

Speaking to Win: How to Present with Power in Any Situation

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Overview

This book is written by a professional speaker and provides many aspects to consider when giving a presentation – ranging from practical tips about communication and knowing the audience to the logistics of room arrangement. The advice applies to anyone speaking to any size audience (e.g., company meeting, large conference) on any topic. The book provides dozens of tips and common behaviors of top industry speakers that can be incorporated to make your presentations go more smoothly and effectively. Mr. Tracy also describes the techniques used when your presentation is helping you with negotiation. Most importantly, speaking is a *skill* anyone can learn; "Every master was once a disaster." -- Harv Eker.

- Your job is to motivate and impel your listeners to think, feel, and act differently as a result of your words.
- What if you asked people after your talk, "What did you get from my talk, and what are you going to do as a result?"
- Preparation is key -- it helps your credibility (ethos), impresses your listeners, and makes them more receptive to your message. The book has tips on considering your audience and how to start organizing your talk.
- Make sure you've planned the opening and closing word-for-word; don't leave these to chance. At least you'll know exactly how your talk will start and finish.
- Confident public speaking begins with having a message *you want people to hear*.
- You have 30 seconds to focus on making a positive impression with your introduction. The book provides several examples to start your presentation.
- Start with the end in mind; "If this meeting were perfect, what would be the outcome?"
- Everything is a negotiation; people bring their own ideas/desires, and you may need to shift them
- If people are not commenting or asking questions, they're not committing. If you always have consensus for big/risky ideas, then people don't understand how important they are.
- Public speaking is not the same as having a regular conversation; your voice and body are instruments for communication, and there are ways to have them help you bring greater impact
- The most common things to go wrong when speaking are sound, light, and temperature.
- The ending is what stays with the audience as they leave, so make it worthwhile.
- Public speaking is a form of selling; you need to build the trust of your audience so they'll accept your message. The more people believe you (credibility), the more open they are to persuasion.

The Arts of Speaking and Rhetoric

Your job is to motivate and impel your listeners to think, feel, and act differently as a result of your words.

Elements of persuasion (from Aristotle)

- **Logos** -- logic, words, and reasons
- **Ethos** -- character, ethics, and believability
- **Pathos** -- emotional content (most important)

Body (55%) > tone (38%) > words (5%)

(Source: Albert Mehrabian)

TIP: Slow down, pause, and smile between points and sentences.

- Your words are clearer
- Voice is more pleasant and enjoyable
- Radiates warmth, friendliness, acceptance

Short talks (30 mins)

- Opening
 - "Thanks for coming. In the next few minutes, I want to tell you about X and what we can do about it."
- Tell them what you promised
 - "We are facing A, B, and C. Let us look at each of these and consider alternatives."
- Summarize what you just told them

Every speech has a job to do.

- **Objective question** -- what if you asked people after your talk, "What did you get from my talk, and what are you going to do as a result?"
- Start with this, and work toward the beginning

Longer talks

- Get their attention, build expectations
- What's coming and why it's important
- Point #1
- Transition to next point
- Point #2
- Transition to next point
- Point #3
- Conclude and call to action

TIP: To become a better speaker, practice speaking. If you don't know where to start, practice reciting a poem. (Vary the pace, tone, etc. as you deliver the lines.)

People will forget what you said, but they will remember how you said it.

TIP: Watch other speakers and observe how they deliver talks.

Planning and Preparation Made Simple

Preparation is key -- it helps your credibility (ethos), impresses your listeners, and makes them more receptive to your message.

The talk is not about you; it's about your audience. What are the demographics?

- Age range
- Gender
- Income
- Education
- Occupation
- Family status
- Familiarity with your subject
- How do they think? (goals, beliefs, worries, political orientation, etc.)
- Common desires (e.g., making money as salespeople)
- What's happening in their lives?

Other traits that are helpful to consider

- What's happening in their business?
- Local environment (e.g., sports events, other conferences)
- Who else they've heard lately
- Tailor your talk to your specific audience
- Start with the end in mind
- Watch the clock (may be other talks after yours, is there slotted time for Q&A)

How to prepare:

1. Come up with a title
2. Write down (one sentence) the "job" the talk has to do
3. Write down every idea, insight, phrase, statistics, image, etc. for the talk -- just write, write, write, write
4. With each point you want to make, PREP
 - a. Point of view -- your idea/point
 - b. Reasons you hold that view
 - c. Example
 - d. Point of view (again)

Make sure you've planned the opening and closing word-for-word; don't leave these to chance. At least you'll know exactly how your talk will start and finish.

