

Presentations

Coaching Questions

“What are your biggest concerns about presenting?”

Topic Introduction

Everyone experiences the same physical feelings when presenting including feeling hotter, potentially getting butterflies, and getting an infusion of adrenaline. The difference of feeling nervous or excited is all in the mind as these physicals feelings are the same for either emotion. The paradigm shift is, if you are nervous about presenting it is just in your mind.

Discussion Questions

- Do you not know where to begin?
- Are you nervous to stand in front of a crowd?
- Are you comfortable, but just not as effective as you'd like?
- Are you worried that your message won't be well received?

Key Learning

There is always room for improvement. From the least effective presenter to the good presenter, if you can improve one thing each time you present, you can become a great presenter.

“Why does your audience care about what you are talking about? Do they?”

Topic Introduction

When developing your presentation, you always need to start with who will be in the audience. If your topics, anecdotes, and your vocabulary don't match your audience, it doesn't matter how good your presentation is.

Discussion Questions

- Have you started with why your audience is there?
- Are you making sure that you mention this at the beginning to hook them in?
- Are there one or two things the audience will take away? Do you have new nuggets of information?

Key Learning

An audience member only retains 2 to 3 messages from your presentation. Make sure that they are taking away the ones you want them to.

“How do you keep them engaged?”

Topic Introduction

Getting your audience's attention is one thing. Keeping it is another thing. It is rare to keep them hooked the entire presentation, and the only way to do this is to continue to have ways to bring them back.

Discussion Questions

- How do you add sizzle?
 - o Do you add anecdotes? Stories? Jokes?
 - o Do you add props? Interesting visuals? Handouts?
 - o Do you engage the audience with questions, games, or other interactions?
 - o Do you add sound effects? Change your volume?
 - o Do you move around?
 - o How do you change the pace, pitch or tone of the presentation?
- How can you stretch yourself?

Key Learning

Typically, the more sizzle the better. But sizzle that doesn't add value or reinforce a point can be distracting.

Examples

Real Life Example: What are your biggest concerns about presenting?

A purchaser at a large wholesale tea and coffee company was proposing to change their packaging, as they did not sell directly to consumers and the packaging was an expense rather than adding value to their restaurant customers.

The purchaser was concerned about presenting, as typically the executive did not worry about the cost of packaging as it was a small component of the budget.

The topic was not important to his audience, but he needed to make it important. He did this by using a metaphor to show how a waste of money it was. He started the presentation with a powerful hook.

He showed a picture of a sports car and said “What a beautiful car! For your pizza to get delivered in this car, it only costs \$400.”

Then he showed a picture of a junky, old car and said “Or you can get it delivered in this for \$40.”

The executive had never considered their packaging a waste of money before, but by using a powerful metaphor illustrating the problem, he had their attention from the start.

Real Life Example: Why does your audience care about what you are talking about?

A lawyer had been doing a few presentations to small business associations, specifically she’d outline the services that she provided and why those services were important for small business owners. This approach had resulted in zero sales.

She changed her approach by realizing that her audience cared about two things;

1. The cost of legal fees
2. The complexity of the legal system

To address these two concerns, she changed her title to “The Top 7 Legal Concerns of Small Business”. She organized the entire presentation into the priority of a small business owner (instead of her priority of services she wanted to sell). Her entire presentation explained that if you only had \$2000, these are the legal risks you could protect yourself from. And if your budget was more or less, what your priorities should be.

She finished the presentation by explaining that this order of 7 was for small business owners in general, but if they wanted their own priority based on their business’ situation, she would do an assessment for free.

By focusing on the audience, she had earned a few customers before she had left the building.

Real Life Example: Do they care?

A teacher began each of her courses by going around the room and asking each student what they expected to get out of the course. Some responses would include a better job, a specific topic, or a specific skill. Whatever the class indicated was their expectation or objective in the first class, she would tweak the course accordingly.

Real Life Example: How do you keep them engaged?

A keynote speaker in a wheelchair due to a horrific accident kept a roomful of 125 people engaged for 2 hours. Most people would think that you’d have to do backflips in order to do this.

The keynote speaker used the following tactics:

- A slideshow with only pictures. No words.
- Stories, anecdotes, and jokes comprised the majority of the talk.
- Intonation, change in volume, and silence.
- Moving from one side of the screen to the other. Then remaining still for impactful statements.