



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



January 2008

“Good decisions and good resolutions.”

When we started Speakers' Corner in 1997 our first motto was: 'Good decisions come from good presentations'.

We felt a little evangelical.

We also felt business was no longer recognising the power of good presentations to inspire, motivate, to build relationships in order to create success - or seeing that a bad presentation could disappoint, negate, fracture.

It wasn't the thinking that was letting them down, but the way they communicated their thinking.

So, a frequently asked question is: "How do you make presentations better". Our advice?

Find the core of the problem and the heart in your solution. Then deliver its story so your client can enjoy the experience and have confidence in your recommendations.

Create a vision in your audience's minds – not just visuals on a screen in front of them.

So we hope in 2008 you will reflect on our motto, maybe make it a resolution. Without doubt whatever good decision you want from clients, your best presentation will always improve your chance of securing it.

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

“When your heart speaks, take good notes.” Judith Campbell

“Do one thing everyday that scares you.” Eleanor Roosevelt

“What presentations do you remember and why?”

In all our workshops we ask our delegates: "What presentation / speaker do you remember and why?"

In 2007, as in the past, the results were the same. Their good memories - many of which they've held for years - were:

1. The speaker was passionate.
2. He/she spoke without notes or powerpoint.
3. They knew their subject & made it relevant
4. They didn't speak for too long.
5. They looked at their audiences.
6. They had a sense of humour and were entertaining.

What comes top is "Passion".

We know a number of you find difficulty in being passionate about some subjects. Well you have to dig deeper! Your audience will sense your lack of passion and take it for a lack of care and concern.

Ask yourself what is it about this topic you feel strongly about? It's about finding your pride in what you're saying. It must matter to you if you want to win over your audience.

Be yourself and share your unique passion.

“Beware of the tyranny of making small changes to small things. Rather make Big changes to Big things.”

Roger Euricho, former Chairman of Pepsi Co

“If it matters to you it will matter to your audience.” Speakers’ Corner

“Vote for change?”

Like it or not, there are lessons to be learnt from politicians across the globe.

At no time has it been more clear that people need to feel convinced in their hearts that their politicians can deliver a change for the better.

Some people find it very difficult to show in public their more human side. Gordon Brown and Hillary Clinton have been criticised for their coldness and yet they’re 1st class thinkers. On paper their offer of change stacks up – it’s the rational choice – but emotionally they can’t get their vision of change across.

Barack Obama and David Cameron have been criticised for having lightweight policies but are winning in the polls because they have the ability to communicate their vision for change for the better.

We’re always telling our delegates, to stop hiding behind the detail of their thinking and instead to show their audience the bigger picture.

To find a way to encapsulate ‘what’s possible’ - to arouse their audience and get their buy-in - so that there is a clear vision that will help them win their audience’s vote.

“I make movies for the masses. But I talk to them one at a time.” Steven Spielberg on the secret of his success

“Don’t forget your prop!”

Props are the forgotten visual aid of the 21st century.

We can blame powerpoint but it’s our fault.

Props can make a presenter feel self-conscious. And they take a bit of extra time and effort – things presenters can be short of. But props can help focus your audience’s attention on the point you want to make.

They help you to explain and your audience to understand more quickly. They make you and your message more memorable so you stand out from other presenters.

Props we saw in 2007 that stood out? We saw a speaker talking about ‘technology not meeting the needs of a company’. He demonstrated this by holding a large, rusty jailer’s key and saying: “Why are so many companies using out-of-date technology when they should be using state-of-the-art?” At this point he held up a hotel door card and gestured a swipe.

At another event, we were given a prop – a flag that said: “No jargon please.” We were asked to wave it whenever a speaker used jargon. It was not only a bit of fun but also kept us all listening!

So, aim to include props, even if they’re simply examples of the product you’re talking about, because a prop can really support you in your presentations – they can really back you up – just as the dictionary says it will!

“Keep in time with the beat!”

Tony Benn the ex-Labour MP is now 82 but has not lost his power to engage an audience.

We heard him recently at an Intelligence Squared debate in Central Hall Westminster, [see www.intelligencesquared.com for future events] where he made a strong case for the US/UK to get out of Iraq immediately. The power of his eloquence was his knowledge, his examples and his belief in his cause.

He’s also one of the foremost hand gesturers in public life. He’s like a conductor with his baton and Benn keeps his energy and rhythm going in time to his gestures. It’s mesmerising.

We may not believe in his politics but we can all admire his convictions and be swept along.

“A man can fall many, many times in his life but he is not a failure until he refuses to get up.” Evel Knievel 1938-2007

“How to beat the competition.”

Here’s a story we enjoyed reading that was reported to have been used to help a company focus on who were their real new business competition.

Two men were out hiking in a forest when they disturb a bear. It’s that time of year when bears are easily upset and sure enough, the bear comes after them.

The men run for their lives but, four legs are better than two, and the bear is getting closer.

Suddenly, one of the men stops, takes off his rucksack and sits on a rock.

“What the hell are you doing?” his friend screams

“I’m putting on my Nike running shoes.”

“You’re crazy – you’ll never outrun the bear in those.” replied the friend.

The man got up and started jogging next to his friend. “I don’t have to outrun the bear. I only have to outrun you.”

“Look to the future because that is where you’ll spend the rest of your life.”
George Burns

Some amazing & worrying facts...

Microsoft says that over 30 million powerpoint presentations are made everyday.

If the population of China walked past you, 8 abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction.

A 'jiffy' is a unit of time for 1/100th of a second.

52% of Korean infants aged 3-5 years regularly use the internet, spending an average of four hours a week online.

The richest fifth of the British population cycles two and a half times further every year than the poorest fifth.

“A tale about Tiger Woods and Stevie Wonder.”

Tiger Woods had always wanted to meet Stevie Wonder and eventually the opportunity arose. Tiger began the conversation:

“How’s the singing career going?”

Stevie replied: “Not bad. How’s the golf?”

“Not too bad, I’ve had some problems with my swing but I think I’ve got it worked out now” said Tiger. Stevie replied: “I find that when my swing goes wrong, I need to stop playing for a while and then the next time I play, it seems to be OK.”

Tiger with an element of surprise said: “You play golf? But you’re blind. How can you play golf if you can’t see?”

Stevie responded: “I get my caddy to stand in the middle of the fairway ahead and call to me. I listen for the sound of his voice and hit the ball towards him. To putt, he leans down and calls to me with his head on the ground.”

Tiger asked: “What’s your handicap?”

“I’m a scratch golfer” Stevie proudly replied. “We should have a round.” said Tiger.

“Well people don’t take me seriously so I only play for money and never play for less than \$10,000 a hole.” said Stevie.

Tiger with a smile said: “Sure, I’m game for that – when would you like to play?”

Without hesitation Stevie replied: “Excellent - pick a night - any night.”

Good luck in 2008!

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

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



1. 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'.

2. 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.

3. 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?"

4. Selling Creative Work / Your Ideas – 1 day workshop

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

5. Writing presentations – 1/2 day workshop

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

6. Assertiveness – 1 day workshop

This programme helps delegates to build greater personal credibility to help them take the next step from team member to team leader.

7. Helping Business Win Business

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

8. One to one training

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

9. Consultancy

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.