



**Secrets To A  
Killer  
Presentation**

By

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# 7 Secrets To A Killer Presentation

There is a ton of material in this e-book. No fluff. Just to the point information that will help you immediately.

I suggest three things before you get started:

1. Print out a copy of this book so you can make helpful notes.
2. Read it and digest it in small sections sort of like reading a textbook.
3. Save it for the next presentation. The principles won't change, but you will get more out of it and continue to improve.

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# 7 Secrets To A Killer Presentation

Early in my broadcast career, I was terrified to be on the air. I would sweat profusely, my heart would race and I was convinced I was going to forget what I was going to say. Sometimes I got lightheaded and thought I would pass out.

I only had one thing going for me. I loved talking about the weather. It was my job and my passion. But I was terrible at it.

With my meteorology background I knew my stuff but didn't know beans about presenting.

I never had any formal training or schooling in broadcasting or communicating! It took years to learn it - the hard way. I am delighted to share it with you.

It was crucial for my job security to learn how to communicate. I had to present so people understood what I was saying and not have to stop and wonder about what I just said.

To make it worse, I had a young-sounding, high-pitched voice and my command of language wasn't anywhere near what it needed to be. (I hated English classes, much to my later dismay)

Slowly, over a period of years, I learned many secrets that made me a success on TV, radio. Later the secrets served me well in my work as an Arizona State Senator, a college teacher and a business coach.

Now, after thirty years in front of audiences, cameras and microphones, I teach others to speak and present like a pro - the easy way. I learned how to overcome my fears and structure my material so it made sense. I learned how to be a more entertaining and engaging presenter.

My first major "Aha!" moment came with the realization that the terror that came with speaking - whether at a presentation, a meeting, or a job or media interview - was something everyone experienced at first. I also realized that, if I was going to rise to the top of my profession, I needed to embrace the terror and use it to my advantage.

Once I did that, I understood people who learn to enjoy the challenge will succeed. 90% of the rest will give in to their fears and fail or, worse, get paralyzed by their fear and never even get to the starting line.

I heard a noted pro golfer say he loved it when the wind blew and the rain came because many of his competitors mentally “give up” when the going gets tough. By *embracing the challenge*, he knew he held an advantage and thus achieved the top tier of his profession.

So, here I have compressed my hard-won experience into 7 secrets that you must know for speaking success. Conquering the terror and using it to succeed is first on my list.

## 1. Eliminate Your Fears And You'll Eliminate Most Of Your Competition

*“The majority of the population is more afraid of dying than getting in front of an audience!”*

It's true some people have “died” on stage. You can check it out on the Internet!

However, dying is almost 100% of the time figuratively and not literally. When you are asked to speak, whether it's a presentation for a potential buyer, a seminar for a business group, or to chair a meeting, fear is, by far, the number one obstacle to overcome.

True fear can be a powerful motivator. We need fear. Without it we wouldn't instinctively jump out of the way of an oncoming car or to stay away from wild animals. However, *paralyzing* fear of something that poses no physical harm is NOT productive.

Sadly, most of us have way too much of that fear.

Did you ever wonder why some people can stand up and talk with seeming ease, poise and confidence? Did you question why you didn't get that job, that sale, or that promotion? You're not alone. Everyone does.

The answer to “why” often can be found in the composure and assuredness you display in front of others. Many hopes are dashed on the rocks of poor presentation skills.

Those with the dashed hopes ask “why” .

Those that succeed have overcome their fears, embrace the success and celebrate.

I tell my clients that as we construct a presentation or speech we will build confidence. We will understand that having backup media and other resources will give you a fallback position to reduce fear. Further, there are specific tactics that we can employ to conquer the “terrors” and dramatically increase our chance for success.

We will be ready to answer most questions and have the ability to deal with the unexpected. We will become the winners. Remember, if you want to be the best, others must see you as the best as well.

Some of my keys to overcoming fear and using it to your advantage are:

- PREPARATION - Nothing beats it to soothe your fears.
- PRACTICE - The more you rehearse, the better your performance.
- MEMORY TRIGGERS - Cue cards are ok and the audience won't see them.
- BACKUPS - Bringing copies of your presentation on different media (Thumb Drive, CD, etc.) increases your odds of success and builds your confidence.

*"Butterflies in the stomach are normal,  
but we can teach the butterflies to fly in formation."*

## 2. Set Your Goal Before You Create Your Presentation

### Build Your Presentation Backwards

Start with the end of your presentation in mind. Ask yourself: "What is it that I want to happen when this is over?"

- Do you want there to be wild applause or a standing ovation?
- Do you want the audience to have a warm and fuzzy feeling?
- Do you just want to be adored for what a great presentation you gave?
- Or...do you want your audience take a specific ACTION?

Politicians and performers crave applause, ovation and adoration. "Self-Help and Lifestyle" gurus want the attendees to feel the warmth. Business speakers want ACTION.

