



SPEAKERS' CORNER NEWSLETTER



July 2013

26 and counting..

In May we added a new country to our training list – Ireland. It was our twenty-sixth international market. We were able to do it in a day but still enjoyed the fun and energy of Dublin.

Co-incidentally, in May we went to Copenhagen for a long weekend.

What's the connection? Well Copenhagen was our first overseas training destination and that was June 1998.

So we've averaged nearly two new markets a year. It doesn't matter which country we're training in, there is always a wealth of talent. And it never ceases to both amaze and humble us to hear presentations and stories delivered for the most part, in English – the recognised universal business language – but which for the majority is not their first language.

A presentation is your chance to get across your belief in an idea and that involves a transfer of emotion not just facts. We teach our delegates to simplify their messages, use stories and speak from the heart, so even if there's a word or even a sentence that is spoken in their native language, they still connect with their audiences.

We'd like to take this opportunity to say a big **thank-you** to all our past delegates – it wouldn't have been the same without you.

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” Arthur Ashe, American tennis player

“The first Elevator Pitch.”

When was the first “safe” elevator invented? In the mid 19th century by an American engineer Elisha Otis.

Otis wanted to demonstrate his new safety invention to a sceptical US audience so he rented space in New York's main exhibit hall. He constructed an open elevator platform and a shaft in which the platform could rise and fall. He got assistants to raise him to a height of 3 stories and with a crowd looking on, cut the main rope with an axe. The audience gasped. The platform fell but in seconds the safety brake engaged, the elevator stopped falling. Otis exclaimed “All safe, gentlemen, all safe”

It was a simple, dramatic and effective way to put a complex idea across in order to change minds. It was the world's first elevator pitch. Otis went on to found the world famous Otis Elevator Company. [A thanks to Daniel Pink for bringing this story to our attention in his book: “To Sell is Human.”]

“Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.” Anais Nin, American author

“When you wake up in the morning..”

We heard Dr Beau Lotto a neuroscientist and amongst other things the director of the Lottolab at the Science Museum in London and a co-director of the branding Neuro-Design lab - Beautiful Mind Ltd, talk on the subject of Perception. He opened with this question - “When you wake up in the morning are you seeing the real world or something you perceive to be real?”

In his view, the brain evolved to see what proved useful to see, to continually redefine normality. He says in fact, only 10% of what we see is information collected from our eyes, the remaining 90% is from our past experiences and patterns that we have become familiar with. As he reminds us, information is meaningless unless we can make sense of it. It's great that we learn from the past, isn't that what evolution is all about? However, we would like to suggest that if we try to make sense of things before we've fully looked, we may miss the opportunity to redefine what's really possible.

“I always turn to the sports page first. The sports pages record people's accomplishments; the front page nothing but man's failures.”
Earl Warren, American jurist & politician

“The elephant in the room.”

We've been running some Advanced Presentation courses recently – we've revised and updated it. During the day's programme we discuss the role of visual aids and in particular powerpoint – as we call it “the elephant in the room”. We advocate minimum slides – none if possible but no more than 10 if needed.

One of our delegates reminded us of “Slideshare”. He felt the highlighted daily presentations were good examples of how powerpoint can inform and entertain in a quick and punchy manner, using say 75 slides and singles messages with the careful use of visuals.

We can't argue with this if the aim is to get across a straightforward message over the internet.

BUT, if you have been given the chance to have a face-to-face meeting with your audience, real or virtual, then this type of presentation simply won't work. It will become another reading lesson admittedly one that even a 4 year old could handle. But in order to deliver that number of slides, to remember their order, the presenter has to refer constantly to the screen. They have to script themselves tightly and in so doing lose the spontaneity of delivering a message in a relaxed and conversational manner.

If you'd like to know more about our NEW Advanced Presentations Workshop please get in touch at info@speakersco.co.uk or call: 0044[0]2086053782.

“Above all else, never think you're not good enough.” Anthony Trollope, English novelist

“How to become more creative.”

Matthew Syed - The Times UK columnist in a recent article reminded us that: “We become more creative when we switch off”.

He gave as examples: Plato the Greek Philosopher who “wrestled”. Winston Churchill, who “swam and painted”. Manchester United Football team who “take breaks”.

What do you do to help you switch off?

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.” Albert Einstein, Physicist and Humanist

“Happiness is not ready made. It comes from our actions.” Dalai Lama

“Speaking Tips No 1.”

