



# S P E A K E R S ' C O R N E R N E W S L E T T E R



**October 2007**

## Ahoy there!

We were training in Putney recently – just by the river. We took our car and parked it on the slipway. There were plenty of signs to advise us the ‘road was liable to flooding’. So we asked the Boat Chandlers ‘when’s high tide today?’ We knew we needed to move it before 2.45pm.

At around 1.45 a number of good spirited clients asked if we needed to move our car as the water was now ‘lapping the back tyres.’ This we duly did. Everyone moved their cars save for one. It was the best car parked that day on the slipway - a new black BMW 5 series estate.

You’ve probably guessed what happened. By 2.00pm the BMW was surrounded by water – up to the foot well. By 2.15 it was gently rocking with the water and by 2.25 it had floated away and sunk.

It just goes to show what happens when you’re not alert and ignore the signs!

Why are we telling you this? To remind you that when you’re making a presentation to look around at your audience for signs they’re not drowning in a river of information!

## Barry Graham and Sally Clare

**“When you set goals something inside you starts saying, ‘let’s go, let’s go’ and ceilings start to move up.”**

**Zig Ziglar**

**“No one trains to be Number 2.” Nike**

## Are you walking your talk?

A recent US report gave numerous examples of experts who didn’t practise what they preached - leadership experts who couldn’t keep employees working for them; financial experts who were broke; experts on ethics who didn’t pay their bills.

Take Nobel Peace winner Al Gore, who’s created a worldwide following from his Oscar winning film ‘An inconvenient truth’ - a personal crusade against global warming. Shortly after its release, an investigation revealed that Gore’s household uses more electricity in a month than the average US home in a year!

Are you living up to the messages you’re sending out? Because there’s no substitute for having personal integrity. It makes sleeping at night easier too!

**“Watch, listen and learn. You can’t know it all yourself. Anyone who thinks they do is destined for mediocrity.”**

**Donald Trump**

## Generic or branded?

As presentation skills trainers we regularly listen to delegates delivering a pitch presentation and more often than not, hear a very generic message.

On the assumption that every agency pitching for the business will have very similar credentials and is likely to come up with similar solutions to a client’s problems,

we ask our delegates: 'Why should the client choose you?' Surely the idea should be to sell their brand and not the commodity?

We know presenter personalities can influence the decision, so making a connection with the audience on the day is paramount. But there's so much more that can be done to brand your message and make it stand out from your competition.

Remember, a brand creates an emotional link with its consumer by balancing the delivery of functional and emotional benefits.

Our delegates certainly think about the functional benefit - that their proposal will deliver against the need; that it's packaged correctly according to their agency's guidelines even down to the powerpoint template they use in their presentation. But few look to see if they're delivering any emotional benefits.

Have they tried to connect with the right side as well as the left side of their audience's brains - the side that is emotional and takes the decisions? Have they delivered an experience that makes their message resonate with their audience?

It's the presenters who win over the hearts of their audiences who are more likely to be the winners when the final decision is taken.

**"It's only shallow people who do not judge by appearances." Oscar Wilde**

## **Don't be hand-tied**

We're often asked to what extent a presenter should gesture and if too much is bad for a presentation. We've never witnessed a delegate over-gesturing whereas we've often seen too little.

Here's some independent proof. Two universities – Birmingham and Wisconsin – velcro-ed people's arms to a wooden board and then asked them to

speak on selected subjects. They found speakers used fewer interesting words and had less to say.

So remember the power of non-verbal communication and help your audience to understand your message even more with some natural, engaging gestures.

Go on, go the extra smile.

**"People hear what they see." Anon**

## **Show you care.**

We recently gave a presentation to speaking professionals on the '10 Lessons' we had learned in 10 years in the training business.

So many of the lessons started with a client's request or suggestion: 'Can you run a workshop in Copenhagen?' So that got us working overseas. 'Can you run a course on selling creative work?' Yes we can. Step by step we built up our training portfolio.

However two lessons we recognised were key to more than just our business but also to how we train.

These were: 'first impressions count' and 'showing you care'.

All of us are in the 'first impressions' business because if we don't make a favourable one, things don't go well. So we aim to make a good impression and make a connection before we even start.

