



Matt Richards

From Metaphysics to Belly Breathing, by Matt Richards

Grant Pearson Brown Consulting Ltd.

The Presentation & Business Development Specialists

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts



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5 Essential Tips for delivering great Presentations

Matt is a client of GPB. We occasionally have the privilege of including articles written by our clients, so with our thanks to him.....

Twenty Two Speed Dates in a day?

Speed dating came a little late for me. When the craze took I was already happily engaged, and now the concept seems entirely alien. That’s how I thought it would stay. But things change.

Last year my board agreed daunting targets for 2015. I realised we needed a new plan. I explored business speed dating events and signed up to the Digital Marketing Forum on March 11th. I needed to understand and prepare 22 unique pitches. I estimated I could spare 10 hours to preparation...challenging...

How then could I perform at the top of my game? I had 3 Core Dimensions:

1. Techniques for engaging the audience
2. Staying in the zone over the “Iron Man” fourteen hours of presentation
3. Getting psychologically primed for peak performance.

Here are my top five tips. I believe they can revolutionise your success in all presentations. Sounds like a big claim? Then read on.

Engagement Tip 1: Create a flexible “Filofax of stories”

Have around a dozen simple, memorable stories on flashcards about key aspects of your business. Weave them spontaneously together in different orders and combinations to describe your business in a highly compelling light. Include:

- Your elevator pitch

- What you do
- How you are different and better than your competitors
- Benefits to your clients of your approach
- How your industry is changing
- Case-studies that bring your pitch to life
- Answers to the toughest FAQs so you are not caught out.

You can carry flashcards with you to help you commit them to memory, then summon them up in a fashion which is seemingly off the cuff, and is hugely adaptable.



Network like mad....

This is because your memory is much more adept at remembering (a) things you have written by hand (b) things that have a story at their heart (c) things you interact with often. As such I find the flashcard format invaluable.

Engagement Tip 2: “Seek first to understand then to be understood”

It’s basic, but in both personal and business life we need to listen first. People need to feel they’ve been heard, and through listening you will also learn how you can best help.

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From Metaphysics to Belly Breathing... continued

Presenting becomes contextualised: it's not about you. It's about how you can help them.

Have you ever been out on a date when your potential partner talked at you and didn't listen? Boring, wasn't it.

They missed a lot about you and your needs, if only they'd asked they'd have known you weren't a fan of steak and chips.

Commit this to heart. Be fanatical about it. If you're talking for more than around 60% of the time you are almost certainly talking too much!

Staying in the Zone

Actually being your best self is one of the hardest things in a presentation. You may know all the facts, but getting over your inhibitions and fears in a high pressure scenario and presenting "in the zone" can be a real challenge. Here I have a couple of related tips from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), scientific techniques for reducing anxiety.

Tip 3: Use Thought Records

Thought Records enable you to see your fears more objectively. We all have a tendency to catastrophise: "if we don't win this we'll fold", "I'm dead tired", "this meeting is do or die". All are comic hyper-exaggeration.

It's constructive to find methods to avoid over exaggerating "dangers" and to stop us under-estimating our ability to handle them. Here's an example: "*what if I lose my thread and simply can't present... and just burn out there... and my boss finds out, and I lose my job, and then how will I feed the kids...*"

The important thing here is to recognise this rationally for what it is. It's pseudo logic which partially stacks up to a panicked mind, but is actually a highly distorted picture.

There are many techniques for dealing with losing your thread, from simply

stating "I've lost my thread" and starting your point over again, to more subtle conversation passing cues such as asking someone else what they think. Even if you do deliver a poor presentation, what really are the consequences? In almost all cases it's just a bad day at work. Think Premier League – even Chelsea or Manchester City lose occasionally!

If you suffer from over-exaggerating the challenges, create simple thought records which allow you to contextualise and re-assess your fears.

Start by summarising your catastrophised scenario in one paragraph. Then write a more balanced assessment. For my example above, something like: "*I present most days in my job, and my presentations are typically well received, the last one actually enabled us to win a new project, and even if the presentation doesn't go entirely smoothly I can explain things quite easily back at the office. This isn't a big deal. I can handle it.*"

You can format this in an email, which outlines both your fear and your counter-balancing rational assessment. When the irrational fear arises just recall your assessment; this should check any over exaggeration of the danger.

Over time these emails can provide solid evidence of your abilities.

Tip 4: Belly Breathing, Progressive Relaxation and Autogenic Training

There are times when logic just isn't enough. You still you have that sense of dark fear rising.

It's useful to understand the physiology of this "fear". In our "state of nature" we frequently needed to fight or flee. We needed a quick way to respond well, so had loads of adrenalin, a high heart rate, and shallow breathing... very useful in preparing for attack by a sabre tooth tiger, but it's fairly disabling to have it in a meeting!

