

5 WAYS to IMMEDIATELY ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE:

1. Create Clear Objectives
2. Have a Positive Mantra
3. Leverage Story
4. See Your Audience
5. Create Flow



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**SMALL
THINGS to
TRY**



**TIPS FOR ENGAGING
YOUR AUDIENCE**



SMALL THINGS TO TRY

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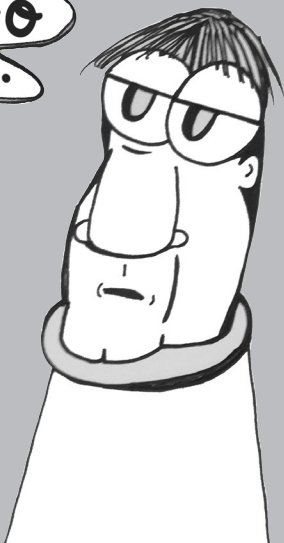




Most presenters focus on themselves. Will they look smart? Good? Credible? Charming? Will they be seen as an expert or as an impostor?

They obsess about their content, making sure that they can answer any question that is asked and that their (many, many, many) slides are perfect.

Because of this, presenters forget about one of the most important aspects of any presentation...the audience...and the talk sometimes hits the audience like a fire hose.





In any presentation there are three components: The presenter, the content, and the audience.

We call this The Engagement Triangle—also called the Blakesley Triangle, named after Steven Blakesley who demanded that presenters in his company stop overwhelming or putting their audience to sleep and instead start paying attention to them.

Paying attention to all three components leads to success.

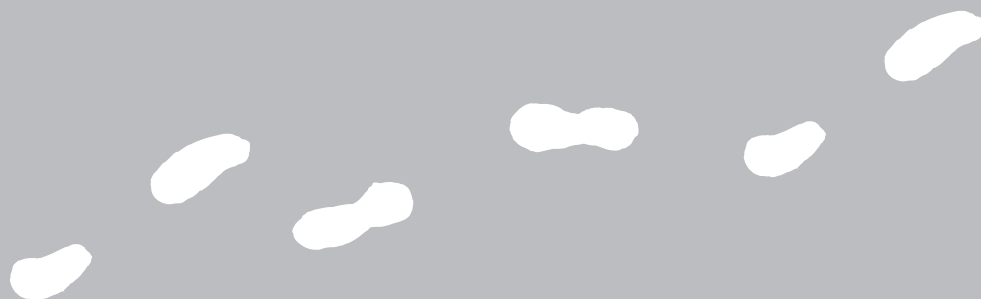






WHAT FOLLOWS ARE FIVE SMALL BUT POWERFUL





WAYS TO IMMEDIATELY ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE.





CREATE CLEAR
OBJECTIVES





SMALL THING #1 TO TRY

CREATE CLEAR OBJECTIVES

What does your audience need to walk out with? When people don't know the goals of your presentation they focus on their own agenda, lose interest, get distracted, and dream about being anywhere else.

Clear objectives give you permission to stop and redirect conversations that veer off course. Put your objectives up on the wall. Keep going back to them throughout your presentation.





STEP 1: THINK

Think about
what you want your
audience to walk out with
by the end of the
presentation.

*Hint: Three objectives
or fewer are good.*

STEP 2: USE NOUNS

UNDERSTANDING OF...
ANSWERS FOR...
AN ABILITY TO...
THREE OPTIONS FOR...
INCREASED CONFIDENCE ABOUT...
A PLAN FOR...
A DECISION ABOUT...
CLARITY ABOUT...
ETC...

Put your objectives
into specific and
actionable language.





STEP 4:



STEP 3:

WRITE

Write “What You Will Walk Out With” up on a flip chart or white board, not on a slide that will go away.

Keep going back to your objectives throughout your presentation.

Hint: This is an antidote to getting sidetracked.

STEP 5:

Make sure they got what they came for.

Hint: At the end of your presentation, review your objectives. This helps your audience remember the content (and makes you look good too!)





