

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

from all at

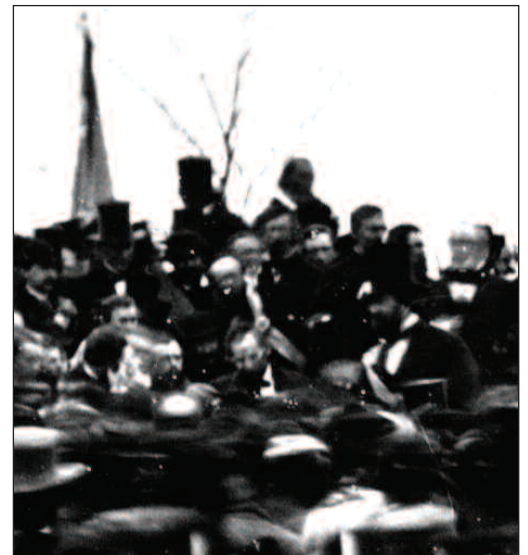
Grant Pearson Brown Consulting

Abe Lincoln appreciated the power of the point

Ewan Pearson

At about 3pm on 19th November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln stood up in front of his chair. He was near the top of a hill at the new Gettysburg Cemetery in Pennsylvania, and was among a huge crowd that had been invited to hear him dedicate the war memorial. One photo survives from that day; an enlargement is reproduced here showing Lincoln sitting down, about three hours before the speech. Just four months earlier, the area had witnessed one of the bloodiest battles in American history.

Lincoln gave a very short speech. It had just 239 words, and he had just finished writing it. Apparently he worked quite hard at drafting the speech (even after he gave it!) and he always took particular care not to deviate from his handwritten script. By all accounts the speech was very well received. This speech is a big feature in US history, and the US Govt still has the 'original' scripts - page one is reproduced



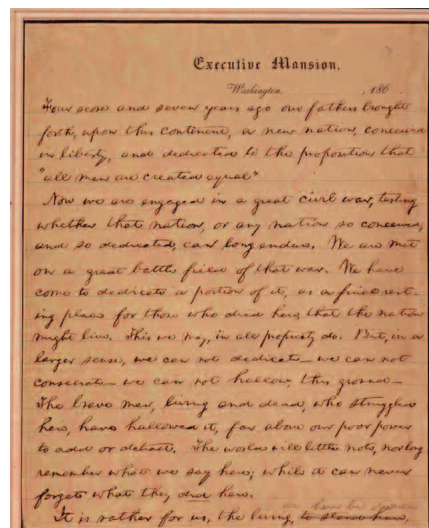
here. I say 'original' as there is a little dispute about which of two slightly different versions was actually 'spoken'. Either way, Lincoln actually said about 30 words less than the 'Bliss' version published later.

Lincoln's speech correctly contained few key points. I give you: "all men are created equal", "these dead shall not have died in vain", and "government of the people, by the people, for the people". Heard any of those before? By the way, that lot's about 10% of the whole speech.

We think his points were well made, although we know very little about how he spoke. We have the 'Words', but not the 'Music' or the 'Dance'. It's likely he spoke very loudly (no microphones or speakers those days to carry his voice to the many listening), and he probably stood quite still (holding his script, surrounded by people).

His words were so influential that others have

[continued overleaf >](#)



Contents

Abe Lincoln appreciated the power of the point

Abraham Lincoln's historic Gettysburg Address is discussed by Ewan Pearson, and updated with today's presentation technology.

A rhetorical interlude

As an aside from the series of articles on Oratory, Sarah Cottam sets the Christmas quiz - can you match up the rhetorical trope with the correct definition?

End of the year - End of the presentation

As it's the end of another year, Alastair Grant gives advice on how to finish a presentation well with a summary, or point of action.