If using PowerPoint,

- Don't have more than 5 lines on the slide, and don't have them all shown once that slide appears
- Face the audience
- Your slides are only a prop; don't put everything there
- Expect the unexpected when it comes to tech

Mnemonics can help with memorizing parts of your talk; you can also use acrostics (e.g., SUCCESS standing for things you cover in your talk)

Put points on index cards; it gives your hands something to do, it shows your audience you've prepared

TIP: Give your talk to small groups first to get feedback.

TIP: Walk as you practice giving your talk

TIP: When giving a talk to a specific crowd (e.g., company), make sure you learn more about that company, and also about some of the key people you'll be interacting with.

TIP: Practice as much as you can; this is 90% of your success

Self-confidence and Mental Mastery

Your fear of public speaking can be *unlearned*. Most of this fear comes from destructive criticism in childhood (i.e., fear of failure and rejection).

"A child who is subjected to destructive criticism or love withheld becomes an adult who is overly concerned with opinions of other people and their attitudes toward him."

Confident public speaking begins with having a message *you want people to hear*. (Any other distraction goal -- approval, fame, wealth -- takes away from that message.)

People in the audience want you to succeed

The more you like yourself, the more you'll like the people you're speaking to. Keep the internal verbalization positive. Visualize yourself on stage doing well; visualize people seeing you on stage as you're doing well.

Imagine positive feelings you'll experience

Imaging you've reached the end of your talk and everyone is smiling, applauding, etc.

"Your subconscious mind cannot tell the difference between a real event and an event that you vividly imagine." Visualize and replay a positive speaking experience in your mind.

Last-minute confidence builders

- Check out the room
- Do some breathing exercises
- Pump yourself up
- Wiggle your toes, roll your shoulders
- Have an attitude of gratitude ("the privilege of the platform")
- Remember it's not about you

Start Strong with Any Audience

GOAL: You have 30 seconds to focus on making a positive impression with your introduction.

Introduction

- Goal: Build expectancy and credibility: "I can hardly wait to hear what this person has to say!"
- If being introduced by someone else, that sets the stage: accomplishments, title, your name

After the intro

- Acknowledge the person who introduced you and let him leave the stage
- Start with silence
- Scan the audience and smile
- Begin with a strong, friendly, interesting opening statement

Look the part

- Nothing should distract from your message
- Appearance tells the audience how you think and feel about yourself
- Dress equal to or better than your audience; look like a professional

Build expectations

- Your job is to make them feel glad they came (time well spent)
- They need to like you from the start; this makes them more perceptive and less hostile to controversial points

Take charge

- The audience wants you in control; own the room
- Carry yourself with energy and determination
- Start by singling someone out in the audience and speak to her/him, then move to the next person (develops a relationship with those in the audience)

Be authentic and humble

- Smile openly and warmly
- Don't act superior

Some ways to start a speech

- Thank the organizers
 - They like to feel recognized
- Start with a positive statement
 - "You're really going to enjoy...", "I'm going to share some ideas that will help you..."
- Compliment the audience
 - "You are the top 10% in this field, so it's an honor to be here"
- Make a thought-provoking statement about the audience
 - "I was told that I'd be addressing a roomful of self-made millionaires today"
- Refer to current events if being topical helps your presentation
- Refer to a historical event (e.g., military victory)
- Mention a famous person (i.e., quotation)
- Repeat a recent conversation
 - "A few minutes ago I talked with John and he said this industry is great"
- Make a shocking statement
- Quote recent research
- Give them hope; inspire change, feeling, and action
- Start with humor (maybe)

- Humor is very subjective, so try this out on others first
- This sets the tone of your talk, so if the talk is serious, skip this idea
- Entertain
- Ask a question, conduct a survey
 - Ex: "Who here is self-employed?"
 - Do this only if it serves your talk; don't have it be a gimmick to get people interested
- Get them talking to each other
 - "Tell the person next to you what you'd like to get from the seminar"
- Open with a problem that everyone has in common
- Make a statement, ask a question
 - Ex: 80% of the money is made by 20% of the people. Would you like to be in the 20%?
 - People love to answer questions, even if it's just to themselves
 - When the speaker asks a question and pauses, they prove they own the room
- Start with a story
 - People love stories to bring them in
- Build a bridge
 - Show how you relate to the audience and that you're one of them
- Tell them about yourself
 - Especially effective if what you'll be telling them helped you get somewhere

Mastering Meetings with Small Groups

Just because you're not giving a big presentation to hundreds of people doesn't mean you shouldn't prepare. Any time you are in a meeting, you are being watched.