WE HAVE FOUND
THAT WHAT YOU ARE
SAYING IN YOUR
HEAD IS NOT JUST A
MANTRA, IT CAN BE
A PROPHECY TOO.





SMALL THING #2 TO TRY

HAVE A POSITIVE MANTRA

How you show up matters. Presentations can be scary because you never know what your audience will do or say. So how do you choose to approach this uncertainty? From a place of hesitancy and self doubt or from a place of feeling “fit and well”?

Notice the current voice in your head (mantra) is around an upcoming presentation. If it’s a version of “I don’t know what will happen, but it might be a disaster”, then you have chosen a negative mantra.

See if you can flip this. Find a mantra that helps you imagine a better result. There are lots of possibilities: “I can learn something from this audience,” or “they will learn something helpful.” Silently repeat your positive mantra to yourself as you prepare and deliver.





SEE YOUR AUDIENCE

I WAS ABLE TO
SPEAK WITH A FEW
OF YOU AND HERE'S
WHAT I THINK I KNOW
ABOUT YOU REGARD-
ING THE PRODUCT
LAUNCH...





SMALL THING #3 TO TRY

SEE YOUR AUDIENCE

Getting curious about your audience doesn't have to take a ton of time. Sometimes we recommend a short series of pre-interviews, either on the phone or in person (e.g., 15-minute conversations with three participants).

You can also just talk to people as they come into the meeting room to gauge their current reality. You can throw a series of pictures on the floor and ask people to pick up one that represents how they are currently feeling about the project.

The important thing is to not only take the time and attention to understand your audience in relation to the content of your meeting but to tell them what you think you know to make sure your understanding is correct.





ONCE... we were working with a high tech organization who hired us to train their engineers to hold conversations with the company's sales force. The engineers loved the tech—how it was built, what was going on inside the box. The sales folks wanted to know how the box was going to help their customers and didn't really want to know the details of how it worked. Each brought a different reality to the conversation. It was highly likely





that if these parties didn't try and understand where their counterparts were coming from, they would miscommunicate and drop important ideas. To prevent this we coached the engineers to get as curious about their audience as they were about the tech that they cared about. They learned that the sales force was focused on the customer, **NOT** the technology. Instead of just talking about tech, they focused on how the tech was helpful to the end user.





STORYTELLING IS
THE MOST POWER-
FUL WAY TO PUT
IDEAS INTO THE
WORLD TODAY.

—Robert McKee, *Hollywood screenwriter
and influential teacher*





SMALL THING #4 TO TAY

LEVERAGE STORY

Stories are ingrained into our DNA and we wake up every time we hear one. Using story as an engagement tool in your presentation is an effective way to get your audience to lean forward, focus and learn.

Three tips for telling a better story:

- Make it personal. Audiences want to know how you were affected and changed by new ideas. Tell stories that illustrate this change.
- Balance your story with a combination of detail (color) and action (advance).
- Use less jargon. Make it relatable.





CREATE FLOW



Are they
smiling and
laughing?



Do they seem
distracted?

Do they seem
bored?



Are they
excited?



Do they have a lot
of questions?



Are they
nodding
their heads?



Do they seem
confused?



Do they seem
frustrated?





SMALL THING #5 TO TRY

CREATE FLOW WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

Creating flow with your audience means seeing everything that your audience does as an “offer.” This means noticing their behavior and not being afraid to acknowledge and do something with what you're noticing.

It's a very practical attitude, that in effect forces you as a presenter to constantly ask yourself “How can I use this?” Implicit here is letting go of judgment about what is happening (i.e. whether you like it or not, whether it's “right” or not, whether you wanted it or not).

Flow with your audience happens when you accept their offer. This doesn't mean you have to agree with it, it just means that you have to recognize the offer and do something with it.

ACCEPT
the OFFER
ACKNOWLEDGE.
RESPOND.





**THIS SMALL BOOK
IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU
REMEMBER THAT IT ONLY TAKES
SMALL ACTIONS TO MAKE A
BIG DIFFERENCE.**

SMALL THINGS TO TRY

Produced and Published by On Your Feet

Illustrated by Gary Hirsch

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