

CEO's - Take the Drama out of Public Speaking



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There's no need to add an acting degree to your financial and business qualifications but if you want to give your audience a memorable experience and get them to act on your message, try adding a little GLOSS to your presentation.

It takes an average audience less than fifteen seconds to determine whether they like you, your style, are willing to listen to what you have to say and if you're lucky perhaps even act on your message. Period. The audiences' perspective is in most cases the only thing that really matters – for without their approval your presentation can die in the wings. If you're serious about getting outcomes, not giving lip service to the topic, or having a soap box to stand on then prepare each presentation through the eyes of the audience and what they would like to hear and see. It is in essence about them – not you.

You may be the CEO or Head Honcho of an organisation, but on the Speakers' platform you are an actor, set and costume designer, director, producer, lighting and music technician, and Sales person extraordinaire – selling the secrets, benefits, opportunities and skills that will improve their lives and their outcomes all through your emotive presentation. Public Speaking in today's business world is about transforming the ordinary message into a visual and physical stage where the speaker moves his audience through impact. And, it can take you less than 35 minutes to prepare, provided you follow the 5 step GLOSS principle

The idea is to come out punching with a *Grab* that makes them each audience go "WOW, this is different and makes me feel this is really about me". While your grab does not have to be an Academy Award performance it needs to be delivered with at least eighty per cent of your maximum energy. (The remaining 20 per cent can be given when you are making your summary). A great place to start is with a question or two, a comment, a bold statement, a visual image that evokes the senses or strong body language and voice combination. *The impact you make when you begin determines the level of interest others will be willing to put into the listening.*

Your opening Grab needs to be short, evocative, focussed and always have the end in mind to allow you refer to it throughout the presentation. Powerful "grabs" include statements like "I'll never forget the time when..... walked in the office and looked me straight in the eye and said....." or "It was 8th August 2001 at precisely 3.15 pm when Tom Smith called to say that he no longer wanted to do business with us there was something in his voice that told me what was to come just the beginning of a major problem"

Once you have set the scene and got the audience's attention, you're already well on your way to linking them to you and your topic which is the second part of the gloss. This link connects you to them, and them to each other and gives them the reason to keep listening. A suitable link could be

"Like you, Tom Smith knew there was more to doing business than just having the goods on hand – it was about being forward thinking, responsible and honest. (Pause and change tonality of voice) Indeed the very reason why this meeting is being held as we believe your future financial and personal success will be dependant upon how we position and look after our customers- now and in the future"

Once your link has been established (all under 5 minutes) you are moving towards the next strategy, which is declaring an outcome for your audience.

"The business results that Tom Smith was looking for are exactly what will be offered to you. By the end of my presentation today I will have given you new skills in handling difficult situations, provide practical skills in internal and external customer service and how to avoid traumatic situations just like the one I was in with Tom. I will also give you greater support and understanding about the many complexities of this business and how we can maximize our collective knowledge to work

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more collaboratively together". "The 5 key strategies to make your job easier and more effective will be covered in today's meeting – all are targeted and will be practical and realistic for you.

By this stage of your presentation you are ready to go deeper into the *skills* and *strategies* of the How, the Why, the What and the Who of your topic. The next step is to demonstrate the strategies and examples of what has worked in the past and what is in place for the future. It could be.....

"Each area will be supported by new team leaders from both the financial and administrative sections to give you the information you will need. There will be weekly support and briefing sessions to assist and provide you with the information you need – when you need it. In fact, we will be able to help you forecast any problems so we as a company and you as an individual are faced with any more incidents liked the one we faced with Tom Smith"

The above is a simple example of how to implement the GLOSS. Now is the time to add the spice and bring a sense of the theatre to the platform.

As the majority of people present at the head of a table or a podium. Your chance is to begin with a little more pizzazz and style, as predictable behaviours and patterns of delivery always get predictable outcomes. Consider beginning as though you were telling a story, seated or standing in a different place. Tell the story in a conversational tone – not unlike if you were talking to friends across a dinner table. Warm up your voice a little with some vocal exercises before hand; think about the right tonality to get the maximum impact at the beginning and pause for 3 seconds after the opening sentence. Make eye contact with others in the room. Don't be in a hurry to race ahead, rather get a feel for the mood you are setting. Breathe deeply and with a slight change in position lift one hand – keep your palm open to mid range and continue your monologue. Lift the energy of your voice, hold your eye contact on 2 or 3 people and only change looking at them at the end of every sentence. Don't change your eye contact in the middle of a sentence.

Practice moving to different areas of the platform, but avoid doing a tap dance on the spot or shuffling from one foot to the other. Practice in front of the mirror, get a colleague to give you feedback and if possible try and set the room up to give you floor space rather than being locked behind a lectern and computer. Tell your story as a story – don't have notes that need to be read. Use icons or dot points to help you remember sequence of what you want to say but don't take your eyes off your audience. They do not need you to read a PowerPoint presentation as 1) they can read! 2) It is boring and time wasting. Telling a story and using your body language will engage them far more. To maximise your effectiveness, remember that 55% of your communication is remembered through your body language. Here is your opportunity to give your story a life of its own and not just facts. Walk the talk, as they say and let your words and body language synchronize. Your gestures, breathing, movements and yes even stillness are all giving messages to your audience so become more conscious of the impact you are doing. Remember if you are speaking or moving, or even using silence to make an effect you are giving signals to people that will evoke some type of emotion or interest. Your voice will contribute to 38% of the effectiveness of your message so let your voice help you get the results you want. Think of your voice as a paint pallet or an orchestra where there are colours and music. It is much more interesting for the listener or viewer to be stimulated by movement and the same applies to our voice. Consider the range of tones you are using and what it sounds like. Vary the pitch, pace, volume, and dynamics of all or few combined or individual that make up the story. People need a variety of all the above to keep them interested, to feel your energy and in many ways you the tonality of your voice will influence others in what you are saying. Silence too, can help our message penetrate into the minds of our listeners. Too often we speak too much, too fast and have too much to say. By instilling some silence after poignant comments, the listener has the opportunity to interpret the words in their own mind without having to orchestrate it for them.

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Choose your words like a script from a play. Demonstrate your information through metaphors, story telling, humour, props, space and imagery such as photos and music. Develop an awareness of where and when to stop talking before the audience stop listening. Most people will *not* remember all you say, all you do, but will remember the way you make them feel.

Following the 5 step GLOSS principle is easy – Make the Grab, Link it to the audience, give them an Outcome, demonstrate Skills and show them the Strategies to help them along the way. The creative part then is up to you, and by using a variety of interactive and emotive techniques you will bring a spirit of performance to your presentations that will remain in the hearts and minds of your audience long after your presentation is over.

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