



consulting®

# speaKup

## We've moved!!

GPB Consulting is expanding and has outgrown the office at Richmond. We have therefore moved to bigger offices near Covent Garden. We look forward to seeing you there!

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#### NERVES - CAN YOU REALLY OVERCOME "THE FEAR"?

**Of all human fears public speaking is the number one. Somewhat surprisingly, in many people's mind it ranks higher than death! James McBrien gives a few practical tips and hints on what we can do to overcome our nerves and perform at our best.**

#### "I OBJECT"

**Right now, there are thousands of business developers having to handle perfectly reasonable objections from clients. Most fail! How are your people doing? Ian McDougall explains the art of handling client objections.**

#### NOTA BENE

**Speaking well from notes is partly a note writing skill, partly a speaking skill. During a presentation, we all need some memory prompt yet we may feel that being seen to use notes degrades our performance. However, preparation is really a compliment to the audience. Alastair Grant explains how to write and present well from notes.**

#### Open Courses with The Industrial Society

These courses are a good opportunity for individuals who need coaching and would benefit from being in a group with people outside their organisation.

#### Advanced Presentation Skills

This senior level workshop is designed to help participants improve their style and

method of presentation. This is a two-day course followed by an on-line 'Virtual Refresher'.

**2002: April 3-4, May 14-15, June 6-7, July 22-23, August 20-21, September 24-25, October 22-23, November 19-20, December 12-13**

#### Pitching to Win

This senior level course is designed to help

participants to win more of the business pitches they do – a higher 'hit rate' so that their organisations generate increased revenues. This is a three-day course.

**2002: June 10-12, September 2-4, November 27-28**

Please call us on 020 7831 1000 for further information or to book someone on a course.



# Nerves Can you really overcome “The FEAR”?

Of all human fears public speaking is the number one. Somewhat surprisingly, in many people’s mind it ranks higher than death! Why should this be so? For many people it is a combination of factors. These can include: a nagging insecurity of being exposed and humiliated as inadequate in front of a peer group, low self esteem, forgetting what to say or a previous bad experience, possibly from school days. For some it can be a very isolating experience and there is no-where to hide. A large sale, future promotion, professional reputation, a company share price may all hinge on how you perform, so adding to the pressure.

## Effect on Performance

When under such pressure, we are out of our natural ‘comfort zone’ where we perform at our best. In such a situation, the body’s ‘fight or flight’ response is to release adrenalin. This dramatically affects your performance. Typical symptoms indicating extra adrenalin is in your system include: a drying of the mouth, loss of control of fine motor

muscles causing you to shake and your voice to change in pitch, sweating of the palms and a distortion in your perception of time. Quite understandably your mind is racing for a solution but you merely become more self-conscious and come across as awkward and ineffective. You may start off by saying something you hadn’t planned and then try to talk your way out of it. Not exactly a great first impression!!

It is important to distinguish between anxiety and ‘The Fear’. Anxiety is actually a good thing as it is the tension responsible for sharpening you up and lifting your performance. Public speaking is a physical performing skill much like professional sport or acting. This is quite different from “The Fear” which brings on the symptoms mentioned and makes you ineffective. Take control in the knowledge that F.E.A.R is an acronym for False Evidence Appearing Real.

## How can we overcome nerves?

*Here are a few practical tips and hints on what we can do to perform at our best.*

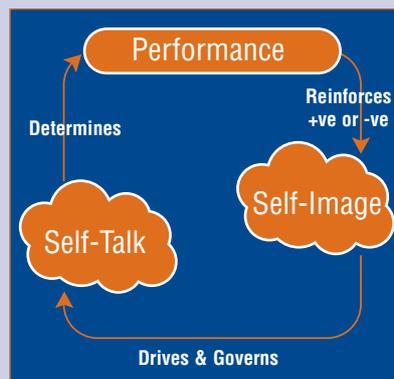
### 1. Preparation

Allow plenty of time well in advance of the event to prepare what you are going to say and how you plan to say it, especially the start. Remember to factor in rehearsal time. If it is really important or you are very busy, a call to expert presentation consultants would save you a lot of time and wasted effort.

### 2. Mentally rehearse

Use your most powerful organ, your mind. Mentally rehearse yourself through the situation and see yourself how you would like to perform in the comfort of your imagination. Change the way you think about yourself and your abilities. Your performance is governed by your personal belief of yourself (Self-image) and the way you talk to

yourself (Self-talk), as shown in the diagram:



The way you change the feedback loop is simply by changing your self- image and self-talk. This is best done by writing yourself an affirmation. Eg: “I am a highly effective and engaging speaker and people listen and want to hear what I have to say” To boost your self-esteem: “I am very confident and calm talking about...(insert “your presentation subject”) and people listen

and are interested in what I have to say”

Repeat twice a day prior to the event and visualise the performance and end result that you desire.

Ask yourself the question ‘How can I do this and enjoy it’. One idea is imagine the audience is filled with your friends.

### 3. At the event

Engage with the audience, for example (if appropriate) smile before you speak - the audience will smile back. You can take a glass of water to the lectern. Importantly, insert silence when you feel an ‘um’ or ‘errr’ coming on. You can also write down the first few lines of your start verbatim and simply say them or commit them to memory.