Advice *squeezed*
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From Metaphysics to Belly Breathing... continued



Our environment has adapted more quickly than our bodies; today's body can go into the flight or fight mode whether the challenge is physical or an everyday business challenge.

There are 3 techniques to control this mechanism:

The simplest is "Belly Breathing". Take 4 - 5 slow deep breaths, exhaling fully. Your belly should expand rather than your chest. This is relaxed breathing; it can quickly help calm an agitated mind.

There are 2 similar techniques which are slightly more involved. The first is called Progressive Relaxation and the second Autogenic training. Read Dr Stephen Briers' book on CBT "*Brilliant Cognitive Behavioural Therapy*" for more.

Tip 5: Psychological Priming: You're stronger with a purpose

Your presentation skills "castle" has to be built on solid foundations, the best of which is from your answers to "what am I here for?" and "How will my presentation further that purpose?" It's existential, but positive answers are crucial. My answer is always: "*to make a positive difference*".



Speed dating, business style....

This may all be a bit metaphysical for you, dear readers, but what's great is that out of this comes our company purpose, which is: "*Transforming communications for the better*". It's big. It has impact, and it gives me the motivation to get up each morning and to do my best. I will put everything on the line, because I believe the outcome is important.

If I didn't believe this at the Digital Marketing Forum I'd be in the bar all day downing pints, and wouldn't roll up for a single speed meeting with any vigour.

The best further reading matter for this is from Viktor E Frankl's School of Psychology, from a subject called "Logotherapy"; the defining work by Frankl is "*Man's search for meaning*".

So, what happened with my 22 speed dates? Well, we've had 8 meetings since, and we hope for 10 in total.

Yes I'm proud of that, but the proof will be in what materialises....

Matt Richards is Managing Director of TMP Magnet, a London-based full service media and creative agency

For more great tips and marketing insight follow Matt on Twitter: @Matrichards08.

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Fire Bell Pitching, by Richard Keith



Richard Keith

How a short and sharp pitch can make a lasting and favourable impression

Imagine this scenario. You are about to deliver your 20 minute pitch to a client when the fire bell goes off.

You are informed that it is only a drill and you decide to seize the moment. You open your mouth: "Before we head out, can I please take 30 secs to tell you the most important thing you need to know?"

You proceed to outline in 30 secs the value-added knock-out message of your 20 minute speech.

A Fire Bell, to be used in this test...



Many of you have used our Fire Bell Test, tool, outlined above, which asks you to envisage just this scenario.

We give you 30 seconds to think of - and write down- the most important key message of your pitch.

Then we give you another 30 secs to think of the second most important one, and finally, because we're a generous bunch here at GPB, the third. As if by magic, you have your key messages.

The logical progression of this is what we have come to call the Fire Bell Pitch (or FBP). This is a pithy, impactful pitch that exists in a variety of lengths between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.

It contains your key message(s) crafted in the way outlined above, and it hooks your audience, leaving them wanting to hear more.

The FBP is similar to the notorious "elevator pitch", but we prefer our version because it suggests that the difficulties are heightened. Instead of pleasant

elevator music, you have the piercing ringing of an alarm bell; instead of the calm shelter of a corporate lift, you are distracted by the bustle of other staff exiting down the fire escape!

Simply put, the challenge is that much bigger so you have to be even more effective in your pitch.

FBPs are unleashed in all manner of circumstances: indeed, it is their flexibility that makes them so attractive. You will have many different audiences: you might strike up a conversation with a potential client on a train, you might be asked by your boss what you think would make the company a better place in which to work, you might be interviewed by the media for your views on a particular subject.

Of course, tied to this, you have an almost infinite variety of possible locations. You should be able to produce an FBP anytime, anywhere, and with anyone.

What, then, are the keys to an impactful FBP? Well, there are the obvious points - you must aim to be concise, clear, snappy, persuasive and memorable.

But we think you should keep a few other things firmly in mind to achieve these goals:

1. **Keep your intention locked in your brain.** Remember, you are not pitching to get the person to buy your service or product right there and then. You may be pitching to set up the next meeting with this person or get them to agree to a call next week.

Or you may simply be reiterating key messages to enhance brand reputation for the future (think politicians!). Remember, it's only step one: leave them wanting to hear more, but know what step two looks like.

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Fire Bell Pitching, by Richard Keith... continued



2. **Balance is essential.** You need to say enough that your pitch is intriguing and compelling, but not so much as to make your listener bored or annoyed.



Balance is indeed essential

Too much or too little, and you're out of the game. Balance is also vital when it comes to the broad scope versus use of detail: you need present your idea through a wide enough lens that the big picture is easily grasped, but you also need to provide enough concrete evidence or examples to demonstrate clearly the value of your proposition.

3. **Language is key.** Use of language, such as effective rhetorical tools, will make a huge difference to how punchy and sticky your messages are.