And 'showing you care' is a basic good people-handling skill. The more we show our delegates we care for their development, their achievements, their successes, the more they care about improving their personal presentation performance.

Our delegates leave us saying they can see a difference in themselves and in the future, will show more care for their audiences and take more care over their presentations.

## **'Up close and personal.'**

For over 2,500 years, politicians have been judged by their ability to stand and deliver a speech. From Demosthenes to Ghandi to Bill Clinton, the course of history has been changed by 'one man and his message'. So it should have been no surprise, the media and public response to a speech given by David Cameron, leader of the opposition, at the Conservative's annual party conference.

The furore arose because Cameron had the nerve to deliver his speech without a script or autocue or powerpoint. As he said: 'it's just me and some notes'. He spoke for 67 minutes and overnight, he managed to improve his party's ratings dramatically.

Conversely, the previous week, the UK Prime Minister had been scripted in his address to his party conference, hid behind a lectern, showed a real lack of charisma or originality and was criticised for plagiarism.

David Cameron, walked the stage and recounted numerous anecdotes and stories, some personal, some not, creating his unique message in his own words.

He got his audience buzzing. He got the media buzzing. He got talked about. He made the headlines and put his party back in the running. [They're 12 points ahead now.]

A good speaker has real knowledge, does a lot of personal research and thinking and knows where they want to take their audience. They know how to open to set the scene and how to finish to leave their audience motivated and committed.

Are you willing to get up close and personal with your audience?

**"Management cannot be expected to recognise a good idea unless it is presented by a good salesman."**

**David Ogilvy**

## **Boosting your memory and your performance**

Recent research suggests that jiggling your eyes from side to side for 30 seconds every morning can boost your powers of recall.

If it can do that after you've been asleep for 7 hours, it could well help as a warm-up for a presentation.

An alternative is a prescription drug, Modafinil, which the UK Sunday Times reports is being used by university academics who fly around the world giving lectures. They take Modafinil to perk themselves up after long flights so they can make their presentations despite jet-lag.

The article concluded that 'cognitive enhancers' such as Modafinil, can help a person to think faster and sleep more efficiently and could be as 'common as coffee' within a couple of decades.

**"There is a way to do it better. Find it."  
Thomas A Edison**

## **A final thought on memory**

If you put up a slide of 5 numbers and ask your audience to repeat them out loud, then blank the slide and ask them to write down what they remember, they'll remember 80%.

If you put up 5 numbers, not ask them to speak out loud, blank the slide, get them to count from 10 backwards and then ask them to write them down, they'll remember 25%.

The moral, don't deliver lists of data. Instead put facts into a relevant context and make what you say resonate with your audience so they're involved mentally and remember.

**Good luck!**

**Barry Graham and Sally Clare**

**P.S. Please note our new contact details overleaf.**

# Speakers' Corner - Summary of principal workshops and coaching on offer



Working in partnership with our clients to deliver tailored training that adds value.

## 1. Writing presentations – Half day workshop

This programme shows the delegates how to write a presentation message that's worth hearing and produce a document that's worth reading.

## 2. Maximising Business Presentations – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates the difference between 'simply having the confidence to stand up and talk' and 'communicating to convince and influence'.

## 3. Advanced Presentation Skills – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates that as with any skill, it's good to have some presentation skills coaching from time to time so you're always at your best.

## 4. Conference Speaking – 1 day workshop

This programme asks the delegates: "Don't think what you have to do for the conference but rather what the conference can for you?"

## 5. Selling Creative Work 'Your Ideas – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates how to help others 'to see and believe in' their ideas.

## 6. One to one training

We work on specific needs, eg on a major industry presentation, helping to build greater self belief and much more.

## 7. Coaching & Facilitation

We work with a group of managers acting as facilitators and trainers to help them resolve issues – such as an agreed new business approach, best practice for working with clients, best face to put forward to the wider business audience or the media and much more.

## 8. Helping Business Win Business

We put the kind of thinking and creativity into your presentations that you put into developing your business.

**Speakers' Corner**  
**'Helping people deliver their best'**

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