



APRIL 2019

One more time!

Spring is God's way of saying "One more time". It certainly feels that way as the clocks went forward an hour, trees are in blossom and the temperature hit 20 degrees in Kew last week.

As David Hockney said: "Spring is very energising for me".

It certainly is for us. We launched in Spring 1997 with a mantra:

"Good decisions come from good presentations."

It's as true today as it was then.

There's a simple way to plan this:

1. Ask "What's in it for the audience?" Before you write a word.
2. What's your purpose? Write it down. Purpose controls content.
3. Finally, what's your Core Message? The message you want your audience to take away, remember and action.

Now deliver it with passion, conviction and credibility.

How to disagree in a helpful way

Years ago we were asked to work with a creative team – a writer and art director – highly respected by their agency but renowned for being combative with the clients.

It became clear to us that there were two things going on – they had little respect for the clients and refused to listen to their viewpoints.

So how can you disagree in a helpful way?

Here are a few tips.

1. Respect each other and look at issues from the other's viewpoint.
2. Before selling an idea, conduct an honest evaluation - should you re-work your idea? If you can understand a potential client issue, what could you say or do to pre-empt their worries?
3. What is really important? What is 'idea' and what is 'execution'? What can you be flexible over?

Our capacity to disagree on the whole helps us to reason better. It helps us to rationalise our strongest case. Without disagreement there can be no expression of your ideas.

So what makes disagreement more fruitful? Better evaluations with more compassion.

When you trust each other enough, you can reason and share.

You need to show it matters to you

We were queuing in our local post office to send off a Special Delivery parcel. It was 4.47pm.

The manager said: "It won't get there for two days - we cut off taking deliveries at 4.45pm."

"That's a shame" we said, "we've worked all afternoon to finish it. It's important."

We thanked him for his time and started to leave. He then said: "Hold on I'm going to get this delivery off tonight. I can see it matters to you"

Do you make sure your clients and colleagues know when it matters to you? It's likely to be the difference between them buying your ideas or not.

Show you care.

Shoot for the Moon

There's a new book called "Shoot for the Moon" by Richard Wiseman about achieving the impossible with the Apollo Mindset. <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Shoot-Moon-Richard-Wiseman/dp/1787474437>

It's 50 years since Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the moon in July 20th, 1969.

President Kennedy set down the challenge in September 1962 with his famous speech "We choose to go the Moon in this decade, not because that will be easy, but because it will be hard...."

Wiseman talks about how humble he'd found everyone. He said they were always quick to point out the important roles played by others, to say 'we' not 'I'. They spoke of the honour of working on the space programme.

He went on to say that this kind of humility is often perceived as low self-esteem. In fact research shows the opposite is true. Humble people tend to be more altruistic, forgiving, likeable, grateful and co-operative. Humility is vital when it comes to teamwork.

Whatever you want to do, this book will give you the mindset to help you achieve your dreams.

Making a 'thank you' work

We were working with a speaker the other day who'd written a fairly long "Thank You" introduction. It slowed him down and frankly we started to lose interest.

If you want to thank your audience at the beginning of your speech you need to be more original and creative.

Here's what the late comedian Bob Monkhouse said in opening a speech:

"May I begin by thanking you for the three great human qualities – faith, hope and charity.

Your applause before I speak, that's faith. Applause during my speech, that's hope. Applause after I've spoken, that'll be charity.

Good luck with your stories, presentations and pitches in 2019.

Barry Graham & Sally Clare

