

Inspire Any Audience

by Tony Jeary

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[This is simply an overview of Tony's content-rich book, Inspire Any Audience. Please visit his web site or your local book store and invest in your speaking career today!]

1. The *funneling process* simplifies the presentation process because information is funneled down through the following steps:
 - A. *Determine the action* you want your audience to take. You will be trying to *change an attitude* and *impart some knowledge* to your listeners.
 - B. *Define your audience*. Know your audience well by understanding the skills, knowledge and attitudes. Everyone in your audience is a human being and wants to belong, be respected, be liked, be safe, to succeed, to find romance and to be inspired.
 - C. *Brainstorm to determine* your needs, your audience's needs and any third-party needs.
 - D. *Focus these various desires* by working them into three or four written objectives. Many presenters write out a mission statement that sums up the presentation and what it will accomplish. Purposes might be to inform, to instruct, to persuade or to entertain the audience.
 - E. *Test your objectives mentally* by putting yourself in the audience's shoes. Are my objectives clear, do I know what and how to accomplish it, and why I want to accomplish it, did I use action words and did I give my audience a good reason to listen?
2. Keep it simple. Go for the goals you can achieve in the real world, not in the ideal world.
3. Your objectives are signposts, not the destination of your presentation. Create clear objectives at the outset, then deliver them in your presentation.
4. The following are secrets to developing your presentation:
 - A. Start with the top three objectives you developed using the funneling process.
 - B. Define your limitations with the following questions:
 1. *How much time* will you have to prepare?
 2. *How much time* will you have to speak?
 3. *What kind of room* will you be speaking in?
 4. *What is the financial budget*: large, small or non-existent?
 5. What equipment will you have available?
 - C. Build a *Three Dimensional Outline* with four headings: time, what, why, and how. This lets you see the *big picture*.
 - D. Decide on, then apply, a logical sequence to your presentation. For example, past to present, priority or material in order of importance, advantages and disadvantages, and categorical.
 - E. Keep your pace fast and your ideas simple.
 - F. Identify and secure the best tools your budget will allow.
 - G. Brainstorm and review your material with other developers if possible.
5. Effective rehearsal means making the best of your preparation time to become comfortable, relaxed and in control, both mentally and physically. It also means anticipating and avoiding troubles before they happen.

6. Walk through each step of your presentation, imagine your successful introduction of each step and point, and go through to the end each time.
7. Write three to seven key phrases on each 3 X 5 card. Organize the cards in the chronology of your presentation. This allows you to form a mental picture of the cards. Practice as often and in front of as many as you can.
8. Use video tape if you can. Note how well the words and transition flows, how comfortable you appear with the materials, your posture, pronunciation and word speed and how you can make it all better.
9. Rehearse with the equipment you will use (flip chart, overheads, etc.).
10. Before the presentation, try to get into the actual room to get acquainted with it.
11. Nervousness comes from the fear of the unknown. Clarify the sources of your nervousness and you can conquer it. The following are steps to go from nervous to natural:
 - A. Know what you're talking about. Be prepared.
 - B. Be yourself. Don't try to be someone you're not.
 - C. Psyche yourself up - use positive self-talk. You're audience really wants you to succeed.
 - D. Work with your body's physical reaction to nerves (stretch, deep breathes).
 - E. Bond with your audience. Keep them on your side. Get there early and greet your audience. Start off by grabbing their attention. Let the audience know what's in it for them. Make eye contact with a few friendly faces.
12. The first three minutes are different from the rest of your presentation because your audience's attention is naturally high. Most audiences spend the first three minutes sizing up the presenter. You've got just one chance to make a good first impression, and your first impressions are lasting impressions.
13. *Show respect and build rapport.* Make your audience your partner. Respect their time, show you're prepared. Empathize with your audience. Meet as many attendees as possible.
14. *Grab the audience's attention and run with it.* The hook is an attention grabber. Know and use the different types of openers - current event, humorous, pictorial, anecdotal, pertinent quote, real-world situation, etc.
15. You can kill your opening if you apologize, use an unrelated or inappropriate anecdote, use a long- or slow-moving statement, or start late.
16. Use appropriate words and gestures to get the audience commitment to stay involved.
17. A few years ago, UCLA did a study and found that the success of a public presentation depends about 7 percent on the *words* that are actually spoken, about 38 percent on the *tone* in which it is delivered, and 55 percent on *body language*. In other words, about 93% of a good presentation is something other than the words the speaker chooses.
18. Make sure your posture is not at odds with your message. Stand up straight, look participants in the eye, be relaxed, use appropriate gestures, be decisive and smile.
19. Know the tensions that every audience member feels and work to ease those tensions during your opening.
20. Audiences tend to respond much more to a speaker's presence than to resume credentials. You will be judged based on depth of knowledge, personal experiences, level of preparedness, enthusiasm during the presentation, appearance, and language - both body and verbal. Credible qualities include integrity, expertise, empathy and awareness of your own power.

