

10 SPEAKING SOLUTIONS

— that apply to any situation —

Often when we hear “public speaking,” we think of speeches and/or presentations given to a larger group of people. While this is public speaking, so are the one-on-one interactions you have with your boss, with your coworkers in weekly team meetings, or with professionals and peers at networking events. We often treat our day-to-day meetings, interactions, and introductions as casual and not worthy of preparation or real thought, but these are the very situations that build your reputation as influential, persuasive, and capable.

Approach your one-on-one and intimate group conversations with as much preparation as you would a speaking engagement with a larger audience. Anytime you find yourself speaking with someone, consider what it is they are interested in knowing and identify what it is you are hoping to accomplish.

Just remember, the primary objective for anyone who delivers a message is the same, regardless of the situation or objective: you have to win the battle for the hearts and minds of who you’re speaking to. That’s the job of any speaker, presenter, or leader: to inspire, persuade, and, most important of all, provoke change.

Consider the Ten Commandments of Great Communicators that are applicable to larger speeches in each of your more-common situations:

PRIMACY/RECENCY EFFECT

Just as in a speech to a large group of people, having

engaging points to start the conversation as well as thought-provoking call-to-actions (CTAs) as you close is important in achieving your objective. Regardless of who the individual is, you can guide the conversation through interesting talking points and specific CTAs that require the individual to engage with you.

EMOTION/CONVICTION

Speak with an appropriate level of emotion and conviction to match the subject matter. Doing so will show your grasp and investment in the content you’re discussing. This emotion can be communicated as excitement, concern, confidence, or passion, followed with a conviction in specific ideas, solutions, or requests.

BODY LANGUAGE/ MINIMIZING DISTANCE

How you hold yourself in front of an audience of five hundred will hold true with an audience of one. Do what you need to feel confident in your meetings with individuals and small groups. Be well- and appropriately-dressed for the occasion and prepare what you want to cover—doing so will help your anxiety level, help you hold good eye contact, and allow you to use gestures to help guide your message. Essentially, be engaging and confident—not nervous and timid.

RULE OF THREE

Where possible, use this principle to organize your thoughts. Try compiling your content into three

benefits, three areas of concern, three ways you seek to improve something, three reasons you should be promoted, etc. Each of these three points will likely expand into additional points of explanation, but finding a way to organize them into clear “buckets,” utilizing the Rule of Three, will likely help your audience member remember what you discussed.

ALWAYS PUNCTUATE

Be prepared for the topics that will likely be covered—doing so will help you be more articulate and confident. As a result, you’ll be able to punctuate your thoughts and avoid stumbling over filler words which detract from your message.

INCORPORATE THE POWER OF PAUSE

Mark Twain once said: “The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause.” Pause allows you to monitor the reaction of who you’re speaking to. It also helps you control the overall pace of your delivery, which, based on how nervous or anxious you are, will be a good tactic to slow you down.

LEVERAGE VISUALS

Where appropriate, have visuals in the form of performance indicators, status reports, or lists that can help support your message. Having these kinds of visuals will help your talking points appear more thought-out and justified.

VARY PITCH AND TONE

How you deliver any message you communicate, in regard to pitch, will dictate the tone, mood, intention, and perceived command of the topic. Recognizing, understanding, and utilizing different pitches and tones will make your message more compelling and easier to listen to.

One client of mine from a Fortune 500 company invested heavily in applying these ten principles, and he once said that this approach “expanded my capacity to lead human change and deliver a greater impact far beyond what I thought possible.” He credited the simple and straightforward approach of learning this model step by step. By committing to these principles, he learned to align his intent with what he actually said and did to persuade others. As a result, he is now a C-level officer in a well-known financial institution.

When it comes to one-on-one interactions—whether you’re meeting new people, pitching your product/service, or interacting with your boss—you are faced with an incredibly intimate situation and the opportunity to persuade, educate, and motivate. These principles, when applied to any situation requiring communication, work and can be a pathway to your success. Learn more about how to effectively communicate no matter your audience by visiting <http://chuckgarcia.com>.



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A 25-year veteran of Wall Street, he spent 14 years in sales and marketing at Bloomberg in a variety of leadership positions. He was Director of Business Development at BlackRock Solutions, an arm of the world’s largest investment manager, and was a Managing Director at Citadel, a prestigious alternative investment manager.

He is also a mountaineer and has climbed some of the world’s tallest peaks, including Mount Kilimanjaro, Mount Elbrus, the Matterhorn, as well as mountains in Alaska and the Andes.