But make sure you don't sound gimmicky like an advertising jingle (nobody wants to feel they are being sold to in that way): ensure your rhetorical tools are embedded deep within your content and not just sitting on top of your words.

4. **Relevance will make you stand out.** Having a good idea, product or service is one thing, but having an idea, product or service that is *good for the person to whom you are pitching* is another thing altogether. Make each FBP specific to the individual with whom you are speaking and ensure you spell out clearly the benefits to them.

There have been several examples recently of fire bell pitches, but let's

look at one in particular that made the headlines. You may have heard the Leader of the Green Party, Natalie Bennett, fail to make the most of her opportunity on a radio interview with Nick Ferrari on LBC Radio on 24th February 2015. (see their website, details below, for a full transcript).

Media interviews are wonderful platforms from which to deliver your FBP that consequently reaches thousands of listeners – unfortunately, Natalie Bennett failed to impress as the holes in her knowledge of her policies came under serious fire.

Ferrari's questions probed how the Green Party would fund the building of 500,000 new social rent homes. Bennett's answers got progressively worse. Long silences, an inability to do the maths and a failure to bridge effectively to any key messages characterised her bumpy performance.

What should she have done differently?

Well, the FBP is only your friend if know it inside-out and back-to-front. You have to know it *and* you have rehearse it; and as you do, you have to listen carefully to the actual words you say as you are rehearsing.

This will give you the knowledge and confidence to tease the points apart or weld them together as and when need demands. (Remember, I said it comes in a variety of lengths.)

Fundamental to this ability is knowing the pithy but concrete detail of your material: the flashiest, punchiest FBP is of no use if it's built on gaping holes in between unsubstantiated estimates.

So, build your FBP strong, and practice it well: only then can you bend it effectively to your will and, hopefully, reap the desired rewards.

Richard Keith
Consultant at GPB

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Resilience - Survival of the adapted?

By Lynda Russell-Whitaker



Lynda Russell-Whitaker

In the 1950s, a young man enrolled in a public speaking course “not to prevent my knees from knocking when public speaking, but to do public speaking while my knees are knocking.”

That young man was Warren Buffet, now one of the world’s richest men.

“The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.”

The course was a Dale Carnegie (author of the multi-million bestseller ‘How to Win Friends and Influence People’) public speaking course and the investment he made was \$100.

Adaptability, therefore, is intrinsic to resilience and ipso facto, as I think most of us would find it hard to dispute, resilience is crucial for an individual’s survival. As individuals make up organisations, communities and countries, and it is individuals who read SpeakUp! Journals, I want to focus my attention on the individual in this article.

Warren Buffet has many admirable qualities and a number of habits that contribute to his enormous financial success.

Let’s face it, a large number of us have had to dig deep since 2008, during what is now aptly-called the Great Recession. Lasting far longer than originally predicted, those individuals who have survived - thrived even - are the ones with the most ability to bounce back and adapt to the new world.



I appreciate that adaptability is only one aspect of a set of survival skills and that our survival is of course dependent on a number of external as well as internal factors. However, for the purposes of this article and its usefulness to you as the reader, I’m going to concentrate on this skill.

Warren Buffet, after he learned to speak whilst his knees knocked

In their award-winning book ‘Why Change Doesn’t Work’, clinical psychologist Harvey Robbins and journalist Michael Finley provide practical and proven methods for managers to work *with* human nature, not *against* it.

My personal belief is that a crucial aspect of his success is his adaptability over his many years in business and, in turn, his resilience.

Too often this has not been the method for effecting change, whether by governments or organisations. They would assert this is why change doesn’t (usually) work.

Resilience has become something of a popular topic in recent years, discussed in the contexts of governments and policy-making, organisational change and of course that of the individual.

The two definitions in the Oxford Dictionary of resilience are:

To develop and use the internal forces that help overcome adversity and

“The ability of a substance or object to bounce back into shape; elasticity.” and

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Resilience - Survival of the adapted?...continued

challenges, we need to build capability and competence.

It would be wonderful if we could simply adapt and gain the knowledge and skills we need to acquire with a simple wave of a magic wand.

Unfortunately, we don't. People need training and education which then has to be put into practise over a period of time to build that capability and competence.

If we embrace what The Royal Society of Arts and Manufacture call the 'power to create', a model of change that starts from people taking action, we don't necessarily need to feel victims of the whims and vagaries of politicians and economists. As Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive of The RSA discusses (RSA Journal Issue 2 2014):

"The power to create identifies the possibility of a tipping point, where it becomes possible to realistically aspire to all people being able to live creative lives. The tipping point results from changes in human capability and appetite, in the technological transformation wrought by the web, and in the growing demand from employers and the state for, respectively, creative workers and citizens."

Yes, technology and its rapid development, particularly the internet, has had a dramatic impact on us, our workplaces and our homes, over the past 10 to 15 years. This is increasingly so with mobile technology.

