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3rd Edition Winter 2001

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SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

The ability to communicate effectively is crucially important.

Our 1:1 coaching will give you the personal attention that you need to ensure that you are giving your best performance.

NOW, for businesses with whom we have not yet worked, two people can benefit from our 1:1

coaching for the price of one. Every time you book one person in for a two-hour session, a second person can have a two-hour session immediately afterwards, completely free.

This offer will only last until 30th June 2001 so contact us now.

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PITCHING TO WIN

PITCHING is more about avoiding elimination than showing how good your professional skills are. Ewan Pearson takes you through the pitching process and gives you some tips on how to hit the hot buttons and increase your chance of winning.

VIRTUAL REFRESHMENT

The development of the GPB VIRTUAL CLASSROOM is going well. We recently added a virtual refresher class to the series. Alastair Grant takes you through our early experiences.

TV INTERVIEWS: TALENT OR TARGET?

Ewan Pearson questions whether you would rather be a rabbit caught in headlights or a suave sophisticated interviewee and explains GPB's different approach to media training.

GPB Consulting

The European Presentation Consultants



Pitching to Win

How you get selected

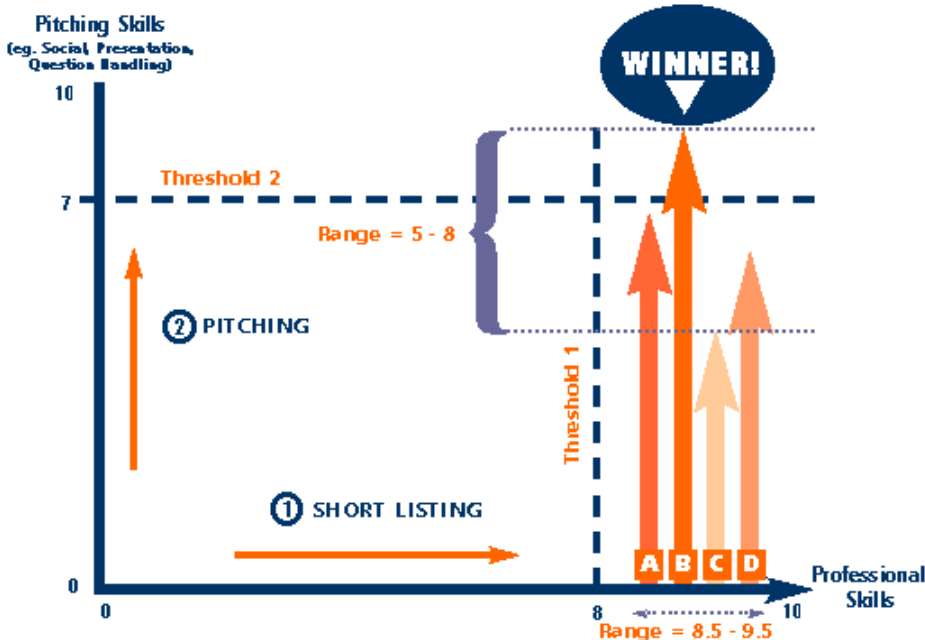
You came a very close second. Isn't it galling to hear that? You are told a reason why you lost, and your thoughts tell you that it's a smokescreen. Or they are candid and tell you that you weren't good enough, or your presentation "lacked fizz" (a real quote!).

fees for an IPO. That's some prize (and yes, they did win it, and no, we didn't get 10%!), so it's worth doing pitches well.

Our first tip is to think hard about whether to pitch at all. If it's one you can't win, decide if your chance of lesser prizes justifies the cost, time, hassle and potential

Then prepare: yourselves to speak well, your content, and for tough questions. Keep it short, simple and relevant. You are pitching to persuade, not to inform. Work as a team, not individuals, share the persuasion out!

This diagram shows the two-stage pitching process. First, firms (usually 3-5) are short-listed on their professional skills using written documents responding to RfPs. The buyers rank them best to worst (D to A), with little perceivable difference. "They could all do the job" is a key phrase, it means the buyers have free range to eliminate all but one team, and they do so on the basis of pitching skills. These skills include social, presentation, question handling and selling skills. They are typically secondary skills, but unless they are very good, you will never get the chance to show how good your primary skills are!



You have just lost a major order to someone who in your mind is not as good. You resolve to do something different.

We have helped teams of people pitching for new business since we first started. Not surprising really, there is a measurable payback from the investment in improving each pitch - the success rate will rise. The biggest order we worked on was for over £200m of

disappointment. OK, you decide to pitch. Now, start asking questions, lots of them, to your colleagues and carefully to your prospective clients. With clients you must build rapport before earning the possibility of getting valuable information.

The most valuable such information concerns their people, selection criteria, hot/cold buttons and presentation style.

