

Must-Do Tips No 31: Presentations – How To Avoid Terminal Boredom

We have first-hand experience of terminal presentation boredom and so have you, haven't you? Within a few minutes of the start, you know you are in for a LONG morning: as Partner X launches out on yet another fascinating exposition. Featuring his 60 fulsomely-populated slides delivered in less than 30 minutes with all the skill and enthusiasm that has lost pitches or alienated clients and colleagues the professional world over.

People buy people. So no matter how expert your professionals are, audiences will not see this expertise if they cannot communicate properly: **and they will not buy** what you say or have to offer them. And presentations are THE most public exposure, designed to test (and sometimes break) the nerves of your hardest souls. This month, we offer three tips that will help banish boredom from your next presentation.

Tip 1 – start with a BANG!

“Hello, my name is Jane Jones from SPP. We are a hypothetical law/accounting/surveying/consulting firm. I am responsible for...etc.”

Terminal boredom begins, as Dylan Thomas said, at the beginning - with someone droning on like this. Research shows that an audience remembers two things more than anything else. The beginning and the end. So give them something to remember! Tell a relevant story. Evoke a hypothetical situation (“Imagine that you are...”). Appeal to a common memory. Go for the DIFFERENT in DIFFERENTIATION.

Tip 2 – us or them?

Having got going, the next thing that we can be assailed with is talk about some professionals' favourite subject: themselves. The fact that SPP was formed in 1926 when old Mr S had a Damascene experience on his way to the butchers, or that you have offices in thunderous numbers of locations may fleetingly impress graduate candidates or inductees. But it is the kiss of death for clients, prospects, and anyone else out of their business short pants. Better to focus on your audience, relate to them directly, their experiences, their situation (use the words, 'you', yours'). Do your homework to find out what will enable you to do this.

Tip 3 – a few points, well made

And finally, the person from SPP throws the proverbial kitchen sink at us. Armed with those 60 slides, massed ranks of facts are marched, jackbooted, towards and over the audience, grinding them into bored submission.



The rule of thumb is that a good presentation should contain no more than FIVE key points, delivered succinctly and with *gusto* and *enthusiasm* (as audience members, we relate to someone who is excited about what they are saying and what they do). Any more detail can be summarised and/or provided in notes and other back-up afterwards.

As one of our missions in life, we want to help banish boredom from the presentations that professionals make. For more information on how this can work for your firm, hit 'Reply' and type **Banish Boredom**. For more general information about what we do, go to www.peoplescope.com.

We welcome feedback from you on what you think about "Must-Do Tips". If you like it, hit 'Reply' and tell us specifically what you like. If there is a topic or issue that you would like us to cover, what is it? And if there's something that annoys, tell us too! We want to improve.

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Best regards.

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