\*\* in the representational system of your decision maker.
  - ☐ Visual – Picture, Depict Illustrate, Glimpse
  - ☐ Auditory – Hear, Harmonize, Ring, Click
  - ☐ Kinesthetic – Strike, Sharpen, Grab, Stir



\*\*\* “The most powerful stimulus for changing minds is not a chemical. Or a baseball bat. It is a word.” *Psychologist George A. Miller*

# Establishing Credibility

- The opening and closing of the speech are best done without notes
  - This means you know them cold

# Introductions

- Your introduction is the first credibility step
- The person introducing you may be...
  - Nervous
  - Unprepared
  - Overwhelmed
- Give them a short bio or introductory statement to read

# Practice

- Start out by yourself
  - Ignore mistakes
- Practice in front of friendly observers
  - Document mistakes *after* the presentation is complete
- Practice through visualization
  - Slide by Slide
  - Positive...Positive...Positive



*"Rehearsal is the work,  
performance is the relaxation."*

Sir Michael Caine



# Handling Distractions

- Technology Glitches
- Audience Members
  - Eager Beavers
- Technical Jargon

# Handling Questions

- Brainstorm the 10 hardest questions someone could ask you
  - Write out the answers
  - Practice the answers
  - Acknowledge what you don't know or is unknown
    - Communicate a plan and a date to resolve this
- *If you don't know... say so... and that you will find out*



# Things to Avoid

- Jokes
  - No canned jokes
  - Funny stories
    - Your own yes
    - Others no
- Be careful with Simon-Says
- If you think it could possibly be inappropriate...  
treat it that way



# Closing the Presentation

- Give a clue
- Recap the objectives/premise
- Request specific action from the audience



# Mistakes

- Never apologize when something goes wrong
  - You Know
  - They Know
  - You know, that they know, that you know etc.
- It is usually best to keep going



# Checklist for Successful Presentations

- ☐ Determine the presentation's structure.
- ☐ Analyze your audience so you address their needs.
- ☐ Establish the length and order of key points.



# Checklist for Successful Presentations

- ☐ Create your presentation's opening and close.
- ☐ Plan for key questions.
- ☐ Plan for distractions and ways to overcome them.



# Checklist for Successful Presentations

- ☐ Practice your presentation's content and delivery.
- ☐ Believe in yourself and your speaking skills.



# Persuasive Power

If you have the power of uttering the word, you will have the physician and the trainer your slave, and the moneymaker will gather treasures, not for himself, but for you who are able to speak and persuade the multitude.

Plato

