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# 5 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR GREAT PRESENTATIONS



IDEAS ON STAGE

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Most presentations suck. Businesses, schools and organisations all around the world waste millions year after year because of bad presentations. If you add the time and money spent creating bad slides, delivering ineffective presentations and attending meetings, conferences and lectures that simply waste your time, you will quickly realise that all around you, presentations are a problem.



Think of it in pure business terms.

- If meeting participants remember nothing and waste their time, and if conference participants sit there bored and praying for the coffee break or evening cocktail, the return on that investment is minimal.
- If your sales pitch fails to make customers want to buy from you, your revenues will suffer.
- If your leadership presentation fails to inspire your employees, they won't be motivated to deliver on your strategy.
- And if your results presentation fails to convince analysts that your leadership, strategy and results are a good deal for shareholders, your stock price and company value could plummet.

The impact of a good or bad presentation has never been higher. The number of presentations given every day has never been greater. Yet the quality of most presentations has never been lower. We don't just have a problem. We have a huge problem.

At Ideas on Stage we understand how hard it is to achieve your goal when presenting. Like you, we are frustrated when we see great ideas getting lost simply because of the way they are communicated. We've created this eBook to help you find a solution.

# | PRESENTATION SCORE

Since 2010 we have worked with thousands of clients, from small business owners and professionals to clients like Microsoft, Lacoste, The World Bank and over 400 TEDx speakers. What we've realised is that the best presentations always have five key success factors.

We call them the Presentation SCORE principles: Simple, Clear, Original, Related, Enjoyable.

Applied to your overall presentation, what does this mean?



Let's look at each principle in more depth.

## I SIMPLE

Every great presentation includes a simple message. To use an analogy, all experienced writers know that the key to great writing isn't in what they say; it's in what they don't say. The more they cut out, the better the book. The same applies to presentations.

One of the key mistakes most business leaders make when developing presentations is they think that everything is important. We often know so much about our subject – and we are also emotionally attached to it – that we feel we have to communicate everything.

However, if you put yourself in your audience's shoes, you'll quickly realise that when everything is important, nothing is important.

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**when everything is important,  
nothing is important.**

A simple yet powerful technique to quickly work out what your audience really needs to hear is to imagine you only have half a minute. No more than 70 words. That's all. If you can say it in that time, then you can say it in longer. If not, your message isn't simple enough.



As an example, Steve Jobs made a long presentation to launch the iPhone in 2007. If he'd only had half a minute, perhaps he'd have said something like this:

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*Today, I'm proud to announce a revolution that's as momentous as the Mac in 1984 or the iPod in 2001. We're launching the first truly 'smart' phone, and it's also a widescreen iPod with touch controls and a breakthrough Internet communicator. Compared to every other smartphone, it's so easy to use. This truly is a revolutionary mobile phone, and we are calling it iPhone. Today, Apple is reinventing the phone.*

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**If you're stuck when writing out your 70 words, consider answering these three questions:**

**WHAT:** What is the key message you need to tell your audience?

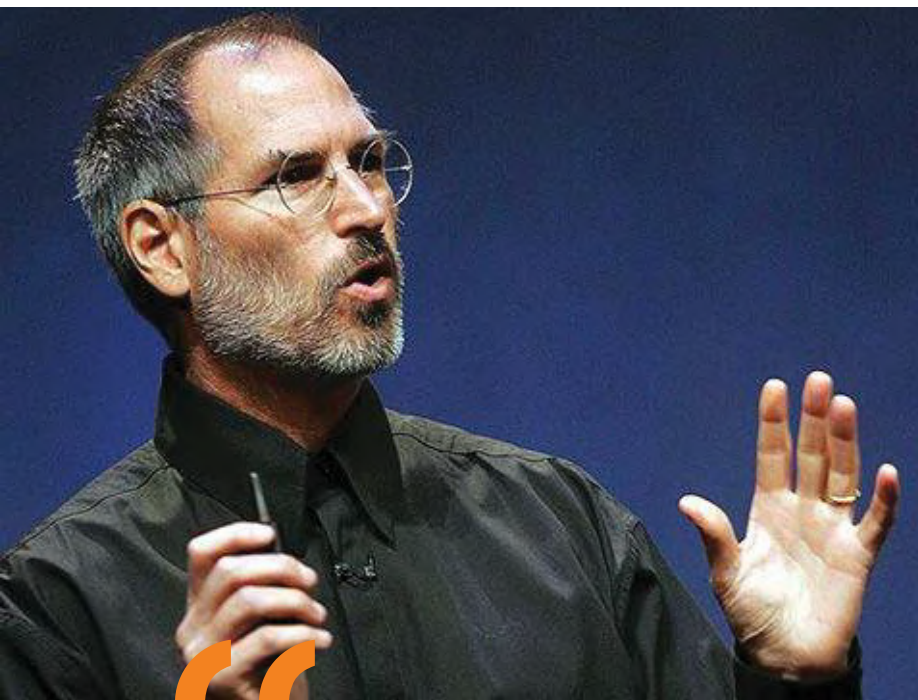
**SO WHAT:** Why should they care? Why is it relevant and important to them?