Cultures and borders are less distinct and more accessible now, as we become more and more interconnected and more networked. We are being forced to train ourselves to a great degree in these new systems and we are having to adapt rapidly.

There are many benefits to be derived from living in an age of ever and faster evolving technology, but there are of course challenges and risks.

A quote from the Executive Summary of McKinsey Global Institute's paper published in May 2013 entitled 'Disruptive technologies: Advances that will transform

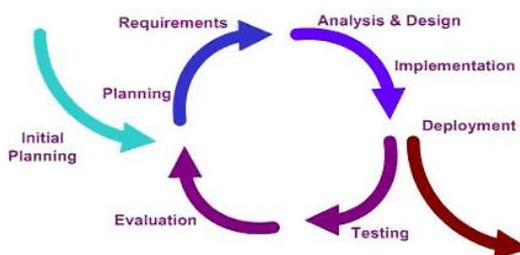
life, business and the global economy' puts it very well:

'Business leaders can't wait until evolving technologies are having these effects to determine which developments are truly big things. They need to understand how the competitive advantages on which they have based strategy might erode or be enhanced a decade from now by emerging technologies – how technologies might bring them new customers or force them to defend their existing bases or inspire them to invent new strategies.'

Combine that sound advice with that of The RSA's 'power to create' principle: that we don't have to wait for appointed 'leaders' at work or in our communities, whether employees in large organisations, leaders of businesses (small, medium or large!) or as self-employed freelance workers, in the context of your choosing. Much like Warren Buffet did in his 20s, when he attended Dale Carnegie's public speaking course, you and I can effect change by taking action.

An iterative process, much like that of Agile software development, enabling us to adapt and learn, train and educate ourselves along the way. We can build our capacity and capability ongoingly, for the benefit of our products & services, ourselves and of course our clients and customers.

An illustration of Agile software



Lynda Russell-Whitaker
Associate Consultant at GPB

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Get that job! By Alastair Grant



Alastair Grant

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Anyone can find that at an unexpected time in their careers, they have to go for interview. This might be to keep their job, get a promotion, or to apply for a new and better job than the one they have.

We help our clients with pitches, handling the media, keynote speeches and presentations and conference events. But every year we are also asked to coach people going for an interview.

Some of our clients are interviewing, or in the job market, for the first time.

The Challenge

Interviewing is a filtering process, starting with CVs being sent, selection for an initial interview and then maybe processing on to a second interview. References are sought. Indeed it is a process of elimination.

A long CV with mistakes is an easy way to be thrown out.

So how can we help those who want to get that job in competition with others?

Preparation

Preparation of Information. Don't be lazy, find out relevant information before the interview. Their website is a good start. Find out how long the interview is, how many people are in the room with you, who are they anyway? Ring their HR department as they may be surprisingly helpful.

Preparation of Logistics. Make sure you know the exact destination, how to get there, is there parking? Do you have the right phone number on your mobile if you are running late? Do you need to bring anything along, perhaps an example of your work?

Preparation of Appearance. Dress style is often unclear. If you are not sure it is best to be smartly but comfortably dressed and be well groomed. That means clean shiny shoes, clean teeth, clean and short finger nails. No stains on your clothing, hair brushed, cut and tidy. First appearances are important. Strive to be immaculate. This will make you feel better too!

Preparation for Questions. You should have an idea of the more important questions that you may be asked. These are typical:

Tell me about something that you are proud to have achieved.

Why do you wish to come to this company/firm/organisation/college/university?

Tell me about some setback that you faced and what you have learnt from it.

What do you hope to do once you have qualified?

It is well worth rehearsing your answers – this will build confidence but as you rehearse you may find you keep adding more and more information. The interviewers really dislike long answers.

So, keep answers short. The interviewers can always ask you for more information if they so wish.

First Impressions

It is said that many make up their minds about you in the first 60 seconds. Hardly logical but don't get eliminated in that first nervous moment. Get your posture right – walk into the room upright and with a smile. They will, or should, take the initiative.

Be ready to shake hands – apply medium pressure and look them in the eye. Don't start to blurt out unrehearsed blabber. Once seated, lean forward slightly and keep your bottom at the back of the seat.

Answering questions

Listen carefully and pause. Don't start revving up your answer whilst they are speaking.

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Get that job!...continued



By pausing you can consider (and indeed show you have considered) the question. **After the interview**

Give brief answers. As I said above, they can always ask for more, but if you ramble and waffle the interviewers will get bored or lose track of what you are trying to say.

Do try to back up your answers with personal or other relevant real examples. This makes it easier for the other party to understand your point and better still they are more likely to remember you afterwards. To be forgotten is fatal!

