

Presentation Excellence

Chapter One

EBook

Paul Archer



© Archer Training Ltd 2006.

All Rights Reserved. No part of this document may be photocopied, reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means whether, electronic, mechanical, or otherwise without the prior written permission of Archer Training Ltd.

Archer Training Ltd reserves the right to change details in this publication without notice.

Contact us on:

www.archertraining.co.uk
paul@paularcher.com
01452 730276



1 Introduction

As a successful speaker and trainer, I really wanted to put pen to paper to record my speaking experiences over the last few years.

I wanted to do this because I wanted others to gain immediately from what I've learned since I began to speak and train for a living in 1990.

An instant download in a data rich world.

It's a cliché that we learn by experience, making mistakes and learning from these, getting valuable feedback from others and observing and learning from the very best in the job.

But it's true. This EBook could knock a few years off your development cycle.

Please enjoy and let me know what value it brings to you.

The first chapter will tell you about 4 ways of calming down those speaking nerves. We all get these in certain circumstances and you can use these 4 practical tips to help you in your moment of need.

Chapter 2 is all about planning your presentation which is the bit most people don't really enjoy and tend to go straight to PowerPoint to cut corners. If you're ever guilty of this, then you definitely want to read this chapter.

Chapter 3 builds nicely because it realises that PowerPoint will not go away as it is so useful in business. If you can't beat them, join them by adopting our 21 tips to enhance your PowerPoint presentation and not kill people with death by PowerPoint.

Chapter 4 puts you on the speaking platform. Whether you're in the Boardroom or on the raised platform at the company's annual conference, you will want to let your body do much of the communication of the message you have in mind. This chapter shows you how to use all parts of your body to become the main visual aid that people won't forget.

Chapter 5 is a quick tour around question time. The Q&A Session, in any business presentation, is as essential as yeast is to bread. This quick tour gives you lots of practical ways of making this session a success.

The last chapter, and one that really touches my heart, is audience participation methods. In a day where we are being bombarded with information and data, we need to make the most of a human requirement that technology can't give us fully yet. This is human interaction. When speaking to groups of 5 or 555, you can bring in ways of engaging your audience so their attention span is longer and more attune to your message.

I hope to write a few more chapters in the future, but these 6 will have an impact on you, I'm quite sure.

And do let me know what that is.

Paul Archer
31st January 2006
paul@paularcher.com

2 Tips to Harness Your Nerves

Why Nerves are Good

Imagine your audience are all sitting on the toilet. That advice only made me giggle so I couldn't use that. Then I was shown the image of butterflies flying all around your stomach and was told to make sure these butterflies flew in formation, and this was to banish my nerves. This told me what, but not how, to handle my nerves. Next I was told to imagine my audience were stark naked and this had a similar result to the toilet.

Finally someone gave me some solid advice. Rename nerves and call it adrenaline. The advice went on to say that you'll never get rid of them; use them to your advantage, since you need adrenaline to do a good job. When I was told this many moons ago it put it all into context.

Now if you want to feel nervous, just imagine you are standing at the front of a landing craft just about to ditch on the Normandy beaches in June 1944. Now that, I can imagine, would be nerve racking. I remember the film Saving Private Ryan, when the US forces were being sick with fear ready to face certain

death. Now I know where I would rather be...standing up in front of people compares very favourably with the Normandy Landings.

But you will get nerves or adrenaline flushes before presenting. If you don't, then stop speaking in public because you don't care anymore. You need adrenaline as this makes you do your utmost best. Controlling this natural energy is vital. Apart from adopting the right body posture and using your arms to gesture freely, I want to give you 4 further ways of handling the adrenaline to your advantage. In no particular order I'll give you peripheral vision, lubricating your voice box, taking a slurp and visualisation.



*"WE'RE DOWNSIZING, MORRISON.
YOU'RE THE FIRST TO SHRINK."*

Go Peripheral Vision

Peripheral vision was taught to me a few years ago. Now I've always struggled to have a wide peripheral vision apparently because I'm a man. Women have naturally more powerful peripheral vision and that's just because women's brains are wired differently. My mum always had eyes in the back of her head. Alan Pease's excellent book "Why women can't read maps..." shows you this.