*Enjoy it!*

*James McBrien*



# “I Object”



All of us who have to deal with clients know the feeling all too well. The meeting is going well, and then ...“they begin to raise objections and concerns.”

**We're sure you will recognise some of these:**

**“Sorry, you are too expensive”**

**“You let us down the last time we used you”**

**“I don't think your firm's products meet our needs”**

**“You didn't want our business four years ago when we approached you”**

**“Sorry we have just signed with someone else”**

**“Why should we put up with your poor performance”**

I have just completed an assignment with a well known investment house. Unfortunately their funds are not performing brilliantly (whose are?). As one of the Directors said: “A great deal of effort is being put into keeping our clients happy. Despite this they keep putting our key relationship and sales people under pressure:”

*“Why should we stay with you, when your performance is so poor?”*

If it were my money, that's the question I would ask. So, why should it be such a shock to professional suppliers that clients give them such a rough time? What is it that the top sales and relationship people do, to manage this pressure situation, which others fail to do?

## ANTICIPATE

When we work on Business Development and Client Relationship issues we usually produce a “Top Ten” list of Current Objections. We then brainstorm the most common objections or challenges as a team. Do you and your people know all the best answers and regularly practice how to deliver them?

We think everyone should work on this.

## PRACTICE

It is easy to “Brainstorm” current objections and, as a team, prioritise them. Then work out and agree the very best answers. When I put a group at the investment house through an exercise on answering their top five objections they performed very badly. They relied on individual brilliance and instinct under pressure. We all know that if we don't prepare we are unlikely to perform at our very best. Good objection handling requires regular team practice.

As you read this article, there are thousands of business developers having to answer objections. Most are failing! How are your people doing?

## CONFIDENCE

Finally, remember, “You don't win them all!” Hit rate or conversion rate is important, but even if you had a 50% success rate, you would still have to live with failure half the time.

*“Confidence gives you the ability to survive failure!”*

**Objections show that the client is interested, or is testing you to see if you are what you appear to be. So why not anticipate, rehearse and plan? Then you just might have to survive less failures.**

**Ian McDougall**

Thank you to all those who responded to our Christmas acronym quiz. Here are a few of the answers (from the judge's view). The rest can be found on our website at [www.gpbuk.com](http://www.gpbuk.com).

ABN AMRO - Algemene Bank

Nederland(ABN) Amsterdam-Rotterdam(AMRO)  
BHP - Broken Hill Proprietary  
GPB - Grant Pearson Brown  
NEWS - North East West South

And here are a couple of others that should amuse you:

1. GOLF stands for “Gentlemen only, Ladies Forbidden”.
2. BOGOF stands for “Buy One Get One Free”.
3. FEAR stands for “False Evidence Appearing Real”.



# Nota Bene: Speaking well from notes is partly note writing skill, partly speaking skill.

The chairman spoke - and it was good. Not a note in sight. Not a visual aid. He held the audience throughout. Later they enthused about the message and vision. But what they didn't know was that he spent hours in preparation and rehearsal. His relaxed spontaneity was a product of deliberate preparation. Most of us don't have the time to go down this route. We need some memory prompt yet we feel that being seen to use notes degrades our

performance. The reality is different. Being seen to have prepared is a compliment to the audience. It is also possible with practice to speak with conviction and apparent spontaneity. A good example is Jeremy Paxman (and others) on an evening TV show where he walks and talks but holds an A4 clipboard - and follows his notes. This all sounds logical enough but there are two snags:

**First** there is an art in writing notes well. One or two word bullet points may not be enough, but nor is it wise to write out full sentences. That would be script reading, an entirely different matter. We advise:

- **Put key headings in the left margin.**
- **Develop each heading horizontally across the page, but spread them out.**
- **A good note is a mental trigger – the whole idea comes easily.**
- **Have a series of mini summaries rounding off each point.**
- **One note per idea - especially at the start and end of a presentation.**
- **Notes are personal - write down something meaningful to you, a 'mental trigger'**
- **'Introduction' and 'Summary' are headings, not notes.**

**Second.** Having written good notes you then have to persuade your brain to actually follow them closely. Too many of us use notes as a launch pad into the unknown; thereafter it's ad-lib. This can result in a weak end to the idea and failure to engage the audience. It's okay to look at your notes whilst talking as long as you come back to the audience at the end of the idea.

Many people wrongly use slides as a note prompt. It seems an obvious way to do it, and the audience can read the words too. However, putting up your notes on display can be distracting to the audience and also detract from your "level of performance". Churchill didn't and Clinton, Mandela and (yes!) Blair don't want to have words popping up on a screen behind them. Our advice is keep word slides to a minimum and have your notes on pieces of card or a piece of paper with the slides at 3 to a page in the left margin.

*Nb. The chairman did impress the audience but left with an uneasy feeling because he remembered that he had left out a vital point. But then, nobody noticed!*

*Alastair Grant*

## GPB Consulting: Our Services

*We are a leading European Consultancy with associates around the world. We specialise in the spoken communication areas of presentation, pitching, selling, negotiation, media, telephone skills and voice analysis. We act as consultants supporting*

*preparation by individuals or teams for major events such as pitches, floatations, annual results or conferences. We coach both one to one with top management and group workshops for middle management. Workshops run for between one*

*and five days, and are tailored to each client's requirements.*

*Our philosophy is simple: "For you to be yourself at your best, even in the toughest situations".*



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