Do tell the truth but do not overdo it. Let's say one of your grades in an exam (educational or professional) is low. *Yes I was disappointed to only get a C in that subject but overall I am pleased with my results which were good and as my tutors predicted.*

If you don't understand a question don't be fazed by it, instead ask for clarification before attempting an answer. This also buys some decent thinking time!

Finally here, answer with a degree of enthusiasm and confidence. Hold eye contact with the other party.

Be happy to ask them some questions - indeed working these out should be part of your preparation.

Some sample dressing:



Helen Mirren - down the shops



Scruffy Pacino - down the shops

Consider writing a handwritten letter to the interviewers saying how much you appreciated the time they spent and your passion and enthusiasm for the post should you be chosen. This might sound a bit cheesy yet it is rarely done and helps to mark you out.

Social Skills

This may seem a bit offbeat, but beyond an impressive CV, an adult, young or old, can gain advantage if they are able to use their social skills well.

This means the ability to:

- Engage people from a wide background and age range in conversation, be able to take an interest in what they say rather than talking about themselves.
- Conduct a conversation at meals and show impeccable manners.
- Turn yourselves out well in terms of dress and grooming
- Present ideas with clarity and confidence

Not all of these can be tested in an interview; some might seem unimportant, but good social skills may be a point of differentiation between two candidates who are equal in every other respect.

Alastair Grant
Associate Consultant at GPB

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts





Plain talking, by Patrick Macdonald



Patrick Macdonald

Advice
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How CEOs use ‘Pub English’ rather than “Managerese” to communicate well to key audiences

Do you call a spade a “spade”, or do you call it a “manually-powered digging apparatus”?

All professions use jargon. Doctors and surgeons sprinkle every conversation with references to obscure ‘conditions’ that the rest of us call illnesses.

Lawyers love throwing in Latin phrases such as ‘mutatis mutandis’ and ‘pari passu’. Sailing types go on about sheets (ropes), lines (ropes) and hal-yards (ropes). Business is no different.

Encouraged by management consultants and business school professors, we have all learnt to leverage our capabilities, focus on our core competencies and work on our adjacencies. We make sure our white papers have key so-whats and our presentations normally have key takeaways. In fact, ‘key’ is a key word to throw into almost any discussion, memo or presentation, key or otherwise.

I’ve even heard managers talking about the ‘key’ KPIs they have decided to use to monitor their business. KPIs are, of course, Key Performance Indicators, so what they’re telling me is they want to monitor their Key Key Performance Indicators. Perhaps their KPIs aren’t so K after all?

So why do we use all this jargon? And why do we take such perverse pleasure from it?

It’s not a new phenomenon. Over 200 years ago, the epistemologist Étienne Bonnot de Condillac said that *“every science requires a special language because every science has its own ideas.”*

We use jargon to communicate precisely what we mean to other professionals.

Thus a ‘core competency’ is something subtly different from a ‘core capability’ or a ‘core skill’.
To those in the know, jargon helps

understanding. Like slang, it’s convenient, quick and easy to use.

It’s our common language.

But we also use jargon to signal that we’re members of the club and to exclude others. If I talk to you about an ‘adjacency’ rather than ‘a similar product or sector’, I get to look and feel pretty clever.

If you understand what I’m on about, you do too. We both bond a little.

For a business leader, however, this act of exclusion is a problem rather than an advantage. A CEO doesn’t just talk with her or his senior team or others ‘in the know’.



Unless the business is very small or specialist, a Chief Executive using this nonsense (or ‘special’ language, if you prefer) will put off the vast majority of the people in the company. They will feel out of the loop, that the senior leaders are disconnected from them. They will switch off.

For this reason, the best CEOs resist the temptation to carpet-bomb their staff with gobbledygook. They use plain English whenever they can, the sort of English they would use down the pub. For some, this comes naturally. For others, they have to work consciously to cut out the managerese.

Plain talking...continued



Jamie Dimon, CEO of JP Morgan Chase, admires Warren Buffet's use of simple language: "*My Chairman's letter [in the annual report] was modelled on his - explain to people what you're doing as if you're writing to your smart sister.*" In a financial services industry replete with egregious examples of manager-speak, such clarity is to be prized.

Just as some leaders like to hide behind their desk or lectern, managerese can form a comforting barrier.

As Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric (GE), says: "*Insecure managers create complexity. Frightened, nervous managers use thick, convoluted planning books and busy slides filled with everything they've known since childhood.*"

They worry that if they're simple, people will think they're simple-minded. In reality, of course, it's just the reverse.

Clear, tough-minded people are the most simple."

Lucy Kellaway at the *Financial Times* has made a career out of exposing the worst examples of managerese. The best examples come from the speeches and emails of bosses in the tech industry, particularly the leaders of businesses built around communication itself.