So what does this have to do with adrenaline control? Well, imagine you're up on your stage and feeling a little anxious and energetic. Maybe you're being introduced or you have a natural moment to pause. Focus on a point in front of you and stretch your peripheral vision right down to your ears and imagine these are your extra eyes.

Do this for a few seconds and you will relax. How? The brain is wired so that you cannot consciously process nerves and peripheral vision simultaneously. Clever isn't it? Try it next time, it really does work.

Lubricate your mouth

As a speaker, your voice is by far the most important asset, only second to your body. By the way, PowerPoint comes down very low in priority. Your voice is the vehicle in which the message is given to your audience so make sure it is ready and willing. There are some things you can do beforehand to make your voice sing, but that's the subject of a different EBook. But what can you do if your mouth is drying up and the water is miles away from where you're standing?

If you have slightly less than a minute available to you, tear a tiny piece of paper millimetres in size, and fold it into a tiny ball. Wedge this in the back of your mouth behind your teeth, so you don't swallow. Make sure no one can see you doing this otherwise they'll think you're taking drugs, and we don't want that do we?

Your mouth now thinks there's something in there and will automatically produce saliva. And that's what you want...to lubricate your mouth at that vital moment. Try it, but do practise first, it does work.

Taking a Slurp

On the subject of dry mouths, the next tip was given to me about 10 years ago by a chap called Frank. Now Frank was from the East End of London and had a wonderful gritty accent. Now when Frank got lost or wanted to check his notes, he would call out to the audience that he wanted a “slurp”.

Off he went to the side of the room where he kept his bottle of water and glass. He would make a song and dance over opening the bottle and fizzy was best. It made a loud psst when it was opened and he poured the water vigorously into his glass and took a couple a big slugs. All of this was done very dramatically and sure enough, many of the audience would copy if they had water in front of them.

Meanwhile Frank could have a good look at his notes to see where he was and to settle down any nerves he might have had. Very clever.

Whilst on the subject of notes, you should have them. Not a script of your speech but something containing bullets or reminders of what to say next. Now Frank would never hold onto his notes as that stilted his body language and use of gestures. Care with using PowerPoint as your notes, many people do it. If you do this you’ll end up having a slide for every single part of your presentation since they are your notes. You’ll end up being accused of “Death by PowerPoint” and you don’t want that.

Do you?

Visualise for Success

My final tip for you to overcome your nerves or ensure they're channelled to assist you not hinder you is major dollops of visualisation. Now this is not new at all and many sport stars use this to increase their success.

Do you recall the Rugby World Cup final a few years' ago, when Jonny Wilkinson scored all those points. I was told by someone, in the know, recently what Jonny does to ensure success and to channel his nerves. The hand clasping routine and the moments of pure concentration before he heads off into his run, was his way of imagining the ball being kicked and flying into the air clearing the sticks to score 3 valuable points. Before it even happened.



Mohammed Ali was perhaps the greatest champion of visualisation. He called it Future History and would predict the result of all his fights. And he got it right many more times than he got it wrong. "Ashley Moore, I'll have you down in four" And he did.

You see the way the brain is wired ensures that if you visualise and imagine an event in your head and if you do this strongly enough. I mean really intensely. Colour, movement, panoramic views, sounds, people, laughter and you're part of it, then the brain will eventually believe it to be true.

So next time you have a big speech coming up. Play a movie in your head of it all going very well indeed. Maybe even a standing ovation. Go on really pump up the success in the movie. Only you know it's there.

So there we have 4 quick little tips to use the next time you have an important meeting to speak at. Apart from plenty of preparation and practise and lets face it we have loads of time for this! Use your peripheral vision, lubricate your mouth, taking a slurp and visualise your success.

Nothing really new probably, but then again the best tips are always the oldest. They were given to me by experienced presenters and I'm now giving them to you.



" ALL THOSE OPPOSED... "