The key point is that pitching is more about avoiding elimination than showing how good your professional skills are.

Hitting hot buttons should be down to planning not luck!

Ewan Pearson



Virtual Refreshment



On the 6th February from 5 to 6 pm we ran our first refresher class on the web.

The concept of a follow-up refresher like this is an absolute winner. It has long been known that skills taught in a two day course, no matter how brilliantly, often become less effective after time. The principle of a follow-up refresher day always made sense, but in practice was hard to achieve because of cost and time. But now we have something much less time consuming, at less cost and easy to implement.

People attended from two recent courses we ran on presentation skills. I had

run both courses so ran the refresher.

I think that it was really good way to remind and refresh learnings, which absolutely helps to utilise learnings in daily work.
Jyrki Karlsson,
Unilever

It was a bit like NASA's mission control. Names suddenly appeared on screen as people logged in. We then all engaged in web chat, and in a curious way, rapport was achieved. Then we hooked up on a conference call, and it almost became like a cocktail party!

This preliminary limbering up was useful in the slightly strange environment. It didn't matter that delegates came from different courses, as they all knew me.

We did a quick tour of the classroom and all were quickly trying out the various tools such as drawing, typing, erasing, and throwing the odd virtual tomato! We then surprised them by accessing another website to play a video with sound of a speech by a well known businessman (one of our clients of course!)

And then down to the main business. The hour was packed with activity by them. We were determined that it wasn't going to be a long-distance lecture. Activities included two-minute presentations by each delegate, polls with five options, and everyone drawing on graphs. The hour seemed to pass in a flash. Both sides seemed reluctant to let go.

So why did it work? First, although it can't ever replace personal coaching, people did enjoy it. Second, we made sure our material fitted concisely and that all the technology was reliable. Third, the delegates all felt it was a useful learning experience to supplement their previous real classroom course.

What next? Well of course we want to do more! And plan to provide this refresher to all those attending our **Advanced Presentation Skills** courses. We are also rolling out more programmes on our **Virtual Classroom**, so watch this space.

Alastair Grant

The Industrial Society - Open Course Dates

As many of you know, we run two-day open courses in Advanced Presentation Skills in co-operation with The Industrial Society. These courses might be a good opportunity where you have just one or two individuals who need coaching and would benefit from being in a group with people outside their organisation.

The dates of courses for the rest of the first half of 2001 are: March 13-14 and 27-28; April 10-11; May 16-17; June 12-13 and 26-27.

Please call us on 020 8334 5755 for further information or to book someone on a course. Dates for the second half of 2001, and for our new Pitching to Win 3-day course will be available soon.



TV interviews:

Talent or Target?

The phone rings in the next office. Your assistant says it's the BBC, they'd like an interview. You panic.

The last time a TV station interviewed you it all went horribly pearshaped. You were more like the rabbit caught in the car headlights than the suave sophisticated person you are well known to be around the office. You faltered throughout the interview - seemingly not knowing what to say, and left the studio feeling angry that you didn't get the chance to put your case. They just wouldn't give you time to work out what to say. You have just been the target. Sure, it could never happen to you. But what if....?

Many interviewees end up like that, even after

some media training with a hotshot journalist. Whatever they said in the training went out of your mind when you most needed it, and they spent most of their time character-assassinating you anyway. Strangely enough we don't think that's the right approach. When we first started to media train corporate spokespersons, we took a different approach: Build confidence and skills as we build the difficulty we thought, and it's paid off.

We first get people to understand what we call *The Media Contract* - that unwritten agreement which permits interviewers of the likes of Paxman to be tough on you, but by the same token allows you to put over a corporate message, however little it makes for interesting news.

Forewarned is forearmed, so you go in to interviews ready to be proactive not reactive;

this itself makes for a better interview.

Then we teach skills, of the sort that don't leave you when you need them. Learning how to answer questions well is not easy. For example, pausing first to think may not be instinctive, but it is essential. Politicians may not be the most loved of our citizens, but they do know how to answer (or not!) media questions and to bridge to the positive. They are kept well briefed, and get lots of practice, which is also essential. Unlike the polies, we think business people should answer the questions, unless confidentiality prevents it.

If you develop these skills, the media will come back to you. You are now talent. You will get more requests, and your organisation will get more free publicity. You may even get a pay rise! What would you rather be, talent or target?

Ewan Pearson

GPB Consulting: Our Services

We are a leading European Consultancy with associates around the world.

We specialise in the spoken communication areas of presentation, selling, negotiation, media and telephone skills. Our principle focus is assisting top to middle management in these areas. We offer our advice both as consultants on important

business issues, and as trainers in general skills development.

We work both one to one with top management and with group workshops for middle management. Workshops run for between one and five days, and are tailored to each clients requirements.

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

Coming soon: our new upgraded website.....



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