

Welcome to Carl-Magnus Schreiter

Grant Pearson Brown
Consulting Ltd.

The Communication
Skills Specialists

*Advice squeezed
straight from the
experts*



We warmly welcome Carl-Magnus Schreiter to GPB. He joined us at the end of April from Speak IT, a firm he founded and ran for 15 years that also specialised in presentation skills. He lives in London, but is Swedish, which has allowed us to expand our Nordic footprint, and as a result we have already worked for IHM Business School in Stockholm and Gothenburg, and for Microsoft in Oslo.

Carl also has particular expertise in the construct of presentations, for example using the oratorical triangle of Logos, Ethos and Pathos. You will see his first newsletter article on that subject below.

Ewan Pearson

What's in a face?



Ewan Pearson

We've coached presenters for years now, on how to deliver a presentation, pitch or media interview well, and have always included an element of what you should do with your face and body – most of it being based on our philosophy of 'being yourself at your best'. We simply suggested that everyone express themselves naturally, avoid any distracting and negative 'tells', and try to avoid doing anything artificial.

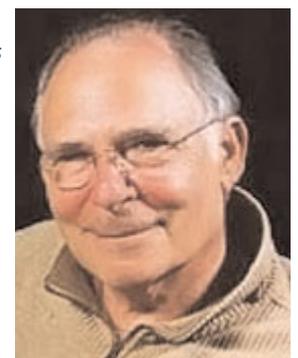
We have based our advice on the available research out there, but not until this year did we seek and obtain a full scientific grounding on the subject of facial expressions. We got it this Spring, and have been developing our advice rapidly ever since. We thought you might like to have some of it.

Professor Paul Ekman of the University of California has for over 30 years been studying the field of facial expression. Uniquely, his breakthrough was to develop the FACS with Wallace Friesen in 1976; it has since been updated, in 2002. FACS stands for Facial Action Coding System. Yes it's complex, but in essence it means they've worked out which muscles

we move when we express a particular emotion. It's proven useful to everyone from psychologists to animators to, well, us.

Among the interesting things FACS reveals is that we all have standard ways of showing emotions. Specific sets of muscles, in something called 'Action Units' - there are 46 of them - contract or relax to generate these expressions. This should not be surprising, as without such a code we'd all misread each other completely! Imagine the alternative: *"Oh, sorry, I thought you were angry with me, I didn't realise that was how you showed happiness (unless you are a teenager, of course)"!* But like the structure of DNA, at least now we have the code, so we can start to use it.

What we've often found with clients is that their facial expressions whilst



Professor Paul Ekman

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Welcome to our **30th Newsletter – Summer 2008!**
All comments welcome!

In this edition:

Can appearances be deceiving? Ewan Pearson examines the science behind your expression in **'What's in a face?'**

Tell me more... After giving away the trade secrets of how to start with a bang, Tim Farish unlocks the secrets behind giving a presentation with **'The WOW Factor!....part 2'**

If making a powerful argument is all Greek to you, Carl Schreiter explains how to hit your audience with a triple whammy of logic, ethics and emotion in **'Rhetorically speaking...'**

Alastair Grant gives you some easy to use strategies to deal with the most challenging objections in **'I object!'**

What's in a face?

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presenting indeed send a misdirecting signal. They might be trying to communicate joy or excitement, but their face is flat or folded into a concentration frown whilst they think hard about what they're saying.



Bad news, or just thinking?

"I'm really pleased to have this opportunity to present our ideas to you" should be accompanied by a smile, but often it's not, and that diminishes the credibility of the person who spoke. In techie speech, this is *dis-congruent* communication.

FACS also helps us to understand that in simple terms the face divides into two expression zones, upper and lower, with the dividing line running just below the eyes.

So, what can you all do about FACS? Well, you can try to understand what your face is doing when you're speaking, but I'd say that's best done by getting someone to video your face 'in action', which is also what we do. Best if it can be done without you knowing or being sensitive to it, but that's a little difficult... You can then replay the video tape and take a look.

Look out for which emotional expressions you use (and fail to use), and make some notes. For example:

- When you said something with an emotional component (happy, sad, angry or other), what did your face do?
- Was it consistent (the techie word is congruent) with your words?
- Was the expression done with the upper face, lower face or both?
- Was it left-right symmetrical? This is the tricky one – all expressions should be symmetrical,

except for that for contempt, apparently.