My particular favourite is this peach written recently by Dick Costolo, CEO of Twitter: "*As we iterate on the logged out experience and curate topics, events, moments that unfold on the platform, you should absolutely expect us to deliver those experiences across the total audience and that includes logged in users and users in syndication.*"

This is almost incomprehensible to a normal human being. Lucy Kellaway had to ask a 'young colleague' what Costolo was on about.

The translation? "*We want to make money out of people when they are on Twitter - and when they are not on Twitter.*" Clear as a bell and short enough to tweet... unlike the original. And in English.

As James Herriot (the vet) said, cultivating a simple style takes time. A good rule is to take out all unnecessary words. We love repeating and reinforcing a point to ram it home, but along the way meaning gets obscured.

If you can say it in fewer words, it is always clearer. This requires conscious effort. As Woodrow Wilson famously said, "*if it is a ten-minute speech it takes me all of two weeks to prepare it; if it is a half-hour speech it takes me a week; if I can talk as long as I want to, it requires no preparation at all. I am ready now.*" So, please take the time and effort to cut out the jargon.

Your colleagues will thank you; your investors will reward you.

By Patrick Macdonald, a GPB client and Partner at The School for CEOs. Ewan Pearson at GPB is a member of their Faculty.

See www.schoolforceos.com for further details.

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts



With thanks to Peatty & Taylor, The Daily Telegraph, 27th April 2006.



What you see is what you get by Ewan Pearson



Ewan Pearson

It is said that the eyes are the 'window to the soul' and that facial expression is the only universal language spoken by mankind.

It is said that Facial Expression (FE) is one of the major elements of visual communication; it is supposed to display our emotions (or lack of). It is also said that to be fully persuasive you can only do so if you communicate on both a rational and an emotional level. So, what you see is what you get.

Yet when we speak we are at a disadvantage, as we alone can't see ourselves; our audience can. So it is important enough to worry about, and can we coach it?

Actually the first problem facing scientists in this whole area seems to be defining what an emotion *is*. There is only partial agreement. Some say emotions are biologically innate, others have said that they are 'Natural Kinds' (defined as 'a group of items that are inherently equivalent'. I know, I don't understand that either).

Without this what hope do Facial Expression readers (the audience) have? Actually it seems most people can agree that what they see on faces are emotions, and which one is which. Paul Ekman even calls it the only truly universal language 'spoken' by mankind. I would put it differently, that what we see suggests a specific emotion: so, a smile means we're happy, a frown means angry, a sad face means we're sad, and so on. Pretty easy stuff, surely.

There were considered to be six basic emotions: happy, sad, angry, fear, disgust and surprise. Now the list has been pushed by one leader in the field, and our already quoted local hero, Professor Paul Ekman, to 21 basic emotions. It is also quite normal to show a mix of emotions, as shown by an interest project summarised with some articles in the newspapers a couple of years back. but let's keep things simple for here and now.

Scientist experiment to test how well people read these emotions by showing

still photos of people with the chosen emotion, and they ask the viewers to 'read' those faces. Once you do this enough times, you build up good data about which facial expression is which emotion, and how easily or otherwise it is for the viewers to tell one emotion from another, or none.

We do short versions of these experiments too, on many of our workshops, and the results are compelling: We can all read basic emotions on faces very well.

Even our very subtle sample - of a face showing what is classically called *contempt* (a unilateral lip corner raising, as you asked) - people shout out 'contempt' or a word that is close, such as smug, cynical, or sceptical.



The classic look of 'contempt'

This proves that we, the "amateurs", can all read faces, thankfully without having to attend a university degree course on the subject. That's important because if you flip this point round, you realise that whatever is on your face will be read by an audience.

Not only that, to make things worse, your face is *always* on display to an audience (Ok, not when you are on the phone), and yet you can't see yourself, so you cannot be sure what your face is saying.

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What you see is what you get ...continued

That neatly brings us to the conundrum: How can we coach someone's face to do the right thing? And how to do that when we don't really want them to do all their speaking whilst doing a 'selfie'?

The answer we have developed over the years is a combination of things: analysis, congruence and video.

We often do a Visual Analysis for our clients. This involves taking video samples (up to 4) and getting our analysts in Geneva to produce a Visual Report. This will contain reports on such things as Facial Expressions, Eye Contact, Gestures, Posture and Movement. The FE report will tell us whether people showed the correct emotion on their faces, and to what degree.

Often we see FE reports that could be summarised as describing a 'Poker or Botoxed Face', one that does not change from emotional neutral even with the emotions clearly intended from the content of what is being said (e.g. a happy story). In such a case we are getting *mixed* messages: "S/he says she's happy, but s/he looks like s/he's just saying it because it's important to say so." That in turn leads to doubt, confusion or even disbelief.

