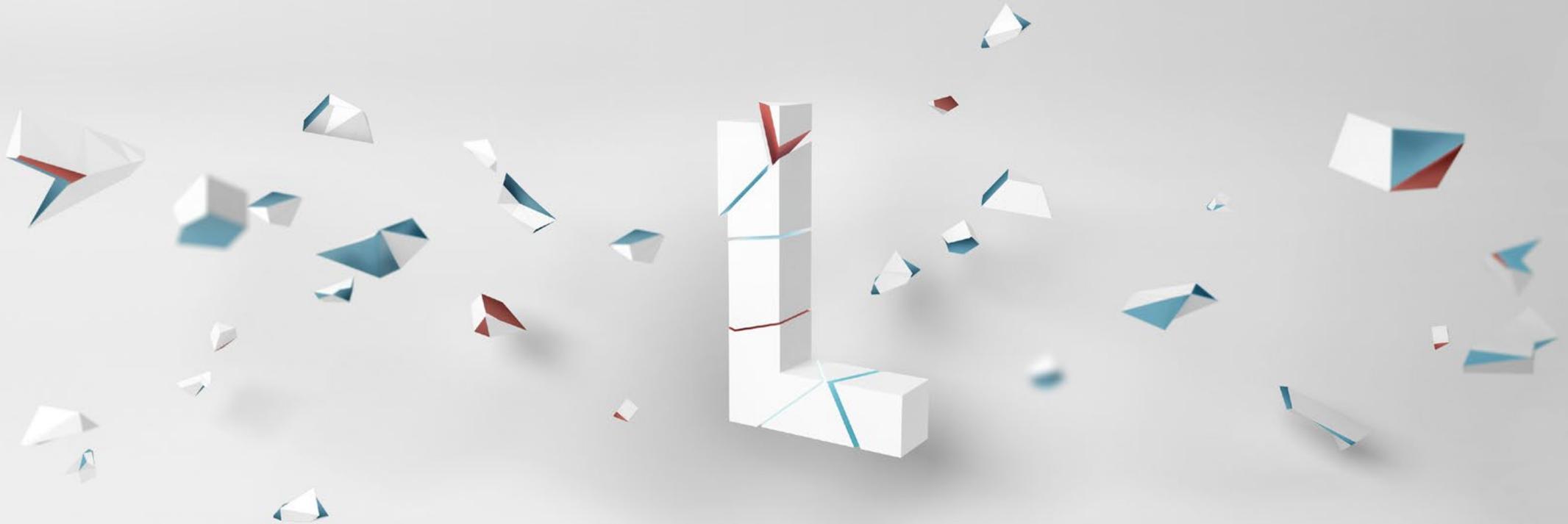




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# CONCEPT AND AIM

You all know the following situation: a few minutes before you take the stage at your townhall meeting or you give a key presentation. Your own expectations of your performance are high, as are those of your audience. Your thoughts quickly turn to the most important points. The content is fine. And yet: you are still a bit nervous. Questions are running through your mind: How will my audience take to me? What are my key messages and in what tone will I address them? Do I look nervous?

These 13 clips provided by two experienced presentation coaches will give useful tips and suggestions for key presentation moments that will make your presentation a success.

# CONTENT

01. **PREPARATION.** WHAT IS THE INTENDED MESSAGE?
02. **AUDIENCE.** WHAT EMOTIONS DO I WANT TO STIR?
03. **COUNTDOWN.** HOW SHOULD I USE THE LAST 30 SECONDS?
04. **VOICE.** HOW DO I SOUND DYNAMIC?
05. **STORYTELLING 1.** HOW DO I TELL A GOOD STORY?
06. **STORYTELLING 2.**  
HOW SHOULD I CONVEY THE 'BUSINESS MESSAGE'?
07. **BODY LANGUAGE.**  
HOW DO I CREATE AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
'WHAT IS SAID' AND 'WHAT IS DEMONSTRATED'?
08. **EYE CONTACT.**  
HOW DO I MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT WITH A LARGE GROUP?
09. **Q&A.** HOW DO I DEAL WITH CRITICAL QUESTIONS?
10. **COMPOSURE.** HOW DO I KEEP MY INNER CENSOR IN CHECK?
11. **CONCLUSION.** HOW DO I ACCEPT APPLAUSE?
12. **ELEVATOR SPEECH** – GET IN CONTACT AND STAY MEMORABLE.
13. HOW TO LEAD A **CONFERENCE CALL** EFFECTIVELY?

## 01. **PREPARATION.** WHAT IS THE INTENDED MESSAGE?

Mark Twain's words: "I need 3 weeks of preparation in order to be spontaneous" apply here. Only when you have submersed yourself in your subject and you know exactly WHAT to say and HOW to say it, you will avoid making any slip-ups. Just like any good actor, you know your message and your key points. Only then are improvisation and flexibility possible. Spontaneous improvisation often has a poor effect and, above all, bores your audience.