**WHAT NEXT:** Now that they care, what should they do with it?

# | CLEAR

Every great presentation follows a clear storyline. You need to be able to choose the most appropriate storyline based on your audience, their needs, your objective, and the type of presentation.

The simple presentation structure is a basic 3-act play: a strong introduction that catches your audience's attention, some clear ideas, perhaps with an example or two, and then a conclusion to sum up and give a call to action, making it clear to the audience what was your point and why they should care about it.



Example: Steve Jobs in his Stanford commencement speech, with a short introduction, three stories, and a conclusion.



## **Three is the most powerful number in communication.**

Three is the most powerful number in communication. Why? Because in short-term memory we find it hard to process and remember more than three pieces of information. In communication, we call this “the Rule of Three”. If you bombard your audience with all the details you think are important, you will confuse them.

And if you confuse, you lose.

If today you're not paying attention to the way you structure your presentations, you're making it hard for your audience to follow you, remember what you say and take action.

If you want to be able to achieve your objective, just tell them the three key messages they need to remember. That's it.



## RELATED

Every great presentation is related to the audience. The first thing most business professionals do when preparing a presentation is to either open up a presentation tool (like PowerPoint) and put together some slides or they start thinking about their key messages.

In reality, whenever you choose to present, you are taking time from your audience. What you give them needs to be a good deal for them, in return for their time. This is why it is important to prepare well, but also why it is vital to know your audience before you begin. When you give someone a present, it's their present, not yours. When you give people a presentation, it's their presentation, not yours. Make sure it suits them well.

This is important because according to the former AT&T presentation research manager, Ken Hamer, “developing a presentation without an audience in mind is like writing a love letter and addressing it ‘to whom it may concern’.”



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To make sure you are ready to begin preparing their presentation, you have to ask yourself some questions about your audience, their burning needs and the context.



### Audience

Who are the key people in your audience?



### Burning Needs

What do they expect from your presentation?



### Context

At what time of day will you be speaking? In what kind of room? Will you have a projector or screen? Is it an online presentation? etc.

The more you know about your audience, their needs and the context, the easier it is for you to communicate a simple and clear message which is relevant to them.

## | ORIGINAL & ENJOYABLE

Every great presentation is also original and enjoyable. If you don't think about these two principles, your presentations will remain dry, factual and boring. It's important to avoid this because according to the author of Brain Rules, Dr John Medina, "the brain doesn't pay attention to boring things".

Therefore, once you have a simple and clear message which is relevant to your audience, you need to spice it up. You need to make it Original and Enjoyable, so you can make a complete SCORE.



**the brain doesn't pay  
attention to boring things.**

## | HOW CAN I MAKE MY KEY MESSAGES STICK?

It doesn't matter how much your participants enjoy your presentation if they forget your key messages soon afterwards. Yet making it Enjoyable for them will help them to remember, so it is important that you make your audience enjoy your presentation.

One key way of making your messages stick, and also making your presentation Original, is to tell them stories: examples and anecdotes that people remember far more than naked facts and figures.

Another way is to find a MAGIQ moment. MAGIQ stands for "Makes A Great Impression Quickly" – something you say, show or do that they will never forget.

Steve Jobs used MAGIQ moments when pulling the MacBook Air out of an envelope to show how thin it is, or when saying the iPod was "a thousand songs in your pocket".

What can you say, show or do that will make your key messages unforgettable?

By default, sooner or later they will forget everything you say. If you want to transform your audience, it's up to you to make your key messages memorable.



# | THE REST IS UP TO YOU

At Ideas on Stage, we have successfully applied the Presentation SCORE method for thousands of business clients.

The results don't always look the same. A press launch for a luxury company is very different – and looks very different – from the annual financial results presentation for an engineering firm. But following Presentation SCORE, both will be engaging, interesting, audience-centred, and memorable.

If you consistently apply the five principles you've learned in this eBook, you will become the presenter everyone remembers. And you will also be able to achieve the following:



Sell your ideas



Make your brand stand out



Grow your business



Inspire your audience to take action



Advance your career

## | WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH OF THESE PRINCIPLES IN DETAIL?

If you'd like to learn more about how you can use presentations to grow your business and increase your influence, here are three things you can do:



### **MASTERCLASS:**

Register today for our next Live Masterclass:  
<http://ideasonstageuk.eventbrite.com>



### **SCORECARD:**

Take the Impactful Presenter scorecard to assess your presentation skills. You just need to answer 24 Y/N questions. Free of charge – no strings attached in less than 5 minutes:  
<https://presentationscorecard.scoreapp.com/>



### **DISCOVERY SESSION:**

Express your interest to attend a complimentary discovery session by sending an email to Andrea Pacini at [andrea.pacini@ideasonstage.com](mailto:andrea.pacini@ideasonstage.com) and we'll get in touch to see if you qualify.