

## SPEAKERS' CORNER



# What's the Story?

OCTOBER 2017

### **“How do I look?”**

A client recently asked us how they looked. And would we make any suggestions?

Taking a bit of a risk, we suggested a good haircut and a new shirt. They thanked us and off they went.

When we saw them next, they looked sharper, more focused, more confident. It seemed to us they had a more persuasive argument, which we believed and bought into.

When you're making a competitive pitch, you've got to look right as well as sound right. Rather like going on a first date: why on earth would you want to look anything less than your best?

Vivienne Westwood put it like this: “You have a more interesting life if you wear impressive clothes”

### **Looking after your people**

We went to New Orleans last month to see for ourselves how this unique city of music, creole culture & food, was doing. When anyone now mentions New Orleans, you may think first of Hurricane Katrina.

Katrina actually happened 12 years ago, in August 2005. In just 5 fateful days, the city was extensively flooded - 80% was under water - in some areas there was 16 feet of water. There was a mass evacuation. 1,836 people lost their lives. It was the costliest natural disaster in American history.

We took a city tour and heard the story of how they had to do a lot more than simply re-build it. They had to persuade the very people, who had made the city famous, to return. Many of their musicians were living and working elsewhere.

The authorities knew that New Orleans without its jazz and its clubs would not appeal to either holiday-makers or conference-goers. New Orleans had to re-grow its roots!

So they built new homes for their people; they gave them low interest rates on their mortgages; they made the new accommodation really attractive, so returning musicians and their families would feel both at home and special.

Their plan worked and today the New Orleans' music scene is more dynamic and varied than ever before. Overall, it's managed to create a more vibrant, lively and fun place to visit.

It highlighted one thing very clearly to us: **If you look after the people who create your wealth, you will win. If you ignore them, you will probably pay for it.**

### **All that matters is the first 30 seconds**

It used to be said that the perfect pop song lasted 3 minutes. Now all of this is changing because of the way streaming services, like Spotify, pay royalties only if the track is played for longer than 30 seconds.

So songwriters are now looking to make their openings more memorable and impactful, with catchier vocals. This way they can earn a living.

This 30 seconds emphasis is just the same for someone making a presentation: if you don't get your audience's attention in the first 30 seconds, chances are, you've already lost them.

How can you achieve this with a presentation or speech? Here are 3 ways which really do work:

1. Ask your audience a question. One which is relevant, different and intriguing. Try it, people love to answer questions. It brings them all together.
2. Tell them a story. Again it should be relevant. But if it comes out of the theme of the meeting or reveals a personal side of your life, which is meaningful to your message, it will create a bond.
3. Use a dramatic visual hook. Remember when Bill Gates came on stage with a bottle full of mosquitoes and released them into the audience? He was talking about the need to overcome malaria. Even though his mosquitoes were not malaria-carriers, of course, he made his case unforgettably in the first 30 secs with this one powerful action.

**If you want your audience to listen to your full message, get them hooked in the first 30 seconds.**

## **Are you ready for 2018?**

2018 looks like it's going to be a tough and challenging year, so we have fine-tuned and honed our workshops.

It's all in our new 2018 Training Portfolio – 4 tested and proven workshops- **Storytelling, Selling Ideas, Persuasive Presentations, Conference Speaking + One-to-One Coaching.** <https://goo.gl/RkZrS6>

Everybody is in the selling game and the ones who succeed, will win the most new clients.

**So if you want to know how to sell yourself and sell your ideas to clients & prospects, come on one of our courses.** See what our clients said about their experiences.

## **Good luck with your stories, presentations and pitches in 2017**

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