



**communication skills for business**

## **Seven Secrets of Successful Personal Presentation**

### 1. **Look Good**

Analysts claim that audience reaction to what you say is based

**58%** on Appearance

**35%** on Voice

**7%** on Content

**For men** it's quite easy – have a shave, get a haircut, a dark suit (adds authority), a clean light-coloured shirt (throws light on the face) and an interesting tie. Dressing like a spiv isn't cutting a dash, it's naff. Better to be smart and stylish rather than faddish and laddish.

**For women** there's more scope – but there are more pitfalls. The main thing is to dress appropriately for the occasion. If you're pitching for business or looking for a job, wear a business outfit; if it's a more informal occasion, smart casual. Be feminine not feline. And whether you're a man or a woman.....make sure your shoes are clean and well-heeled.

### 2. **Sound Good**

Have you ever recorded your own voice and played it back? Many people are horrified because their voice sounds flat and uninteresting. Don't worry ... you're normal.

Women tend to have better voices than men – but practise varying the pitch and pace of your delivery to add polish and impact. Always stand if possible – it gets more oxygen into the lungs. If you have to sit, sit upright.

Remember – audience reaction to your presentation is based around **35%** on your voice.

### 3. **Be Interesting**

Yes, I know what you're thinking. What you say can't be that important if it only accounts for 7% of the impact on your audience. But in business the substance of what you're saying is important.

What is your Unique Selling Point and Unique Benefit to your potential client that separates you from the pack? Think like a listener – most people want to hear something new and exciting. Have your own 60-second 'elevator presentation' prepared that encapsulates what you're about. It should be a story with a clear beginning, middle and end. This will help people to remember you. Humour helps too. Be a good storyteller - **Facts tell but stories sell.**

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### 4. **Be Positive**

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Nothing is more guaranteed to grind down any listener than being negative. Being positive lifts the human spirit and fills the heart with gladness! However, it's worth remembering that it can also be pretty irritating to live or work with people who are permanently chirpy. But people would generally rather engage with someone whose cup is half full rather than half empty. Doom and gloom can hang like a black cloud in any office.

## 5. **Smile**

Sounds simple, but lots of us forget it. It may seem trite to say: 'Smile and the world smiles with you.' But it happens to be true and almost always guarantees a smile in return. It doesn't cost much, but it's worth practising.

You can even smile on the phone. Wouldn't all those drab sales calls have so much more chance of succeeding if the people making them just smiled a bit more? Smiling really is the USP of the human race. Even other higher primates can't do it – apart from the orang-utan, I believe. Dolphins and porpoises just look rather smiley, but that's another story .....

## 6. **Engage and Include**

This is closely allied to No. 5. Smiling is an important first step in engaging a listener – but you need to go further. If you apply all the first five steps, you're well on your way. In a 1-2-1 conversation it can be as simple as maintaining eye contact, but with a bigger audience – even two or three people – engagement requires more effort. Draw your audience in by ensuring that you spread eye contact and hand gestures around all your listeners. For example, if you're trying to sell to a group of people but you fail to engage one person then it's likely your pitch will have a negative impact on that individual. That reduces your chances of winning the sale. Exactly the same applies if you're facing an appointment board.

## 7. **Energy, Enthusiasm & Enjoyment (The Three E's)**

Almost any presentation is doomed to failure without The Three E's. Energy is a very powerful tool when selling yourself. This needs to be backed with real enthusiasm. If you're not enthusiastic about yourself or whatever you're trying to sell, why should anyone else be?

Above all, enjoy your presentation. You'll find it's infectious.

**Good Luck!**