Abe Lincoln appreciated the power of the point

continued . . .

adapted or quoted them for their own purposes. For example, Martin Luther King Jr, who gave his immortal "I have a dream..." speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC on 28 August 1963. He says his famous phrase 8 times in that speech. Lincoln started "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers..."; King starts his "Five score years ago, a great American.." in deliberate reference to the man whose statue he chose to stand in front of for this highly charged speech. King's speech was recorded live, so we know the words, music and dance; he said about 1,550 words, and spoke for about 10 minutes. We know he had strongly crafted words (no 'umms' or 'errs'!). He spoke rapidly with a passionate, loud and confident voice, he paused long and often, made appropriate gestures and good eye contact. He had a microphone and speakers. Again he spoke from script.

So, what about Lincoln? Surely he would have done so much better if microphones and PowerPoint had been around! How on earth did he speak so well without the clever technology we have today?

We face a dilemma with our client work: Whilst PowerPoint is a useful tool to help presenters, most people still don't understand how to get the best from it. We are robust on the point that the speaker should always be the star, supported where relevant by helpful visuals. Never the slave to the slide show.

We have berated our readers on this subject before, so as it's Christmas time we'll make fools of ourselves and give you some fun. We've done a modern day 'upgrade' of Lincoln's speech using PowerPoint and the new Breeze technology that we covered in our Autumn newsletter. To view it, go to our website www.gpbuk.com and click on the Gettysburg link highlighted on the homepage.

BTW*, 142 people have so far viewed the Breeze PPT presentation from our Autumn newsletter; thanks for taking a look. We know how many people looked at each page too... But with web hosting, we can tell much more. We could have asked for your names, in which case we would also know who had seen what - very useful if you need or want to monitor viewing.

*BTW = by the way (acronym disease)



We are delighted to announce that Grant Pearson Brown Consulting Ltd has formally been appointed as sole Presentation Advisers to London 2012 Ltd, the company that is bidding to host the Olympic Games in London in 2012. The role involves coaching the key speakers at each of the major presentations up to and including the final bid presentation in Singapore on 6th July 2005. If you wish to back the bid, go to www.london2012.org.



250,000 people have signed up so far to 'Back the Bid'. Add your name and help London win the 2012 Olympics.

A rhetorical interlude

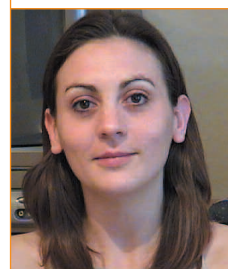
Sarah Cottam

As you may recall, my last article finished with a rhetorical question, a type of rhetorical trope (Surely Oratory should regain its good name?) - a question posed for effect rather than seeking an answer. So before we get into my third and final article on Oratory ("What have the Romans ever done for us?"), I want to take a closer look at some other types of rhetorical tropes (or figures of speech as they are more commonly known today).

Here are some example tropes that if used moderately and correctly can enhance your presentations. But as a little Christmas quiz, can you match the word with the correct definition?

A	Allegory	1	Deliberate exaggeration, not meant to be taken literally [Eg I told you a thousand times not to exaggerate]
B	Hyperbole	2	The formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named [Eg. sizzle, hiss, bang]
C	Irony	3	A seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that may in fact be true [Eg. An existing unicorn does not exist]
D	Litotes	4	The device of giving emphasis by professing to say little or nothing of a subject [Eg. I can't tell you anything about...]
E	Metaphor	5	A joke exploiting the different meanings of a word or the fact that there are words of the same sound and different meanings [Eg. Time wounds all heels]
F	Metonymy	6	A play upon words which sound alike [Eg. That turkey tastes fowl]
G	Onomatopoeia	7	A word or expression used as a substitute for something with which it is closely associated [Eg. "There's a lot of money in the room" describing the rich people in the room]
H	Oxymoron	8	Understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary [Eg. definite maybe]
I	Paradox	9	An expressed idea in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction [Eg. Bittersweet]
J	Paralipsis	10	Attribute a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human [Eg. The car groaned into third gear]
K	Paronomasia	11	A figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa [Eg. England lost by six wickets (meaning 'the English cricket team')]
L	Personification	12	Comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind [Eg. as solid as a rock]
M	Pun	13	A word or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable [Eg. Food for thought]
N	Simile	14	The expression of meaning through the use of language which normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous effect [Eg. Mother's going to be so happy when she sees the state of you]
O	Synecdoche	15	A story, poem, or picture which can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning. [Eg. Animal Farm]

Answers can be found at the bottom of page 4 in this newsletter.