## 02. **AUDIENCE.** WHAT EMOTIONS DO I WANT TO STIR?

Human beings are emotional creatures. But yet we tend to show only a very narrow range of emotions in the workplace. As you know this: "It's all about facts and information. Emotions are unprofessional". But as a manager, you are expected to inspire and motivate other people. You are expected to be approachable and create trust. Content alone cannot convince people. Your personal demeanour and therefore also your emotions make your presentation credible in the first place. Use your tone and body language as instruments for expressing these emotions.

Be clear about which emotional messages you wish to communicate and that speak to your audience on an emotional level.

### 03. **COUNTDOWN.** HOW SHOULD I USE THE LAST 30 SECONDS?

A personal ritual works like a 'resetting' of your inner system. It reduces stress and provides security. Relax your muscles and vocal chords, call upon your inner self or a method for providing yourself with energy and relaxation.

### 04. **VOICE.** HOW DO I SOUND DYNAMIC?

Stress is a form of behaviour inherited from the early days of human evolution. The classic fight or flight syndrome gives us fast and shallow breathing. As a result, our muscles effectively become filled with oxygen. But if we can neither take flight nor fight, we freeze inside. Our system goes 'dead'. To avoid this: We take a deep abdominal breath to calm ourselves down. We relieve the pressure just like with yoga or meditation. And signal to our system that there is no looming danger.

## 05. STORYTELLING 1. HOW DO I TELL A GOOD STORY?

We love stories. Our minds have been conditioned by stories for thousands of years, long before man invented print.

We lead our everyday lives in the form of stories.

We remember our past in the form of stories.

Every story that we hear also contains part of our own story. Therefore, with personal stories, we are particularly good at conveying information and simultaneously creating an (emotional) relationship and closeness with our audience.

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES

### REPRODUCING DETAILS AND MEANINGFUL IMPRESSIONS.

Stimulate your listeners' senses: sight, taste, smell, hearing and feeling. Create a visual impression of the story, state the colours, scents, mood, substances and names of people and places.

*"It is the summer of 1999. I have my first day of work at Daimler in Sindelfingen..."*

### THE HERE AND NOW

Tell the story in the present tense and start of on a note of 'high impact' instead of a lengthy description of the circumstances.

*"I am standing on the production line next to a colleague who is not overly pleased to see me."*

## RELIVE AND DEMONSTRATE EMOTIONS.

Put yourself back to your story and try to relive the situation along with all the associated emotions. A story has no excitement whenever there is a lack of emotion. Also show your inner conflicts.

“I am frustrated, I will not be discouraged and I want to show this to him...”

## BODY LANGUAGE AND TONE OF VOICE

Don't be afraid to use your voice, body, facial expressions and gestures. For example, slip into the role of each character and create interest through an expressive narrative style.

“After 2 hours I am totally exhausted. My colleague nevertheless laughs approvingly: Not bad, I wouldn't have thought such a small young lady was capable of that”.

## SHORT AND SUCCINCT (MAX. 90 - 120 SEC.)

Get straight to the heart of the story. It is possible to effectively recount an entire story in less than one minute. Use short 'bullet points' for this purpose. Stories are seldom too short but often too long.

“From this day onwards, we were not only a perfectly synchronised team but also best friends”

## 06. STORYTELLING 2. HOW SHOULD I CONVEY THE 'BUSINESS MESSAGE'?

Storytelling in a professional context:

A story, even when it is brilliantly told, has no impact if it is not placed in the proper context and doesn't support the 'business message'. Here is guide on how to place your story in context:

### 1. BUSINESS CONTEXT

"Today I would like to talk about the future prospects for our company with regard to the planned market entry to the UAE [...]"

### 2. TRANSITION TO THE STORY (BRIEF!)

"Before we look more closely at the details, I would like to tell you a short story [...]"

### 3. THE STORY

"It is the summer of 1999. I have my first day of work at Daimler in Sindelfingen [...]"

### 4. PERSONAL INSIGHT

"What have I learned from this [...]"

### 5. MESSAGE TO THE AUDIENCE (WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS STORY?)

"What we can learn from this [...]"

Connect the story with the current topic.

## 07. BODY LANGUAGE. HOW DO I CREATE AGREEMENT BETWEEN 'WHAT IS SAID' AND 'WHAT IS DEMONSTRATED?'

Your audience will decide in a split second whether it trusts you or not. At the same time, we unknowingly compare what we see and hear with the cognitive part of your presentation.

If there is any non-correlation, in other words, 'what is said' contradicts 'what is demonstrated', then we tend instinctively to interpret 'what is demonstrated' (including tone of voice) as a clear indication of your stance. We are all familiar with this in private life. The simple sentence: "Of course I love you darling" can have a totally opposite impact depending on body language and tone of voice.