A business speaker wants you to buy into their idea or product, get on board for the next project, invest money or perform a specific action. Those actions might be as simple as going to a website, taking a survey or giving the speaker your contact information.

When I work with business speakers I show them how to achieve their goal and move their audience to ACT!

Some of my keys to inspiring action are:

- **Enthusiasm** is contagious to an audience
- **Delivering** what the audience wants and expects
- Your **confidence and believability** will transfer to your audience
- **Likeability**. If they like you they will do what you ask with a smile

### 3. The Best Presentations Solve The AIDA Code

The success of your presentation depends on four factors - The A-I-D-A Code:

- Attention - Grab It!
  - Open strong. Make them think. Ask unusual questions or make provocative statements. Your opening is the Headline of your presentation
  - Promise to take them someplace they've never been or give them important information they do not know.
- Interest - Keep It
  - Once you have their attention keep feeding more and more information that your audience wants to hear. Use discussions, imaginative graphics, anecdotes, case studies, and on-the-money quotes to stimulate the mind of your listeners.
  - Move. Interact. Be energetic. Use your voice to enliven, not hypnotize. In other words, be an entertainer, not a trainer. Make it fun! Never, ever be boring.
- Desire - Create It
  - Why are you here? What is the reason for your presentation? Whatever your answer is... make the audience desire it.
    - I'm here to help the sales force make more sales. Create a desire for excellence, for recognition, for success. Inspire them to outperform and be a "Star Circle" member.
- Action - Direct It
  - Tell them what you want them to do.
    - Commit to making five more calls per day.
    - Bring your closing ratio up by 20%
    - Increase your booked dollars by 12%
  - Then have them imagine what it will be like when they do it
    - More money
    - Extra vacation week
    - Corner office
    - Enhance your business
    - Better your life

This may sound silly, but every presentation has to have a beginning, middle, and an end. Many presentations don't. They start weak, wander around in the middle and never direct the audience to take action at the end. Presentations that are just "shooting the breeze" are not presentations at all. They are conversations. They are boring. And they don't get the job done!

Look to the A-I-D-A Code to structure a great opening, information-rich middle and a "boffo" close aimed at taking ACTION!

*"By your entrances and your exits ye shall be known."*  
--W. Shakespeare

Shakespeare got it right 500 years ago. People remember a good beginning and a good ending. Think of the last time you saw a really good movie. As odd as it sounds, if you work hard to have a good open (grab their attention) and a good close (move them to act) the middle (information) will pretty much fall into place.

## 4. Your Audience Is Sitting At Your Kitchen Table

After 30 plus years of broadcasting and public speaking I'm convinced that the most difficult situation in public speaking is being a standup comic. Most speakers present to a group that can be considered friendly territory. This is not the case with a standup comic.

Picture the person in the audience with arms folded saying: "Okay make me laugh, pal." It doesn't get much tougher than that. Oh, and frequently members of the audience are, shall we say, inebriated.

So here's a way to make it easier to reach your audience

- Speak conversationally as if they were your friends sitting at your kitchen table.
- You'd speak plainly, in short sentences, using words that everyone understands.
- If you ask a question - you'd look to one of them for an answer.
- You'd look them in the eye.
- You might make a witty comment.
- Speak like a stuffy professor or teacher and you'll get a chilly reception.

### Know Your Audience

A presenter who connects and identifies with their audience can custom-tailor their presentation to them. Whether that customizing entails using industry-specific terms, understanding their problems and presenting solutions, or having case studies or stories they can relate to.

This creates kinship with the audience that leads to success. The more you know about the audience, their problems and their desires, the better your chance to get the outcome you want.

#### Quick Pro Tip:

In some professional speaking situations, I encourage the people I work with to conduct a survey beforehand. Take the time to find out what's on the mind of the audience. Imagine how much easier it is to craft a presentation aimed directly at the questions that are on THEIR minds. It's a powerful tactic that has worked for me every single time I have used it.

## 5. Preparation - Your Best Friend

*“Just as knowing the audience leads to success,  
lack of preparation leads to failure.”*

We're used to seeing broadcasters and actors and politicians effortlessly deliver their lines. Many of them make it seem really easy. Some natural talent may be involved but nothing makes up for preparation. Great presentations are a learned skill.

The newscaster delivering the hard news of the day is likely reading it off a Teleprompter. They have probably read over that script many times and have become very successful at “selling it” to the audience. Practicing and the Teleprompter are two forms of preparation.

Aside from live television, shows that we see on television involving actors and yes - even those on the reality shows - are working from some form of script or outline. They will video a scene as many times as it takes to get it right. Rarely do you see the bloopers.

Moviemaking takes it to whole new level. It's very common for a scene to be shot 10 or 20 times to get it just perfect.

It is almost impossible to over prepare or rehearse for a presentation or speech. Some of the tactics I employ make the rehearsal less painful than you might think.