Then what? Does self-help involve staring longingly into a mirror? I know you all want me to say "yes", so I won't. Well all right, it does, sort of.



Many of the facial muscles are not controlled consciously, but by the Autonomic Nervous System (I knew my medical background would come in handy eventually!), which means they are controlled subconsciously, so there's nothing you can do about them without years of specialist self-training. They just do what your brain's emotions tell them to do; you don't get a say.

That was the subject of our article about fake and real smiles in the March 2004 newsletter. You want some of the geeky stuff? OK: FACS can be used to distinguish two types of smiles as follows:

- insincere and voluntary Pan-American smile: contraction of zygomatic major alone,
- sincere and involuntary Duchenne smile: contraction of zygomatic major and inferior part of orbicularis oculi.

So whilst some muscles are beyond your control, others can be controlled voluntarily – actively at will. These would be the ones to look at (in the mirror).

Well, yes, but...what do you do when you've got your handsome mug up there looking back at you?

You can exercise different muscle groups, to teach your muscles to move more correctly – some will need to move more, some incorrect movements will need to be restrained. Then get the video camera out again.

You can practice feeling more emotive and being more expressive with your face and body. Unlock the most expression that you are capable of and try not to restrain it unless already excessive.

In the end, it comes back to what we've always said: Be real about what you're saying so that your face encodes the positive and negative emotions in line with the context; try to avoid wincing, frowns and plastic smiles, but do something with your face. Unless you're playing poker....

Advice squeezed straight from the experts



The 'WOW! Factor'

Creating compelling content (Part 2)



Tim Farish

My last article looked at how you can create compelling content by using a strong opening or 'WOW! Factor' to grab the audience's attention and make them want to listen to the rest of your presentation. This article will look at how you structure the body of the presentation after the opening to keep them wanting more!

Once you've got their attention, the most important thing is to keep giving them enough reasons to want to listen more.

We have created the GPB Snapper to help our clients structure their presentations. The snapper uses the old adage that every good story has a head, body and tail. In the previous article you created a powerful opening by using a WOW Factor, through either one or a combination of scene setting, case study, bottom line or bait. Hopefully, this will leave your audience keen to go into the details or 'body' of your presentation.

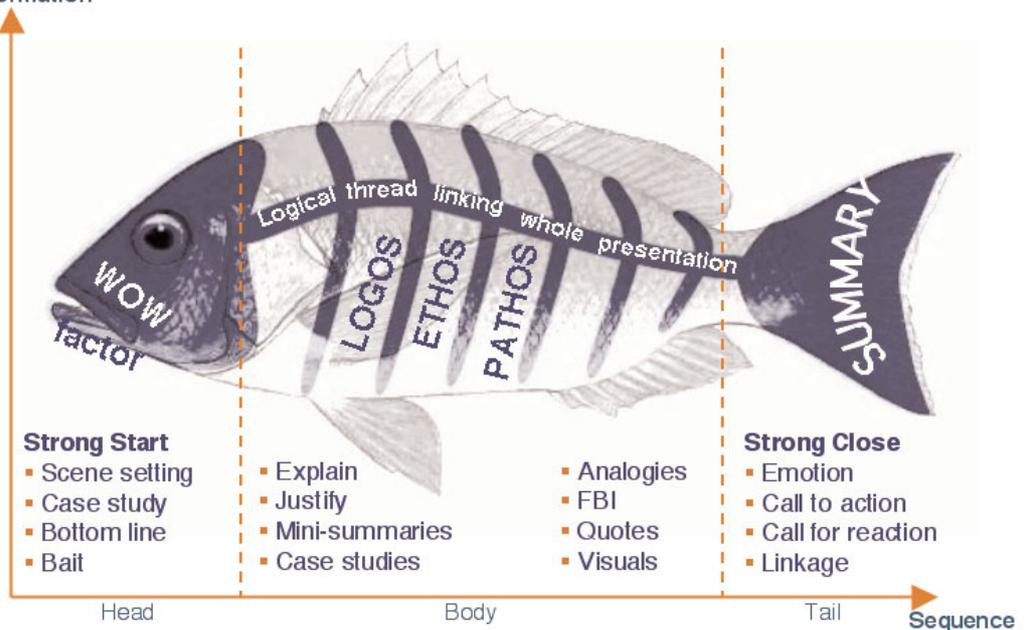
Firstly, you can use *case studies* to provide weight to your opening argument which can show your capabilities and expertise. You could also use a case study which shows how one of your competitors has dealt with a similar issue that you're facing. For example, imagine that you are a property developer proposing a new project in the Middle East. You could show previous project examples of work your firm has carried out in the Middle East or you could show examples of how a competitor has carried out similar projects in the region and you could compare and contrast to show how your firm could do a better job.