## 08. EYE CONTACT. HOW DO I MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT WITH A LARGE GROUP?

Your eye contact with your audience is important. Maintain clear and friendly eye contact with your opposite number. In doing so, it is necessary not to treat the audience as an anonymous crowd, but rather as a group of individuals who should be looked at and spoken to separately. View your presentation as a dialogue. You are speaking **with** your audience and not to your audience. The audience is often too big or difficult to see, so it is hardly possible to distinguish individual faces. Do not scan the room while you are speaking. Your audience feels involved if you seek out representatives/delegates from the crowd and speak to them directly. And if you can't see anyone, introduce these delegates to the audience and speak with them.

## 09. Q&A.

# HOW DO I DEAL WITH CRITICAL QUESTIONS?

“So, are there any further questions?” This obligatory sentence, which is often only said half-heartedly, is used at the end of nearly every presentation. This question, when used correctly, can become a mainstay of your communication. Below are our inner crib sheet suggestions for getting you through any difficult Q&A situations: **TRACT**

### T – THANK

Do not conduct Q&A sessions in ‘defensive mode’. Inwardly welcome any questions, including critical ones. Listen to the full question. Thank the person for asking the question.

### R – REPEAT

Now turn to the entire audience. Repeat the question for all to hear in your own words. You can easily get to the heart of any vague or unclear question by slightly rephrasing it. Neutralise ‘poison arrows’.

**Beware:** if the question contains highly emotional undertones, address these emotions at the outset. If you don’t deal with the emotional aspect, the questioner will never be satisfied with the response. So address the question at hand, e.g. “I understand, that you are really concerned about ...”.

### A – ANSWER

Now comes your response, which should be as honest as possible. This is an excellent opportunity to underline your key message again. If possible, also use images, metaphors or a personal experience here to create a memorable impression.

### C – CHECK-BACK

No, don’t ask the following yet: “Next question, please”. Firstly, ask whether the question was properly answered in relation to what the questioner was really asking.

## 10. COMPOSURE. HOW DO I KEEP MY INNER CENSOR IN CHECK?

Even confident speakers are familiar with this. The inner censor. It is an internal control mechanism that regulates us and partially evaluates us. Our inner censor is not bad in itself. It drives us on, whilst observing rules and regulations. Only when our inner voice evaluates us, discourages us or somehow hampers our presence and self-confidence, do the critical censors become a problem. This inner voice is often dictated by past experience. It stems from authorities that we had to take our cue from. This may have been a previous boss, teacher, parent or other person of trust that demanded our obedience.

How do you deal with this? Take notice of your inner censor. What does it help you with? How does it hinder you? Where does it come from? Accept the fact that it will appear time and again. Give it an internal 'nod' and then do 'your' thing. In the long-term, you can therefore attempt to free yourself mentally.

## 11. CONCLUSION. HOW DO I ACCEPT APPLAUSE?

At the end of each presentation, thank your audience for their time and attention. Your audience will gladly return your gratitude through applause or some other form of appreciation.

Do not leave the 'stage', do not reject the applause and do not make any self-critical facial expressions while you are being thanked. Your audience needs to show their appreciation through applause. If you don't want to accept this, then you will disappoint the other party. You owe this to both yourself and your audience. Only leave the 'stage' when the applause comes to a natural end.

## WELCOME TO THE 2<sup>nd</sup> GENERATION OF OUR VIDEO CLIPS

The first 11 clips dealt with typical classroom room situations, all familiar from Daimler Corporate Academy programs.

In these new clips, we are no longer in the classroom but in the office. We have a look at representative communication cases, observing a “before/after” simulation. What works and what doesn't?

## 12. ELEVATOR SPEECH. GET IN CONTACT AND STAY MEMORABLE.

When you find yourself in informal business situations such as meetings on the floor, town hall meetings, after work gatherings, how do you introduce yourself? How to do “small talk and leave the right impression?

### HERE IT IS:

- Look for people, you find interesting and start by introducing yourself.
- Don't bore them with details of your CV. Imagine, you have to explain your job, your skills and talents and the value you bring to the company within a 1 minute speech.
- Use a metaphor, an analogy and short sentences in order to stay memorable. And do it with confidence and modesty.

# 13. HOW TO LEAD A CONFERENCE CALL EFFECTIVELY?

You have to facilitate a conference call? If you know how to handle a few tools this could increase your effectiveness in leading conference calls significantly.

Start with applying everything you already know about facilitating meetings effectively.

In addition to the agenda, send out the team clock beforehand. It needs to be in front of everyone. Prepare yourself before the call starts.

## 1. YOU ARE THE LEAD!

Welcome everyone joining the call with their name if possible.

## 2. MAKE THE RULES CLEAR:

e.g.: "When you want to say something please say your name again. Please use "mute" if there is background noise. Never go on "hold" during the call. Everyone else will hear your "on hold music".

## 3. KEEP CONTROL AND MANAGE THE FLOW

Follow the team clock and go around clockwise when asking for input. Address participants with their names. ("Joe, what you just said is important...")Take notes in order to refer back to them.

## 4. EXIT:

Summarize and declare next steps. Ask if there are any remaining questions before ending the call.

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