

Successful Presentations

Ormond Coaching and Training

This short article will take a look at the steps to develop and deliver successful presentations

Successful Presentations

“All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Many presentations fail to achieve their desired results. All they succeed in doing is wasting time – the time you spent in preparing and delivering the presentation and the time that the audience spent in attending your presentation. This can add up to a lot of waste or down time. A huge cost! What if new sales contracts depended on that presentation? The cost now is even greater. What if the presentation played a role in an interview or prospects for promotion? A huge personal cost!

Few people are natural public speakers and those who make it look natural do so because they have worked at it. One of the biggest mistakes people can make when it comes to making presentations is no, poor or inadequate preparation.

What is a Successful Presentation

How do you measure the success of a presentation? If you don't have means of measuring the success of your presentations or yourself as a presenter then you do not know if it was time well invested or not. Identifying goals will help you measure the success or otherwise of your presentation. For example:

- ✚ What do you want to achieve from the presentation? (see point 1 in *The Steps*). What will be different when that goal has been achieved?

- ✚ What personal goals can you set? These may be different and change as your experience develops. Examples could cover
 - Managing your nerves
 - Your confidence
 - How you used slides and other visual aids
 - Your ability to involve, relate to the audience
 - Ability to field and answer questions
 - Linking to other areas
 - Ability to motivate the audience
 - Number of creative risks
 - Ability to differentiate yourself

The success of your presentation can also be measured by asking the following questions:

- ✚ Will the audience remember you for the right reasons
- ✚ Will the audience want to come to your presentations in the future

The Steps

What does it take to develop and deliver a successful presentation? In simple terms it requires preparation and rehearsal.

- ✚ Determine your overall goal – what do you want your audience to do, think, feel, know or understand as a result of attending your presentation? In other words start at the end.
- ✚ Understand the audience's needs, points of view, what they want to hear. What are their thoughts on the topic? What are the potential benefits to them? What need are you addressing?
- ✚ Determine how best to put your message across based on your goal and the audience's needs. Prioritise the information. Keep it to around three main points. You can't give all the information in a 20 minute or less presentation.
- ✚ Research your topic. Know your subject area. Use examples, stories, analogies,

visuals to illustrate your points and aid understanding and recall.

- ✦ Plan your visuals to support your message. Learning is reinforced by visualisation. The proper visuals can really add strength to a presentation. Poor visuals will weaken it.
- ✦ Prepare for questions.
- ✦ Rehearse, rehearse and rehearse

Giving a successful or effective presentation is a skill that can be developed through knowing the right tools, techniques and approaches. The above steps will help you deliver an effective presentation.

Rehearsing

Rehearsing the presentation not only increases your confidence it also gives you the opportunity to develop a feel for it and refine it. As you rehearse it ask yourself the following questions:

- ✦ Will my opening statement grab the audiences' attention
- ✦ Does the flow make it easy to follow and understand
- ✦ Are the examples I am using relevant to the audience, are they realistic and will they help to influence my audience
- ✦ Am I linking to the audiences' experiences
- ✦ Does my closing have impact and identify a call to action
- ✦ How was my delivery in terms of articulation, voice tone and body language

Rehearsing will help you to visualise yourself in the room and speaking to the audience, making eye contact and engaging with them.

Final Thoughts

Successful presentations are much more than just standing up and getting through it. You need to

- ✦ Know what you want to achieve
- ✦ Have planned how you want to achieve it
- ✦ Relate it to your audience
- ✦ Rehearse to deliver with impact and support your message

As Emerson said *“All good speakers were poor speaker once”* you too can deliver successful presentations.

Author

Dymphna has been working with clients to help them develop and deliver successful presentations since 2003. Dymphna is an experienced trainer and coach in the areas of leadership, communication, interviewing, self-management, personal effectiveness and personal development. Prior to developing her career in Coaching and Training Dymphna held a variety of positions in the Chemical and Medical sector. In her roles Dymphna initiated and led many projects across functions including sales, marketing, customer management and product development and training. These roles involved seminar, conference and customer presentations. Dymphna is passionate about helping individuals release the potential within them through focused training and coaching.

Dymphna has a Ph.D in Chemistry, Diploma in Marketing and Sales, Diploma in Business and Life Coaching and is accredited by Belbin Associates to deliver Belbin Team Role Assessments. For more information on how Ormond Coaching and Training can help you to develop a strong customer service ethos please contact us on:

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Thank you.

We are looking forward to working with you.

Dymphna