We're starting a new column on Speaking Tips. Our first one is from Peggy Noonan*:

“Once you've finished a first draft of your speech – stand up and speak it aloud. Where you falter, alter.”

*Peggy Noonan was President Reagan's speechwriter and has written many books on the subject including “On Speaking Well”.

“18 Camels.”

When the father passed away, his sons opened up the Will. The Will stated that the eldest son should get half of the 17 camels while the middle son should be given a third. The youngest son should be given one ninth of the 17 camels. As it is not possible to divide 17 in half or by 3 or by 9, the three sons started to fight with each other. As they were unable to resolve the issue they went to a wise man.

The wise man listened patiently about the Will and after giving some thought, brought one camel of his own and added it to 17. That increased the total to 18 camels. Now, he started reading the deceased father's will again. Half of 18 = 9. So he gave the eldest son 9 camels. One third of 18 = 6. So he gave the middle son 6 camels and one ninth of 18 = 2. So he gave the youngest son 2 camels. Now add this up: 9 plus 6 plus 2 is 17 and this leaves one camel, which the wise man took back. Moral : The attitude of negotiation and problem solving is to find the 18th camel i.e. the common ground. Once a person is able to find this 18th camel or the common ground the issue is resolved. It is difficult at times. However, to reach a solution, the first step is to believe that there is a solution.

“It's kind of fun to do the impossible”

Walt Disney, American Film Maker

“Summer Afternoon”

“Summer Afternoon” the best two words in the English language said Henry James. And we have to agree. We've recently spent a glorious and emotional “Summer Afternoon” watching tennis on Centre Court at Wimbledon and by contrast a few gentle and quiet “Summer Afternoons” in our back garden in Kew.

Wherever you are this summer, we hope you'll enjoy yourselves creating many memorable moments.

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

Summary of Training & Coaching 2013

The Power of Storytelling

Who will benefit?

The art of storytelling is an important weapon in anyone's communication arsenal so any managers who have made a number of presentations and are competent at delivering.

Workshop outcomes:

To understand the different ways to use stories in business presentations.

A step guide to crafting stories.

To develop the confidence to use stories to make more impact.

To release imaginations to communicate more creatively.

To observe themselves in action as a storyteller and receive feedback.

NEW Advanced Business Presentations

Who will Benefit?

Managers with 5 plus years of experience who have to deliver presentations to all levels of clients and internal management. Maximum 6 delegates.

Workshop outcomes:

A new approach to writing a memorable presentation/message

Ways to make stronger connections with audiences

Greater personal confidence to step outside the norm.

Seeing themselves in action and getting extensive feedback.

Appreciation of personal responsibility to improve the standard

Selling Creative Ideas

Who will Benefit?

Anyone who has to sell ideas – whether the original creator or account management. Typically, a prospective delegate may lack confidence or feel unable to put together a logical argument or find it difficult to bring an idea alive. They may have only just started in the business or have years of experience.

Workshop outcomes:

A better understanding of the 'client's viewpoint.'

What is the most 'persuasive case for buying'.

The skills to sell the logic behind the idea.

The confidence to bring an 'idea alive', helping the client get into the right 'mind frame' for creativity and the right 'visual frame' to understand.

- A step-by-step plan of action for selling their ideas.

One-to-one Coaching

The areas we cover include:

1. Preparing for a major industry or company conference – speech writing and delivery.
2. Working on a particular aspect of delivery - voice, presence, body language, emotional connection
3. Building greater self-belief and confidence in front of an audience
4. Building greater connection and engagement through message and delivery.
5. Working on speaking fears/ being unable to rise to the presentation opportunity.
6. Working on assertiveness /building greater credibility /developing greater personal presence.
7. Helping prepare for MC'ing a major event.

Maximising Business Presentations & Conference Speaking

Who will benefit?

We offer a range of workshops which are tailored to the needs of the delegates from graduate through to MD. We design the workshop for each client's particular requirements and include learnings and exercises on the message, medium and messenger.

Presentation Masterclass

Who will Benefit?

Managers with 5 plus years of experience who have to deliver presentations to all levels of clients and internal management. Maximum 6 delegates.

Workshop outcomes:

A best practice for writing presentations NOT a straightjacket of powerpoint

How to produce an in-depth v a focused presentation

A best practice for writing a send ahead/leave behind document

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