I never suggest memorization. Unless you're a practiced actor, memorization usually comes off as very stiff and unemotional. When you try to memorize just forgetting one part of the script can throw off your whole presentation.

I much prefer techniques that supply triggers that help carry you from one thought to the next. Here's the thing - if you know your subject, that expertise will shine. If you don't know your subject - Prepare!

Some of my keys to good preparation are:

- PREPARE EARLY AND OFTEN - Do not wait until the last minute. Start the moment you know you have a pending presentation
- USE POWERPOINT - It's a marvelously effective memory trigger - but keep the number slides to a minimum. And only one concept per slide.
- HANDOUTS - Printed handouts are powerful. It should not be your presentation but a guide for the audience. (Great for promoting you and your business, too)
- ARRIVE EARLY - Know the setup of the room and who is in charge of everything technical
- LEAVE NOTHING TO CHANCE - What can go wrong frequently DOES!

*“Be Prepared!”* -- Boy Scout Motto

## 6. Murphy's Law For Speakers

*"Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong"*  
Murphy's Law

When was the last time you were at a presentation or speech and there was some sort of an audiovisual or technical problem with the setup?

I believe there is some sort of a technical problem in eight out of ten presentations. It is outrageous that it happens so often but you can do a few things to minimize problems.

Again this requires preparation.

### Visit The Venue

If possible, visit the venue well before you give your presentation. Here are a few questions to answer before you present:

- What does the room look like? How big is it? How high are the ceilings? This makes a great difference in the way you conduct your presentation.
- How is the seating configured?
- Where will you be working from in the room? Try to never get locked down to a podium or a small area to make your presentation.
- Where are the microphones located? What type are they? Who will help make sure they work before you start?
- What will I do if my computer presentation won't work? Is there an IT person on site?
- If your presentation is on computer (like PowerPoint) always bring at least one backup. I travel with a back-up laptop and thumb drives and a CD I have made.
- Make sure your hand-outs and giveaways are well-organized and printed in sufficient quantities. Make sure the venue has a copier available in case of an emergency.
- A number of top-tier speakers start their presentation with a short video. It quiets the attendees immediately and serves as a great introduction to your presentation. If you can, test the video at the venue in advance.

This is just a sampling of the many things that should be checked out in advance to give you the best odds that there will be no technical difficulties.

## 7. Leave Your Ego At The Door

The audience members may not admit it but they only have one thing in mind - they all listen to one radio station, WIIFM. (What's In It For Me?)

So enter your presentation with composure, with preparation, but without arrogance.

*Remember: "Your presentation IS you but it is not ABOUT you."*

Your guests probably wouldn't be there if they did not already think that you had material that they were interested in. They don't need to hear a lot about how wonderful you are unless it is from the person that is introducing you - that's different. Here are some ways to help you get rave reviews.

- A GOOD INTRODUCTION can set the stage to make your presentation much easier and have the audience in the palm of your hand.
- TRY A SHORT VIDEO - It hushes the audience and gets their attention. When you begin they are primed to listen and participate.
- HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, KID - The audience (especially a live audience) will notice how you're groomed, how you're dressed and how you present yourself. This is more powerful than many realize. Don't overlook how you come across to your audience.
- CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? It is much easier to listen to someone using a conversational tone than a lecturing tone. Even if you don't have a trained voice, you can learn techniques to make you easy on the ears of your audience.
- GESTURES AND BODY LANGUAGE are important as well. With a live audience are you interacting with them? I've known speakers that literally refused to get out from behind the podium to give a presentation. Trust me, it's a lot harder to engage an audience today if you aren't out there "mixing it up" with them a little bit.
- YOU CAN'T FAKE IT. People have a very strong B.S. detector. Be yourself. Be conversational, have fun and the audience will love you. Oh, and one other thing. Good-natured humor breaks down barriers faster than a Sherman tank.
- BUT LEAVE THE STAND-UP TO THE PROFESSIONALS - There is a wide chasm between a bit of humor and trying to tell jokes like a comedian. Trying to be a comedian is risky. NEVER, EVER, tell an off color or out of bounds joke. All your hard work can be undone in seconds.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

You have the secrets now.

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You are on the right track toward that killer presentation. The more times you speak, the easier it will get and the better your presentation.

Some of these secrets may be easy for you, some harder. If you follow these suggestions, you will be making better presentations right away. If you prepare, practice and present a lot, you will become very good very quickly.

Helping those who wish to give fantastic presentations is one of the things I do.

In groups or one-on-one, I help you get over the tough spots and help you prepare for that important speech or presentation. Those I work with are amazed at how much better they get quickly when they have the right person and tools to work with.

If I can help you with your presentations, let me know. Send me an email to [Ed@MessageMarketMedia.com](mailto:Ed@MessageMarketMedia.com) and I will send you a link with my schedule so we can discuss it. My initial consultations are complimentary and there is no obligation.

I look forward to speaking with you!

Warmest Regards,



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