21. *Tell the truth.* Commit and adhere to a time-requirement up-front. Make a note when you say you will do something, then do it.
22. *Tell why you have the right to talk to them.* The more relevant the introduction, the higher your credibility. Share personal experiences with your audience. Let them know why you are speaking to them.
23. *Connect with the audience.* Be natural, sincere, enthusiastic and spontaneous. Work the entire room; don't fall into the trap of speaking to just one or two people. Identify with someone the audience admires. Let them know you that you understand. Dress like your audience dresses.
24. Always be willing to share information on your background and other qualifications with the audience.
25. It's not enough to possess the qualities of a credible person - you must demonstrate them, both directly and indirectly, as soon as you take the front of the room.
26. The *tone* of your presentation is the sum of everything you do. The tone you establish determines how the audience perceives you. Create a conversational tone. Enjoyable atmospheres are exciting, entertaining, engaging, relaxed, lively, direct, fun, inviting, and loud. Less enjoyable atmospheres are serious, reserved, solitary, formal, slow, wordy, showy, closed-off and quiet.
27. A lot of little things are really big things, such as eye contact, word choice, body language, appearance, openness, humor, enthusiasm, music, breaks and activities.
28. *Quality audiences love* conversational, open, accessible, knowledgeable, confident, entertaining, funny, excited to be there, and humility.
29. *Quality audiences hate* lecture-oriented, reserved, aloof, a show-off, a braggart, dull, rude or insulting, perfunctory (I've done this all before), and arrogance.
30. "No matter how busy you are, you must take time to make the other person feel important!"
Mary Kay Ash.
31. Have a conversation with even the largest of groups. Try to talk *with*, not *at*, your audience. Use everyday conversational language; avoid big words. Ask questions *immediately* and listen to the answers. Get the audience involved, even if it means having them stand and shake each other's hands. Place nothing between and your audience - avoid lecterns, podiums, and risers when possible. Mingle with and actually walk into the audience. Use participants' names whenever possible. Smile, use humor and tell stories.
32. Avoid words that leave no room for dissent such as always, never, certainly, at no time, forever, and positively. Instead, use often, usually, seldom, likely, rarely, once in a while, and most likely.
33. An offended or alienated audience member is not an inspired one. Avoid stereotypes. Don't describe people by their looks, age, race, ethnicity, or clothing. Don't say *girl* when you mean *woman*. Try to use examples that equally employ both genders. Avoid tired old expressions that carry a negative connotation like *old-wives tale*. Don't assume certain jobs go with a certain gender business man, salesman, etc.
34. "When we do more than we are paid to do, eventually we will be paid more for what we do."
Zig Ziglar.
35. *Become known as a presenter who delivers that little something extra.* Give value - do more than is expected. Know your audience's wants, needs and desires. Establish expectations early in the presentation. Define what the presentation *is* and *isn't*. Under-promise, over-deliver. Create winning opportunities for your audience. Always hold a little back in reserve, and have several aces in the hole to surprise the audience.