Prepare thoroughly

- Running the meeting? Plan ahead, make an agenda, organize as though it were very important
- Attending the meeting? Review and have something to contribute

Seating considerations

- Running the meeting? Back to the wall, face entrances
- Attending the meeting? Sit opposite the leader if you can

Start on time (and be on time)

Active participation

- Speak up in the first 5 minutes, otherwise people deem you of lower significance
- Volunteer for responsibilities
- PREP (point of view, reason, example of why you're correct, restate the point of view)

To persuade others, you must be likeable; to be likeable, you must make others feel important.

How to make others feel valuable (6 A's)

- Acceptance -- look at them and smile
- Appreciation -- thank them for time, information, etc.
- Admiration -- find ways to compliment people
- Approval -- make it immediate and specific
- Attention -- pay attention when others talk and don't interrupt

- Agreement -- avoid being defensive ("that's interesting, I hadn't thought about it that way"); don't attack the person

When leading, everything you do and say is magnified and put under scrutiny.

Avoid criticism and negativity toward meeting members in public; talk with them later.

Avoid barriers to communication (furniture, laptops). When possible, sit kitty-corner instead of opposite them.

Mastering Small-group Presentations and Negotiations

Take these kinds of presentations just as seriously; careers can be made or lost here.

Start with the end in mind; "If this meeting were perfect, what would be the outcome?"

Everything is a negotiation; people bring their own ideas/desires, and you may need to shift them

Know the difference between desire and fear

- Desire -- what they gain by following your advice
- Fear -- what they lose by not following your advice
- Aim for desire, but fear is 2.5 times more powerful (loss aversion)

Understand your participants

- What do they want to accomplish? What do they fear?
- A common fear is being manipulated or taken advantage of
- Start with facts that everyone agrees on; leverage these facts into areas that may be new

When dealing with big contracts, most will be boilerplate stuff that everyone agrees on; start with those. During the next pass, pick the least contentious sections, then gain agreement. (This sounds like the "yes/yes" approach from *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.)

The Law of Four -- both parties must pick four issues to discuss/resolve, and they must be in different orders of priority. For example, if Party A's #1 priority is price and Party B's #1 priority is quality, you can compromise. Tip: Identify these four issues before meeting.

Consider objections to your ideas before you present them.

It's a conversation; remember the 6 A's and keep the participants involved.

Aim to treat everyone fairly, but know what the pecking order is so you can prioritize who has the most weight.

If people are not commenting or asking questions, they're not committing. If you always have consensus for big/risky ideas, then people don't understand how important they are.

Set up the room so everyone can see one another (usually a U-shaped table).

Make sure it's clear what the next action is.

Use visuals.

Whenever someone asks you a question, restate it to make sure there's no misunderstanding.

Platform Mastery: Impressing Large Audiences

The shorter the talk, the more difficult because of the constraints.

1. Introduction and opening -- it's essential you make a good impression.
2. Practice makes perfect
3. Check out the facility
4. Mix with your audience; get to know people and get a sense for them
5. Listen to other speakers (this is more important if you are one of a sequence of speakers so that you can agree with or debate their points; you can also skip things that have already been said)
6. Meet your introducer and give him your introduction text

To ensure your audience follows your logic, is engaged, and is open to your influence...

- Link each point back to the story
- Speak to individuals in the room
- Stay in a 5x5 area to avoid wandering (distracting); gesture, but don't fidget or put your hands in your pockets
- Make smooth transitions by being clear about when you're moving on from a topic
- If something jumps into your mind that helps your point, use it (extemporaneous speaking)
- Don't confuse speakers who are funny/positive/articulate (and talk all over the place) with effective speakers; people will enjoy the talk but get no substance from it
- Write it out word for word to ensure your phrasing has the best possible effect
- Smile and be genial; audiences like warm people
- Sometimes an unintuitive question will get people connected (e.g., what's the highest paying job in the US -- they want to answer and will probably be surprised by being wrong)
- Be able to give your opening and closing in your sleep; this is what people will remember
- In closing, repeat your key points and give some calls to action
- When you're done, thank the audience and stay still (don't start gathering your stuff)

Special occasion speaking

- Awards and congratulations -- speak with warmth, intelligence, and knowledge about the recipient's accomplishments (do your homework first)
- Introductions or thanks -- your job is to make the person you're introducing look amazing; when thanking someone, call out some points from their talk to let them know you were listening
- Birthdays or anniversaries -- do your homework on the person; be uplifting and congratulatory and help them feel good
- Weddings -- your comments will be remembered for years to come, so do your homework; focus on love, commitment, happiness
- Funerals -- write every word out (don't wing it when you're emotional); sometimes people will want copies of the eulogies; speak slowly; talk about how good the deceased was, talk about how important family was, talk about accomplishments, end with sorrow/regret