That takes us to the subject of Visual Congruence. This is the match (or mismatch) between what we see and what someone says. Discongruence is a bit like inverse correlation, the two are going in opposite directions. This position we would say is more of a problem, as it means we are getting *opposing* messages. For someone who exhibits this on their face, we will believe what we see over what you say. You can say you are happy and look sad or angry. This is not good! We use this analysis to inform much of our coaching.

Video filming is useful, although widely disliked, as it does tell us what the

presenter's face is doing over time, so is better than still photos. We can film fairly unobtrusively now, with mini digital devices, or even a phone, and the quality of image is very high. This allows us to review the footage, pause and slow play, and see what's happening.

The key thing though is the coaching. We don't ask people to try to change a facial expression. Have a go—the results are pretty amusing, but not usually effective as we become self-conscious, and put on fake and often silly FEs.

Instead we focus on what the baring is doing. We know that we can effectively coach better FE if we can get the brain to think the right things. The FE follows, so we get the presenter to *think* the emotion. This comes best by working on the content, and making that properly and personally emotive. So we ask them to include personal war stories, to think and realise that what they are doing is a positive event for them and their firm. This is the most profound basis on which to build good, real emotional displays.

So the tips list here is pretty simple:

First, work your content into a form that is appropriately emotive, with variations in emotion perhaps as you move from subject to subject. This will make the emotion genuine.

Second, rehearse it, preferably with a colleague, to check the FE is congruent with the content, not static, and that it moves with the content.

Third, film it using a smartphone or similar so that you can play it back and reassure yourself that your face will be read in the correct way.

So, what we get is what you want.

Ewan Pearson, Director at GPB

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Appendix: GPB's "B" list of Rhetorical tools, with examples

We think that the use of Rhetorical Tools is important in the creation of good content. In Winter 2013 we published our "A" list of these tools. Here we publish (in the printed version only) our next alphabetical favourite of our ones. Some will be known to you, others will be new, weird and wonderful. Please enjoy yourselves in making up some new content using them, and please do let us know of any that you spot - effective or otherwise - to journal@gpb.eu.

[bdelygmia](#)

A litany of abuse--a series of critical epithets, descriptions, or attributes.

[boosting](#)

An adverbial construction used to support a claim or express a viewpoint more assertively and convincingly.

[categoria](#)

Direct exposure of an adversary's faults.

[chiasmus](#)

A verbal pattern in which the second half of an expression is balanced against the first but with the parts reversed.

[chleuasmos](#)

A sarcastic reply that mocks an opponent, leaving him or her without an answer.

[climax](#)

Mounting by degrees through words or sentences of increasing weight and in parallel construction with an emphasis on the high point or culmination of a series of events.

[commonplace](#)

Any statement or bit of knowledge that is commonly shared among a given audience or a community.

[commoratio](#)

Repetition of a point several times in different words.

[confirmation](#)

The main part of a speech or text in which logical arguments in support of a position are elaborated.

[concession](#)

Argumentative strategy by which a speaker or writer concedes a disputed point or leaves a disputed point to the audience or reader to decide.

[connotation](#)

The emotional implications and associations that a word may carry.

[copia](#)

Expansive richness as a stylistic goal.

[crot](#)

Verbal bit or fragment used as an autonomous unit without transitional devices.

[deduction](#)

A method of reasoning in which a

conclusion follows necessarily from the stated premises.

[dehortatio](#)

Dissuasive advice given with authority.

[deliberative](#)

Speech or writing that attempts to persuade an audience to take (or not to take) some action.

[delivery](#)

One of the five traditional parts or canons of rhetoric, concerned with control of voice and gestures.

[demonstrative rhetoric](#)

See epideictic: persuasion that deals with values that bring a group together; the rhetoric of ceremony, commemoration, declamation, demonstration, play, and display.

[denotation](#)

The direct or dictionary meaning of a word, in contrast to its figurative or associated meanings.

[diacope](#)

Repetition broken up by one or more intervening words.

[diatyposis](#)

Recommending useful precepts or advice to someone else.

[distinctio](#)

Explicit references to various meanings of a word--usually for the purpose of removing ambiguities.

[dysphemism](#)

Substitution of a more offensive or disparaging word or phrase for one considered less offensive.

[effectio](#)

Personal description; a head-to-toe inventory of a person's physical attributes or charms.

[ellipsis](#)

Omission of one or more words, which must be supplied by the listener or reader.

[encomium](#)

Tribute or eulogy in prose or verse glorifying people, objects, ideas, or events.

[enthymeme](#)

An informally stated syllogism with an implied premise.

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Appendix: GPB's "B" list of Rhetorical tools, with examples...continued

[epanalepsis](#)

Repetition at the end of a clause or sentence of the word or phrase with which it began.

[epicrisis](#)

Circumstance in which a speaker quotes a passage and comments on it.

[epideictic](#)

Speech or writing that praises or blames.

[epimone](#)

Frequent repetition of a phrase or question; dwelling on a point.