36. When using name tags, print the first name in large print, and the last name smaller. Never misspell a name! If a participant's name badge says William, don't call him Will or Bill.
37. There are two levels to create winning opportunities for your audience:
 - A. *Level one* is those moments that simply occur.
 - B. *Level two* are those moments you create to make your audience a hero.
38. *Remain flexible*. Most audiences don't expect much flexibility from presenters. Surprise them by being the kind of person who can meet them half way.
39. Give your audience a dose of business entertainment to wake them up - then give them booster shots throughout the presentation to keep them interested.
40. Know when and how to use the following business entertainment crowd pleasers: music, games, stories, audio-visuals, breaks, and freebies.
41. The average adult has an attention span of between five and seven minutes. The average presenter speaks at 120 to 200 words per minute while the average listener comprehends between 600 and 800 words per minute. This gives your audience's collective mind plenty of time to race ahead of you.
42. The adult attention span is *increased* and learning *enhanced* by:
 - A. An uninhibited environment.
 - B. Creative approaches to solving problems.
 - C. Allowing mistakes to be made.
 - D. Constructive and timely feedback.
 - E. Experimental learning (that is, doing instead of hearing).
43. The average adult retains:
 - A. 10% of what he reads.
 - B. 20% of what he hears.
 - C. 30% of what he sees.
 - D. 50% of what he hears and sees.
 - E. 70% of what he says.
 - F. 90% of what he says and does.
44. The room is the most overlooked of all your tools. The right size room for the audience size counts. The shape is important so everyone can see you. Know where lighting, heating and cooling controls are. Use comfortable chairs when possible. Use a microphone for more than 50 participants. Arrange seating wide and flat rather than narrow and deep. Avoid windows as a general rule. Keep refreshments on hand either inside or just outside the room.
45. Visuals should be simple, legible, neat, consistent, unified, colorful. Use bulleted points and sentence fragments, combine pictures, symbols and key words, and make graphics related to the subject matter.
46. Overheads and slides should support your presentation, not replace it. They should have no more than five points and five words per point (5x5 rule).
47. Handouts should contain statistics, graphs, examples, comparisons, quotations, and expert testimonials.
48. Learn to use *Verbal Surveying* and *Targeted Polling* for obtaining honest, usable audience feedback. Audiences are full of information that will help you manage your presentation.

49. Continually build excitement from one section to the other. Use transitions between all important ideas you present. Use transitions to introduce new ideas or topics. Keep them short and sweet. Sum up before moving on.
50. Stick to your schedule but remain flexible.
51. Give clear concise directions. Break instructions into clear, briefly defined steps. Anything more than five steps will confuse the audience.
51. *Verbal surveying* is a method that makes sure the entire room is benefiting from the presentation. Cover such topics as your audience's comfort, the quality of your content, the pace of the presentation, whether they are being entertained, and whether they are retaining the information being presented.
52. *Targeted polling* is where you select a few individuals and ask them questions throughout the presentation. Take notes on how they respond to your material.
53. *Managing your audience* means seeing things from their point of view. A confused audience is difficult to manage. When you ask them to do something, make sure you've given them clear directions. Become a skilled handler of questions.
54. You'll keep your audience focused by letting them know where they've been and where they are headed.
55. You will increase your audience's retention rate by summarizing exactly what's important about what you've told them.
56. You'll heighten the audience's interest by reducing confusion.
57. The key to effective summarization at the *close* of your presentation is to summarize *throughout the day*. Introduce key points, explain them, discuss them, recap key points, give a transition and introduce new key points.
58. The *Vary Important Points (VIP)* - method is where the participants receive a booklet called a *VIP note taker* where they can write down the points they found most important. At the end of each segment, ask for a few examples of important points from participants. The VIP method will increase retention, increase audience buy-in, puts audience members in charge, and makes audience members heroes.
59. At the beginning of the presentation, ask for your audience's expectations. At the close, return to the flip chart and confirm you've met their expectations.
60. Presentations should end with a bang! Some attention-grabbers for closings are questions that challenge participants and leave them pondering a course of action, quotations that form the basis for a rhetorical closing question, a personal anecdote that illustrates the points made in the talk, a slice-of-life story that illustrates the ending or your presentation, and an analogy that brings the main points of your presentation together.
61. In the closing, appeal to emotion. Keep it short, no longer than two minutes. Be positive and motivational, and be energetic.
62. *The send-off* is after the close. Thank the audience for their time and participation, say goodbye, and remain available until all audience members have left.
63. Have a checklist of specifics and ask your audience's opinion. The checklist should be easy to use, specific, honest, comprehensive and brief as possible.
64. Your form should be only one page and should include areas regarding the topic and content, the presenter's performance and preparation, materials used, effectiveness of visual aids, areas of improvement and participation.

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