Vocal Mastery: Powerful Voice Techniques

- Slow down
- Energy is essential; speaking is "enthusiastic conversation"
- Everyone must be able to hear (note areas of the room that may be problematic; hopefully there's a sound system)
- If having a sound system issue will ruin the experience, sometimes delaying/rescheduling is the best move (depends on the talk you're giving, of course)
- On your own, practice reading aloud (e.g., poetry) as if you were reading to an audience
- Record yourself and look for ways to improve (pronunciation, delivery, pacing, crutch words)
- Public speaking != having a regular conversation
- Exaggerate your voice and body language more than feels comfortable
- Record phone conversations and listen to them afterward
- Relax and slow down; leads to deeper, more authoritative tone of voice
- Pause for power
 - Between phrases (listeners need gaps between every 3 sentences or so to absorb)
 - For drama, to get attention
 - For emphasis
 - To let the audience anticipate the end of the sentence (absolute power corrupts...
_____)
- Change the tone of your voice (e.g., loud and powerful, or quiet and intimate)
- Physical instrument
 - Stay hydrated
 - Have room-temp water on hand
 - Sore throat? Warm water with honey and lemon

Tricks of the Trade: Techniques of Master Speakers

- **Marquee speakers** -- the highest paid speakers who are famous in some field (politics, sports); e.g. Bill Clinton, Norman Schwarzkopf
- Some orgs pay to bring in speakers so they in turn draw attendees (who pay convention fees and show up to the meeting)
- **Journeyman speakers** -- industry experts in their fields (marketing, leadership, sales) that turned to professional speaking; they please their audiences and their reputation spreads

Speaker qualities

1. **High levels of energy and vitality** -- warm, friendly, likeable; you can tell they're happy to be there
2. **Excellent content and delivery** -- people come away nodding and talking about what a great job the speaker did

Other things top speakers do

- **Please the meeting planner** -- if you do well, the attendees share that info, which makes the planner look good (maybe gets bonuses as well)
- **Meet other speakers** -- observe what they do and how they interact with others, get to know them
- **Spend time studying, researching, and preparing** -- know your material, your audience, companies/venues being spoken at, contextual information that can help them present a stronger message

- **Be clear about your objective** -- what are you there to do? Did you promise to cover anything specific?
- **Learn the language** -- every company/org has their own history, culture, and events
- **Plan and organize your material**
- **Review and rehearse**
- **Check out the location** -- sound, lighting, temperature; audience members need to see your face
- **Get to know the audience** -- don't just stand off by yourself; meet people as they're coming in
- **Learn the names of key people**
- **Know how to enter and how to exit** -- rehearse your opening and closing remarks
- **Engage the audience** -- quickly and emphatically answer the question "I wonder if this will be any good"; keep people on the edge of their seats, make points, emphasize things, tell stories
- **Treat the audience as if they were all your friends** -- helps connect with warmth
- **Use every speaking method possible** -- use rhetorical devices, silence, ask questions, grab control
- **Keep shifting gears** -- "telling is not selling"; ask questions and deliver answers, use dramatic pauses, master your timing
- **Let it sink in** -- (this is also called "let it land"); make sure you're heard before moving on, let them laugh at your joke
- **Use your voice and body** -- use the range of your volume and body language

Controlling Your Space

The most common things to go wrong when speaking...

1. Sound
2. Light
3. Temperature

Some venues will lie about what they can and can't do ("this is against fire regulations" is a common way for hotels to not do something).

Be friendly, polite, and charming; but also be insistent. The most useful threat is to threaten not to pay and to sue them for lost revenues because of unhappy attendees leaving. Always ask to speak to somebody at the head office.

People need to be able to see your face. They also need to see your screen (angle, lighting to eliminate contrast problems). If in a situation where you need all the lights off to see the screen, avoid it -- seeing your face is more important.

"This isn't a nightclub performance." You need to see your audience, too. If all the light is on your face, you can't see anybody. Another reason to have lights on in the audience is so they can take notes and see one another.

Everyone should easily see you. This can be tough with lots of circular tables where people have to turn around.

When arranging the room, avoid a center aisle; the energy runs right down the aisle and out the back of the room. Have a solid block of people in front of you.

Move people closer if possible; they don't care how much room is *behind* them, but how much room is between them and the speaker.

Keep a bit more room between seats than you would expect. Don't crush people together; give them some breathing room.

The stage needs to be high enough for everyone to see the speaker from the waist up.

Microphones can be tricky. Lapel mics (wireless preferably) are great. Hard-wired microphones have almost zero probability of failure/distortion/power issues. If you hold a mic though, one of your hands is now tied up (can't gesture as well). Keep the mic close to your chin and try not to obscure your mouth.