End of the year - End of the presentation



Alastair Grant

So it is that end-of-year feeling, lots to fit in between office parties and general socialising. We sometimes feel the same about ending presentations. Much energy is spent on what to say, how to begin and finally, exhausted by our efforts, we realise we haven't considered how to finish off.

When preparing a presentation, just to remind you, we think the best starting point is to apply the 60-second fire bell test. If you only had 60 seconds (instead of, say 20 minutes) what key message would you put across? This helps to focus on the most important issues. Once you have your key points then you can decide on your final words.

We think an ending should include:

- A summary. This is fairly safe advice but we emphasise it not for structural logic but because listeners will, if they have drifted off, pay close attention lest they ask a question and look foolish when it is apparent they have been on planet Zog!
- Point of persuasion. Some presentations are just about information but in most cases presenters are trying to encourage, cajole and persuade and so your presentation carries more weight than a slide summary 'way ahead'.
- End upbeat. Not all topics can be upbeat but even when there is bad news you can and should end on an optimistic note, although it should be a realistic one. Bill Slim who faced with a series of defeats as his 14th Army retreated towards India tried to be upbeat. On hearing yet more depressing news declared "well it could be worse". "How could that be" said a staff officer. "Well it could be raining" he said. Shortly

afterwards they were deluged in a downpour! He tells the story against himself but he was a man who set standards for inspiration hard to match. It is always a true test to inspire when the chips are down

- Avoid hype. Often when editing a speech we come upon expressions that look worthy enough but when spoken fail to connect. "We must produce a standard of service better than the customer expects" is a fine sentiment but won't inspire as it stands. It is abstract and bland. Worthy sentiment, if it has to be used, should be related to a vivid example mentioned earlier. If one doesn't exist then it may be necessary to return to the main part of the talk and create one.
- Point of action. You may want your audience to take action. Don't assume that this will happen by telepathy. You may have to spell it out. Of course those who know you well may respond to a subtle nuance but be sure you know your audience and that what you want to have done is as straightforward to them as it is to you.

If you want the audience to ask questions you may need to engineer it to happen. Suddenly finishing and asking for questions can cause people to stall. It may be a good idea to prime a colleague to ask a question at the beginning to overcome any reluctance to be the first.

Endings are important. To end by saying that's all I have to say looks and sounds weak and may cause you to miss a prime opportunity to get a message across.

The End.

Our Services

Grant Pearson Brown Consulting is a respected adviser. We enhance the performance of businesses, helping clients to excel in the use of the spoken word, improving the performance of individuals and teams. Over the long term our work improves the way a firm does business.

We coach and advise individuals to perform at their best in the toughest situations including: Presentations, New Business Pitches, Business Development, Negotiating, Media Interviews and Telephone Calls.

Our clients' needs are the only focus of our work; we listen to them and closely tailor our response to deliver first class coaching and advice. Through our own innovative culture we selectively pursue new ideas and approaches, continually hone our advice and create tools such as Voice Analysis, Prospect Relationship Management (PRM) and the GPB Virtual Classroom.

Answers: A=15; B=1; C=14; D=8; E=13; F=7; G=2; H=9; I=3; J=4; K=6; L=10; M=5; N=12; O=11

Advanced Presentation Skills

(through Capita Learning & Development)

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'.

2005: February 17-18; April 21-22; June 16-17;
July 21-22; September 15-16; November 17-18

Open Course

This course is a good opportunity for individuals who need coaching and would benefit from being in a group with people outside their organisation.

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