Secondly, you can use *differentiation* to add weight to any evidence. Building on the property developer analogy, you could show unique selling points (USPs) or points of differentiation (PoDs) to help compare and contrast your firm with your competition. USPs are rare in business but your firm



Volume of information

The GPB Snapper



The main purpose of the body is to provide evidence in favour of the argument or key themes that you introduced at the opening. This can be done in a number of ways:

might just have one, so ask yourself – is there anything that we offer that really is unique and benefits our clients? Using the property developer analogy, you might be the only firm that has



The 'WOW! Factor' ...continued

Creating compelling content (Part 2)



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experience designing polished blue sandstone and glass structures which might be in vogue with our Arab cousins! If you are unable to find a USP then don't despair, as PoDs are much easier to create and can be just as powerful. Ask yourself the question – how is our offering different from our clients? If you ponder this question for long enough, you might find that even though you have a competitor with similar experience using blue sandstone and glass, their project lead-times are typically 65% longer than yours. Time spent thinking deeply about PoDs will always be time well spent.

Thirdly, you can use *quotes or testimonials* to support your arguments. A third party endorsement is a very powerful way of giving credibility to what you are saying. One word of caution here..... always get permission to use testimonials. In our experience, people are more than happy to help out, if they are asked first. It is also a good way of building trust between you and your clients.

Also, don't forget to consider using *visual aids*. They can be an effective way of providing evidence for an argument as they can provide credible proof of expertise and capability. Showing pictures of the property development process your firm recently conducted in the Middle East is tangible proof of expertise and also offers the opportunity to tell the story of how your company successfully overcame the challenges of the project. The power of the

picture will also underline your point and help people to remember your work.

Finally, *mini-summaries* are a powerful way of checking in with an audience while you are going through the body of your argument to make sure they are still with you! They are put to good use when you have been going through the finer details of how you designed the diamond latches to the windows of the 5th floor balcony of your sandstone and glass structure by 'zooming out' with the words, "And if I can summarise so far; we have covered the materials used in this project and why 18 carat diamond was the best choice for doors and latches. I would now like to move on to how we are going to finance this project." If done well, not only will you highlight an important point but you will also be bringing the audience along with you to the next topic.

Hopefully, you've enjoyed coming along with me so far. In the next article, I will be looking at how you close your argument with a strong 'tail' to maximise impact. In the meantime, I've just remembered that I've been ordered by 'she who must be obeyed' to get some polished aluminium door knobs from B&Q for our new living room. There's no accounting for taste, is there?!

Advice squeezed straight from the experts



Rhetorically speaking...

Carl Schreiter



The art of rhetoric was born out of a need.... a need to communicate.... a need to persuade. This need holds true today as much as it did some 2,500 years ago.

The Ancient Greeks took this communicative challenge to heart. Based on a series of observations they devised a system commonly known as *rhetoric*. Aristotle, a highly regarded 'consultant' at the time, maintained that rhetoric is:

"The ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion."

Let's explore these available means. Let's map out the fundamental building blocks upon which persuasive speech is based and has been allowed to flourish. Let's see how the teachings of ancient Greece may guide us in our communicative endeavours today.

The Greeks worked out that our ability to persuade is based on how well we appeal to our audience in three different areas: Logos (logical appeals), Ethos (ethical appeals) and Pathos (emotional appeals). These areas form what is commonly known as *The Rhetorical Triangle*.

Logos, Ethos and Pathos are different but complementary methods of persuasion. Here, for example, are a few sound bytes of what an investment manager might say when addressing clients:

"As we progress through 2008, we predict stronger growth which should generate better, more sustainable returns..."
...Logos!

"...We have gained the reputation as a firm that clients can trust because we give honest and unbiased advice..."
...Ethos!