Podium

- Make sure the mic is as close to your mouth as you can get it
- Don't lean on it; makes your posture look sloppy
- Ideally, stand slightly next to it; you can glance at your notes, and people can see more of you

Remember that PowerPoint is not designed to carry the weight of your message (that's what your voice, words, and gestures are for).

Face the audience -- keeps eye contact and voice projection. (Use your laptop to see what's on the screen behind you).

Make sure you get all your equipment set up and run through common scenarios (sound check, video check, presenter remote check) before your talk.

The ideal temperature is 68 -- below this is too cold, and above this people start getting uncomfortable and not paying attention. If you're a professional speaker, you may need to put a clause in your contract about having the room at 68 at all times. (Venues don't like to spend money on HVAC.)

End with a Bang: Leave Them Breathless!

The ending is what stays with the audience as they leave, so make it worthwhile.

Write your ending word-for-word before doing anything else. What will your audience take away (or do) because they've heard your talk?

Call to action -- tell them what to do next; make sure it ends with an exclamation point!

Summary -- recap and link all the main points

Story -- provide an example that makes your talk work and relate it to your audience

Humor

Rhyme/poem

Inspiration -- hope is the religion of mankind; everyone in your audience is dealing with something

Let them know when it's over -- smile warmly afterward and be still (don't shuffle your stuff together)

Let them applaud -- sweep the room and mouth "thank you" to the audience

Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

"Everyone is in the business of selling. The only question is, how good are you at it?"

People avoid selling because of the risk of rejection/failure.

Public speaking is a form of selling; you need to build the trust of your audience so they'll accept your message. The more people believe you (credibility), the more open they are to persuasion.

All sales skills are learnable; all top salespeople today were once poor salespeople.

People don't like being manipulated -- sold something you don't want/need/can't use/can't afford/you'll regret.

Your first job is to (1) reduce fear, and (2) replace it with confidence.

Everything you do from the first moment of contact adds/subtracts from your level of credibility... speech, dress, handshake, etc.

(1) **Prospecting** -- finding the people who can and will buy what you're selling; "no need, no sale"

Requirements

1. Must have pain that your product alleviates
2. Has a problem that has not been solved
3. Has a need that has not been satisfied
4. Has a goal not yet achieved

(2) **Establishing rapport and trust** -- ask questions and listen

- Don't talk and talk about your products without asking questions
- Telling is not selling; it takes intelligence to listen and map people's questions to good answers about your product/service
- Phrase statements as questions (e.g., do you know how many copies an average copier makes per minute?). When giving talks, you can do this as well -- ask questions and use the tension while you wait for an answer
- Focus on the relationship, because emotions distort valuations. The more people like you, the more positively they'll respond to you.

(3) **Identify the needs accurately**

"Doctor of Selling" approach

1. Examine through questions about past and present
2. Make a diagnosis; discuss the findings and compare to the "symptoms"

3. Prescribe treatment

Don't assume your prospects need what you're selling. They must have all four requirements.

(4) Making the presentation

- Repeat what you've discovered while identifying the needs and how what you have will meet those
- Don't persuade; show that what you have is ideal
- Ask (multiple times) whether your benefits make sense
- "Let me think about it" means good-bye to your customer

(5) Answering objections

- The best salespeople think through every possible objection (e.g., price, terms, conditions, quality, other offers, utility) and have clear answers to each
- Listen, acknowledge, explain

(6) Closing the sale

- Invitational close -- if no questions from the customer "why don't you give us a try" or "why don't you take it"
- Directive close -- "Then the next step is for me to X, Y, and Z. How does that sound?"
- Ask for the decision -- don't ask the customer what they want to do next (gives them an out); give them something concrete
- Rejection is not personal -- everyone is bombarded with requests to buy things and they have to turn things down

(7) Resales and referrals

- Preventing buyer's remorse -- be prepared for how you'll handle this; treat people well after the sale
- Easiest and most profitable sales happen when your foot is in the door

Selling to groups

- Find out how the buying decision is made
- Identify the key people; ideally talk to them individually beforehand to prepare
- Find out who makes the final decision
- What is the one thing you must convince them of before they'll buy?
- Uncover the key objection

Speaking professionally

- Build rapport and trust (ask questions, be genial)
- Clarify their needs (ask questions to help them affirm what you have is what they need)
- Present your ideas clearly (and show that your offering is best)
- Address their concerns ("At this point people often ask ____")
- Deliver a call to action (tell them how much better off they'll be by accepting your recommendations; tell them concretely what their next step is)