[epiphora](#)

Repetition of a word or phrase at the end of several clauses.

[epiplexis](#)

Asking questions to reproach rather than to elicit answers.

[epithet](#)

Using an appropriate adjective (often habitually) to characterize a person or thing.

[epizeuxis](#)

Repetition of a word for emphasis (usually with no words in between).

[erotesis](#)

A rhetorical question implying strong affirmation or denial.

[ethopoeia](#)

Putting oneself in place of another so as to both understand and express his or her feelings more vividly.

[ethos](#)

Persuasive appeal based on the projected character of the speaker or narrator.

[euphemism](#)

Substitution of an inoffensive term for one considered offensively explicit.

[euphuism](#)

Elaborately patterned prose style

[evidence](#)

Facts, documentation, or testimony used to strengthen a claim or reach a conclusion.

[exordium](#)

The introductory part of an argument in which a speaker or writer establishes credibility (ethos) and announces the subject and purpose of the discourse.

[exuscitatio](#)

Emotional utterance that seeks to move hearers to a like feeling.

[fable](#)

A short narrative meant to teach a moral lesson.

[figures of speech](#)

The various uses of language that depart from customary construction, order, or significance.

[gradatio](#)

Sentence construction in which the last word of one clause becomes the first of the next, through three or more clauses.

[hyperbole](#)

An extravagant statement; the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect.

[hypophora](#)

Raising questions and answering them.

[hypotaxis](#)

An arrangement of phrases or clauses in a dependent or subordinate relationship.

[identification](#)

Any of the wide variety of means by which an author may establish a shared sense of values, attitudes, and interests with his or her readers.

[induction](#)

Method of reasoning by which a rhetor collects a number of instances and forms a generalization that is meant to apply to all instances.

[invective](#)

Denunciatory or abusive language; discourse that casts blame on somebody or something.

[invention](#)

The discovery of the resources for persuasion inherent in any given rhetorical problem.

[irony](#)

Use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning. A statement or situation where the meaning is directly contradicted by the appearance or presentation of the idea.

[isocolon](#)

A succession of phrases of approximately equal length and corresponding structure.

[judicial](#)

Speech or writing that considers the justice or injustice of a certain charge or accusation.

[kairos](#)

The opportune time and/or place, the right time to say or do the right thing.





Appendix: GPB's "B" list of Rhetorical tools, with examples....continued

Our Services

Grant Pearson Brown Consulting Ltd (GPB) is a respected adviser based in London. We enhance the performance of businesses, helping clients to excel in the use of the spoken and written 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, Visual and Content Analysis reports, then provide content, 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. In support of this we selectively pursue new ideas and approaches, continually hone our advice and create tools such as Prospect Relationship Management (PRM), Just a Minute, the Fire Bell Test and the Information Iceberg.

litotes

A figure of speech consisting of an understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by negating its opposite.

logos

In classical rhetoric, the means of persuasion by demonstration of the truth, real or apparent.

meiosis

To belittle, use a degrading epithet, often through a trope of one word; rhetorical understatement.

memory

One of the traditional five parts or canons of rhetoric, that which considers methods and devices to aid and improve the memory.

metaphor

An implied comparison between two unlike things that actually have something important in common.

metonymy

A figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it is closely associated (such as "crown" for "royalty").

narratio

The part of an argument in which a speaker or writer provides a narrative account of what has happened and explains the nature of the case.

onomatopoeia

The formation or use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.

oxymoron

A figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms appear side by side.

parable

A short and simple story that illustrates a lesson.

paradox

A statement that appears to contradict itself.

paralepsis

Emphasizing a point by seeming to pass over it. See apophasis.

parallelism

Similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses.

parataxis

Phrases or clauses arranged independently: a coordinate, rather than a subordinate, construction.

parenthesis

Either or both of the upright curved lines, (), used to mark off explanatory or qualifying remarks in writing. (2) The insertion of a verbal unit that interrupts the normal flow of the sentence.

pathos

The means of persuasion in classical rhetoric that appeals to the audience's emotions.

periodic sentence

Long and frequently involved sentence, marked by suspended syntax, in which the sense is not completed until the final word--usually with an emphatic climax.

peroration

The closing part of an argument.

persona

Voice or mask that an author or speaker or performer puts on for a particular purpose.

personification

A figure of speech in which an inanimate object or abstraction is endowed with human qualities or abilities.

ploce

Repetition of a word with a new or specified sense, or with pregnant reference to its special significance.

polyptoton

Repetition of words derived from the same root but with different endings.

polysyndeton

A style that employs a great many conjunctions (opposite of "asyndeton").

prolepsis

Foreseeing and forestalling objections in various ways. (2) Figurative device by which a future event is presumed to have already occurred.

proverb

Short, pithy statement of a general truth, one that condenses common experience into memorable form.

pun

A play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words.

