



Corsini's Point of the Week™

September 7, 2009 — Part 2 of 4



Presenting ... You (In the Very Best Light) During your Presentation

Last week, we started our “Winning Presentations” series of Points; these are based on some of the many topics we cover in “**Corsini's Rainmakers & Leaders Club.**” **At each of our twice-monthly meetings, we use the Toastmasters International communications model;** Toastmasters is a proven way to **enhance communications and leadership skills.** If you'd like to learn more about **Toastmasters** and our **Rainmakers & Leaders Club,** go to www.corsini.com. Additionally, www.toastmasters.org will point you toward a Toastmasters club in your area.

In last week's Point, we discussed what to do *before* you give your presentation. Today's Point will give you some presentation tips to keep in mind *during* the presentation.

No matter who your audience is or what your subject is about, **the common goal of a presentation is to capture (and hold) your audience's attention—especially during a sales presentation.**

Also common to all presentations: a structure. **Every presentation has a beginning, a middle and an end.** Each of these parts needs to be strong:

- **The introduction:** Start strong. **Be enthusiastic, and thank your audience for having you there.** Be sure to give a quick acknowledgment to the people who made that happen.
- **The main point:** Be clear and concise with your information. **Emphasize your expertise,** and talk up how what you offer can help the client do what they do better—whether that's saving money, increasing productivity, reducing their risks, etc. (You should not give a presentation until you absolutely understand the client's needs, wants, goals, etc. This requires that you get to work long before the presentation day.)
- **The conclusion:** Summarize your main points, **highlight, once more, the benefits of doing business with your firm** and thank your audience sincerely. If your presentation is a sales presentation, **end with a call to action.** Think about what you want the client to do next, and make that your call to action.

That said, let's continue this discussion with some tips for keeping your audience focused on what you have to say.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*“Be sincere;
be brief;
be seated.”*

— Franklin D. Roosevelt,
on speechmaking

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- **Solicit input.** After major points, get some feedback. **Ask how what you've just presented will help the client.** Do they agree with you? Do they have any concerns as you are presenting? This back and forth keeps your audience focused.
- **Time matters.** Get to your point quickly; stay within your time limit; and avoid complex, difficult-to-understand presentations. **If you're given 45 minutes for your meeting, plan on a 30-minute presentation, and leave 15 minutes for questions, answers and surprises.**
- **A picture is worth a thousand words.** Make your presentation as visually pleasing as possible. **Use images whenever you can.** Make your message more appealing with some type of audio/visuals such as interactive white boards, slides, posters, large screens/monitors, etc.
- **Stay off the Internet.** A real-time visit to the Internet sounds exciting, but there are just too many things that can go wrong.
- **Don't just stand there, do something.** Move around the room; this makes you seem more accessible. Also, **make eye contact. But don't just focus on the decision-maker.** Connect with assistants and secretaries, too. You never know how much say they have in company decisions.

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Next week, we'll discuss how to handle impromptu speaking and the question-and-answer part of a presentation.

CORSINI'S POINT

A good presentation has a beginning, a middle and an end. And the end should be your call to action. Open with enthusiasm, speak with clarity and end with a summary. Solicit feedback after major points. Get to your main message quickly, and stay within your time limit. Make your presentation visually pleasing. Stay off the Internet; too many things can go wrong. Move around the room, and make eye contact with everyone—from the boss to the assistant. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, be yourself. Nobody likes a fake. Relax, and have some fun.

Do What You Do Better with Corsini's Rainmakers & Leaders Club

Enroll now in Corsini's Rainmakers & Leaders Club. This twice-monthly program, based on the Toastmasters International model, features guest business speakers and timely topics. Sessions are 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

The investment is only \$99 per month for two sessions. As always, **we offer a 100% money-back guarantee.**

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