

Speakers' Corner

January 2007 newsletter

You only score if you shoot at goal!

This was said by a football commentator but for us it sums up well what happens to many New Year resolutions.

People the world over have become so disillusioned with setting new goals each year that they've given up on the habit.

Because they lose sight of what they were aiming for, their resolve quickly dies. And so instead of taking a new look at how to achieve their goal, they give up altogether. Just think what would happen if this was the attitude of a footballer!

So like a footballer who needs to keep finding new ways to score we say, don't lose sight of what you want. If you don't get there first time how else could you get your goal? Take some chances, not all will hit the target. After all, you can only score if you make an attempt!

Here's a final thought from one of the greatest goal scorers of all time, the Brazilian footballer, Pele.

He scored 1280 goals in his playing career [many top footballers today are lucky to score 30 a year!] and summed up the secret of success by saying: 'Everything is practice.' Quite simple really!

Good luck in 2007 and remember the old saying: 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again!'

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

'Definition of madness. Doing the same thing in 2007 as you did in 2006 and expecting a different result!' Derek Arden

Six Lessons from '06

We've learnt a lot from working with our delegates in 2006. Here are the top 6 lessons we'd like to share with you.

Lesson 1 – whatever the message, audiences hate watching you read slides!

Lesson 2 – catch your audiences attention in the first 30 seconds or they'll switch off.

Lesson 3 – credible presenters illustrate how they'll help their audience's to succeed.

Lesson 4 – people buy people so find ways to connect, build trust & show commitment.

Lesson 5 – if you think what you're saying is boring, so will your audience.

Lesson 6 – if you haven't rehearsed, then prepare to fail.

'My No.1 beauty tip is to lie about how old you are. Add an extra ten years and people will say you look incredible for your age.' Jimmy Carr UK comedian

Relationships – where would we be without them?

One of the most common questions we're asked is: 'How to deal with a difficult client'.

Building good relationships is key to developing any business. And good ones have both emotional and economic benefit.

Here are some tips we've been given to help build better relationships so clients are no longer seen as 'difficult'.

1. If it begins in a hassle it will end in a hassle. Forcing relationships won't work.

2. Be your best self. Show your strengths and weaknesses but above all be decent.

3. Interested beats interesting. It's not about you getting your interests heard but being interested in the other person's needs.

4. Empathy rules the day. It's the ability to understand without necessarily agreeing.

5. More information doesn't create a better relationship. Aim for an exchange of meaningful ideas not just more information.

6. Conflict avoidance often signals the beginning of the end. Unaddressed conflict will diminish if not destroy any relationship.

7. If you value the person don't ever waste their time. It's not about 'staying in touch' but having a 'meaningful exchange'.

We'd like to leave you with John Hegarty's view on relationships: 'Rapt attention is the highest compliment you can pay a client.'

'Good actions give strength to ourselves and inspire good actions in others.' Anon

An Idea – now there's a thought

The UK Sunday Times magazine on 31.12.06 featured 'The Year in Ideas' mentioning 'graphic novels', 'conscience consumerism' and a whole lot more. But what we found more fascinating was an article written by Kate Muir on the subject.

Her conclusion – 'ideas are just not what they were'.

Her point – in the past you knew something was a big idea because it hit you between the eyes. Nowadays, an idea creeps up on you.

She believes we interact with information differently. The net's given us the extremes of global information sourcing and personal blogging. We have more choice than ever when it comes to TV, radio, press, books.

We as consumers don't read or watch the same things so we may well see the same idea differently and at different stages of its development and we can also impact on how the idea develops over time.

So what's the point we're making here?

Well whether you're selling creative work, a brand or media proposal – they're all ideas and as such will be received by a number of different people in a number of different ways. It may have been delivered to one audience, emailed to another, told by a third party to another one. But what is key is that as an 'idea', its principles are bought into by everyone who receives it and they work with it to make it an even better idea.

So when you go about beginning to sell your idea, instead of looking at your client as the people most likely to kill it, look instead at them as the people who can help to make your idea a truly great one.

'Successful people are always looking at ways to help others. Unsuccessful people are always asking: 'What's in it for me?' Anon

Are your clients satisfied?

It's always interesting to hear about other people's businesses and to learn from them.

We talked with an owner of a small hotel chain recently who told us: " 56% of hotel guests had a complaint but only 25% bothered to mention it to a member of staff. So 31% left feeling dissatisfied and are therefore most unlikely to return".

His solution was to have additional members of staff at check-outs talking with guests and establishing that complaints could be aired.

How can you find out in your business whether your clients are satisfied or not?

'Emphasise everything and you emphasise nothing.' H. Gordon Lewis

The 'Imperfection' Connection

You've probably watched a juggler drop something and gone 'aargh!' You will have unconsciously changed from a passive watcher to an active one. You'll be thinking: 'What will they do now?'

Normally, the juggler will stop, compose himself, look around his audience, smile and begin again. His audience will be willing him on. He will have made a connection.

So when giving presentations think of how you could use a situation to show you're 'in the moment' and make a better connection.

Obviously your audience must believe you are the 'expert' - that you're knowledgeable and professional - but they must also see you as 'real'.

The more regular and like your audience you can be, the more they will buy into you and your message. Because regular people, like them, are fallible!

Here are three ways you can appear 'more in the moment'. Ask a question of the audience as though you've forgotten the word you're looking for. As you get to an important issue, talk about how difficult you found the task. Refer to comments made by your audience to help you make your case.

Good presenters are responding all the time to their audience and don't need to 'stick to a script' but instead 'work with the energy' in the room.

'Take time to reflect after a meeting or a row. What have you learned? What would you do differently?'
The Mind Gym

A few amusing thoughts to end on!

How can there be self-help "groups"?

If the world was a logical place, men would be the ones riding side saddle.

Show me a man with both feet firmly on the ground and I'll show you a man who can't get his pants off.

And finally - a rhinoceros was crashing through the jungle totally distraught. An owl sees him and asks: 'What's wrong?'

The rhino says: 'I'm in love with a butterfly, but I know it will never be. She's beautiful, floats on wings of gossamer and I'm too big and ugly. She has a short life span and I am doomed to remain on this earth while she has gone. What am I to do?'

The owl replies: 'Well I know.' 'Please tell me.' says the rhino. 'You must turn yourself into a butterfly.' says the owl

With hopeful eyes the rhino asks: 'Oh yes, but how do I do that?'

'I don't know.' replies the owl, 'I'm the strategist - you have to implement it!'

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

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