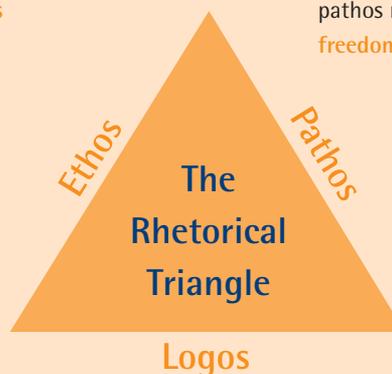
"These are exciting times and there's plenty of opportunity out there for investors. All it takes is a bit of courage..."
...Pathos!

The mixing and matching of appeals is a delicate balancing act. To that end, The Rhetorical Triangle works as a radar guiding us in our search for the strongest and most convincing arguments in each and every appeal. Our first port of call would normally be Logos, (classic orators stressed the importance of sound logical foundations as a prerequisite for good communication) passing

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Ethos: An appeal either from the credibility of the speaker or to the audience's sense of what is morally wrong or right. **Duty, responsibility** and **fairness** spring to mind.

Pathos: An appeal to an audience's emotions and sentiments prompting it to accept propositions or calls to action. Commonly used pathos related arguments are **freedom, love** and **happiness**



Logos: An appeal to logic or reason. As such it is often concerned with **profitability, efficiency** and **necessity**



Rhetorically speaking...continued

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through Ethos and ending in Pathos. As in "This is an efficient, environmentally friendly and exquisitely designed piece of machinery".

So, is the appeal of rhetoric only applicable in the crafting of formidable messages aimed at discerning audiences occupying mahogany-clad boardrooms in the City and beyond? No, The Rhetorical Triangle is as relevant a tool in the upbringing or education of a child or the hiring of an advisor as it is in the positioning of a brand.



We need look no further than to Waitrose's strap-line for a tasty rhetorical concoction:

"Quality Food, Honestly priced."

Logos and Ethos in close partnership.



By contrast Sainsbury's Pathos driven strapline is:

"Try something new today".

Be daring, be courageous, eat what you haven't eaten before. Today!



Asda's *"Always low prices"* firmly and singularly puts the supermarket in the Logos category. Not paying more than necessary is considered a wise

but not necessarily an exhilarating decision. Yes, Asda's strap line is (by default) devoid of pathos.

Some may claim that rhetoric is manipulative and that its sole purpose is to lure people into beliefs that they would otherwise refuse had these beliefs been presented in plain 'honest' language. I beg to differ.

Like any tool, the tools of rhetoric are neither inherently good nor bad. It's all a matter of proper or improper use. A victim of knife crime may well come under the knife of the surgeon. Words can heal or harm.

So how can you use this wondrous tool? The beauty of The Rhetorical Triangle lies in its simplicity and usability. In preparing for a presentation, business development meeting or media interview, decide on your key messages. Then get a pen and paper. Draw the triangle and write down as many arguments as you can possibly think of in each category. Since this is a creative phase, you should refrain from scrutiny. Don't dismiss an argument at this point just because it lacks in appeal at a first glance. Only check for quality once you have exhausted your creative resources and your argumentative search comes to a natural halt. Ask yourself: "Does this argument support my message?" "Is it relevant in relation to my audience?" "Do I have enough evidence to support the validity of the argument?" Ideally, you should opt for the best argument in each category, resulting in a triplet such as 'efficient, fair and exciting'.

"Love, Peace and Understanding" and "Blood, Sweat and Tears" are both good examples of forceful triplets. The former changed the mindset of a generation and the latter saved a nation from disaster.

Armed with forceful messages and three compelling appeals, you can now continue to build your case with a greater degree of confidence. Good rhetoric is hard work. Make no mistake about it. It may even take some "Blood, Sweat and Tears" but the quality of the messages that we can deliver to our audiences is certainly worth all the toil and trouble.



I object!

Alastair Grant



We handle objections all the time. Good objection handling is often a simple matter of explaining or clarifying a point to resolve the issue. But on other occasions, it can have a huge impact on winning business, customer relationships, negotiations, trade sales, IPOs, and so on...

Some look upon tough objections with trepidation. Perhaps you are going to a meeting and find your ideas are being rejected, there appears to be hostility and you are driven on to the back foot. Your reaction may be defensive, even aggressive. Either reaction is a recipe for disaster. However in many cases objections should not be seen as hostile. At least the other party is engaged, and may just be testing you. Moreover, if you handle a difficult objection with skill, you could end up ahead. In a business pitch it could be a critical turning point.

There cannot be a set way of dealing with objections; They are so varied, the situations are so wide-ranging and personalities are so diverse that 'a one-size-fits-all solution' is precluded.

