



HINTS & TIPS ON GIVING DYNAMIC PRESENTATIONS

Communication Skills – The Basics

What is COMMUNICATION?

As a strict definition, it's the transfer of ideas, facts and information from one person to another. "Yeah, well I do that every day". OK, so our mouths open and words come streaming out. BUT do we COMMUNICATE? Is the IMAGE we have in our mind the one conveyed to our audience's mind?

COMMUNICATION has 3 main components, the 3 "Vs":

1 Verbal – WHAT we say; the WORDS.

2 Vocal – HOW we say it.

3 Visual – How our message is PERCEIVED.

For COMMUNICATION to take place the 3 Vs have to be in harmony and synchronized. If only one is present, then it will be very much harder for your message to be understood.

And what is that people remember? WHAT you said? – that's about 7%. HOW you said it? – well we're improving – that's up to about 30%. No, it's how the image of your message is PERCEIVED that has the most memorable impact.

1 Verbal

We need to ensure that the WORDS we use convey the same meaning as we have to our audience. Do you use jargon? You might know what you mean but does your audience? Does ATM mean the "cash machine" (Automatic Teller Machine) or is it a way data is transmitted (Asynchronous Transfer Mode). ALWAYS clarify any jargon you use and avoid its overuse. Does the "pavement" mean the road or the sidewalk? (In Britain it's the sidewalk). It might seem obvious to you, but there's a fair chance there's someone in your audience that doesn't understand and that person could be the one making the decision to buy your product or service! Make sure your WORDS are understood.

2 Vocal

You've probably heard the old adage, "It's not WHAT you say, but HOW you say it". This is so true.

When you talk on the phone, do you smile? It will perceptibly come through in your voice. If you speak in a dour monotone, your message will be just a wishy-washy gray color and it will have no impact. You've just let your competition get the upper hand.

If you are not visibly in contact with your audience – like on the phone – WHAT and HOW we say our words will create the PERCEPTION. Have variety in your voice. Vary the pitch, let it rise and fall (like the roller coaster), change the level to give POWER to words or phrases and be careful with your phrasing. Make sure your pauses are in the right place to convey your meaning. You don't use pauses? See our WebHints™ #1. When you add "color" to your words by having variety in your voice, you add another dimension to your message that helps make it memorable.

3 Visual

When you're giving a presentation, it's your VISUALS that people will remember the most. So make sure that what you are saying matches the visual you are showing. If you're going to be talking on something that isn't reflected in your visual, blank it out during your talking. Otherwise the brain really doesn't know what to concentrate on and then guess what? Your message is lost!

To ensure your message is COMMUNICATED then, you must have the 3 "Vs" in harmony. Your message will then be memorable.

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