



What's the Story?

JUNE 2018

Template for Speaking

5x15 talks in London are the perfect template for speeches- a 15 minute speech by five different speakers – no notes, hot topic, action point.

We heard Miriam Gonzalez Durantez talk about Gender Equality. She's a high-flying partner in a City law firm, founder of Inspiring Girls and also married to Nick Clegg.

Two stories from Miriam stood out. Her charity had undertaken research with 6 year old boys and girls on what their expectations were for future careers:

The boys were Bankers, Doctors, Bosses.

The girls were Teachers, Nurses, Wives.

It showed the scale of the problem. She followed this up to show there had been progress, Miriam said when she was eight (some 40 years ago) in Spain women couldn't own a business or have a bank account.

Now a Spanish woman heads the largest Eurozone bank.

"When" by Daniel Pink

Daniel Pink is a bestselling author (*Drive & To Sell is Human*). We thoroughly enjoyed both so we bought his latest book "When" to read about the scientific secrets of perfect timing. We all know timing is critical for all the important things in life – proposing, asking for a rise, pitching and many more.

Just one point among many which stood out for us was the importance of a leader responding to his e-mails quickly. E-mail response time is the single best predictor of whether employees are satisfied with their bosses.

Interestingly, we had a query for Daniel and e-mailed it on a Sunday not expecting a reply until Monday at the earliest. His transatlantic reply was back within two hours in a warm and engaging way. He's a man who believes in what he writes.

His book is full of entertaining and relevant facts and stories about getting your timing right – so why take a chance [WHEN](#) you can follow the best advice.

Start Strong

As any 100 metre sprinter knows it's much harder to win if you get off to a slow start. Likewise the first 30 seconds of your presentation can determine the rest of your talk.

At a recent workshop we saw this first hand as one of the delegates would listen for the first 10-15 seconds to other delegates speaking then switch to his mobile if he didn't hear anything that interested him.

This isn't new – watch any conference group. They want to listen but need an incentive.

The first 30 seconds is your time to grab the audience's attention – tell them your purpose, the benefit to them listening and make them like you.

You must rehearse this 30 seconds the most.

You need “Hands”

How many times do you use your hands to emphasise and bring home a point?

A US research study reviewing TED talks found that the more times a speaker used their hands the greater number of views the talk received.

To get you in the habit one tip is to practise with a bottle in each hand: this gets you accustomed to speaking with your hands out in front of you which looks really natural but initially will make you feel robotic.

The other tip is that if you want to stand up and talk, don't sit down and practise. Because whatever you do in practice will come through in the real situation.

Too focused to think clearly

We read Matthew Syed's article titled 'Too focused to think clearly' in The Times 30.05.18 and it struck a chord. Here's the gist of what he wrote. Last Month in the Champions League Final, the Liverpool goalkeeper, Karius was so focused on 'distributing the ball' his lack of situational awareness meant he threw the ball into the feet of the opposition and a goal was scored.

There's a book called 'Processing under Pressure' by the psychologist Matthew J Sharps which describes how we can become so focused on the end that we forget to take in what's happening and end up with tunnel vision.

He writes about a training exercise for combat policemen when the officers were so focused on the 'gunman at the end of the long corridor' that they ran without seeing that there were 'numerous improvised explosive devices in their path'. If this had been a real situation they'd have died. They were so focused on the gunman that they had stopped having any 'situational awareness'.

So instead of zooming in under the pressure – learn to zoom out by keeping an awareness of what's going on around you – whether you're delivering a high pressured presentation or trying to come up with the 'big idea'.

Good luck with your presentations, pitches & stories

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