The first and most obvious piece of advice is to prepare. Just as you anticipate difficult questions so you should try to anticipate possible objections in each specific situation. If you are caught on the hop then try to buy time before reacting.

When the objection comes in you have a number of options which can be mixed and matched. These include: *Clarification, empathy, short shrift and bridge.*

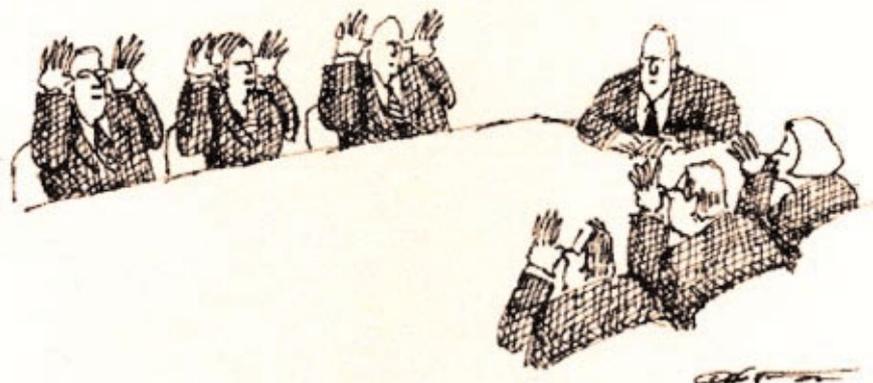
Clarification. This is about avoiding a knee-jerk reaction. Instead of immediately countering the

objection, you first respond with an open question to find out more. The effect is to take you off the back foot and give you the opportunity to clarify the other party's position. In the thinking time that you gain you should consider the reasons for the person's objection. It could be a genuine objection, but sometimes objections are there for other reasons. Maybe the objector is showing off in front of their manager, maybe they object on principle to test you, perhaps they are having a bad day or possibly, they just don't like you! Having *clarified* the nature of the objection and why they are doing it, it is time to counter-respond to the best of your ability. A final stage is to *confirm* the acceptance by the other party. If they are happy with your explanation then get them to say so. The effect of the words coming out of their mouth will commit them. If not asked they can interpret the situation differently and so the objection - in their mind - remains unresolved.

Another approach is to show *empathy*. However it must be genuine and not the horrible trite clichéd utterances that some help-desk operators are taught. Remember showing empathy is not the same as admitting responsibility.

Maybe an objection comes winging in that you are not sure is justified. You can still say "I am sorry you are upset - I can see why you are upset but let me find out what has happened. I will get back to you by the end of today. Okay?" Then make sure you do get back to them the same day, or you'll create another objection!

Whilst going down the empathy route you can also acknowledge, if true, that others have the same



The mediator sensed that the negotiations were in trouble.

I object! ...continued

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objection: "You are not alone". This is no longer a hostile approach but actively legitimising their position. You may then have the opportunity to use what we call 'Third Party Reference': "What they found was that our solution to the problem really worked well".

The '*Short shrift and bridge*' can be used when you are sure of your ground and feel that you can be robust and use the, "I don't accept your objection because..." approach. Then you can bridge to more positive territory, e.g, "*We all know that the market is volatile at the moment so you should not be surprised at what has happened [short shrift]. But look at the big picture [bridge] – over a number of years you have made above average gains. There are still opportunities out there [more positive territory].*"

There are also some style issues to note. If you are dealing with an emotive person then remember to '*mirror and match,*' verbally and non-verbally. If they talk fast then so should you – at least at first,

and be careful not to crush their feelings. But, with a colder, more direct objection then a more factual approach might be better.

A final thought, '*Under promise, over-deliver*' is a cliché, yet it has definite relevance. If you say you will resolve an issue by Friday then make sure that you do just that by achieving it before Friday. That's much better than attempting to gain quick favour by promising a solution on Wednesday but in reality it comes in the following Monday. People favourably remember those who consistently over-deliver on their promises.

You can't win every objection encounter. Events happen and things go wrong but that doesn't stop you playing your cards to best effect. So, you decide: Clarify, empathise and/or give them short shrift with a bridge!



It's really worth getting objection handling right, before things take a turn for the worse!

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, Telephone Calls and Document Writing.

We also produce scientific voice and face analysis reports, then provide voice coaching and non-verbal communications advice.

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 and Face Analysis and Prospect Relationship Management (PRM).