ACT 3

Refine and Rehearse

So far, we've learned how Steve Jobs plans his presentations. We've talked about how he supports the narrative through his words and slides. We've discussed how he assembles the cast, creates demos, and wows his audience with one dynamic moment that leaves everyone in awe. Finally, you'll learn how Jobs refines and rehearses his presentation to make an emotional connection with the audience. This final step is essential for anyone who wants to talk, walk, and look like a leader. Let's preview the scenes in this act:

- **SCENE 14: "Master Stage Presence."** *How* you say something is as important as *what* you say, if not more so. Body language and verbal delivery account for 63 to 90 percent of the impression you leave on your audience, depending upon which study you cite. Steve Jobs's delivery matches the power of his words.
- **SCENE 15: "Make It *Look* Effortless."** Few speakers rehearse more than Steve Jobs. His preparation time is legendary among the people closest to him. Researchers have discovered exactly how many hours of practice it takes to achieve mastery in a given skill. In this chapter, you'll learn how Jobs confirms these theories and how you can apply them to improve your own presentation skills.

- **SCENE 16: "Wear the Appropriate Costume."** Jobs has the easiest wardrobe selection in the world: it's the same for all of his presentations. His attire is so well known that even "Saturday Night Live" and "30 Rock" poked some good-natured fun at him. Learn why it's OK for Jobs to dress the way he does but it could mean career suicide if you follow his lead.
- **SCENE 17: "Toss the Script."** Jobs talks to the audience, not to his slides. He makes strong eye contact because he has practiced effectively. This chapter will teach you how to practice the right way so you, too, can toss the script.
- **SCENE 18: "Have Fun."** Despite the extensive preparation that goes into a Steve Jobs presentation, things don't always go according to plan. Nothing rattles Jobs, because his first goal is to have fun!

SCENE 14

Master Stage Presence

I was hooked by Steve's energy and enthusiasm.

—GIL AMELIO

Steve Jobs has a commanding presence. His voice, gestures, and body language communicate authority, confidence, and energy. Jobs's enthusiasm was on full display at Macworld 2003. Table 14.1 shows his actual words as well as the gestures he used to introduce the Titanium PowerBook.[1] The words he verbally emphasized in his presentation are in italics.

The words Jobs uses to describe a product are obviously important, but so is the *style* in which he delivers the words. He punches key words in every paragraph, adding extra emphasis to the most important words in the sentence. He makes expansive gestures to complement his vocal delivery. We'll examine his body language and vocal delivery more closely later in the chapter, but for now, the best way to appreciate his skill is to call on a guest speaker who pales in comparison.

"Who's Mr. Note Card?"

During the iPhone introduction at Macworld 2007, Jobs invited Cingular/AT&T CEO Stan Sigman to join him onstage and to share a few words about the partnership. Sigman took the floor and sucked the energy right out of the room. He immediately

TABLE 14.1 JOBS'S MACWORLD 2003 PRESENTATION

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S GESTURES
"Two years ago, we introduced a *landmark product* for Apple. The Titanium PowerBook *instantly* became the best notebook in the industry. The number *one lust object*."	Raises index finger
"Every review said so."	Pulls hands apart, palms up
"And you know what? Nobody has caught up with it in *two years*."	Holds up two fingers on right hand
"Almost every reviewer today *still* says it is the number one notebook in the industry. No one is even *close*."	Chops air with left hand
"This is important for Apple because we believe that someday *notebooks* are even going to outsell *desktops* . . . We want to replace even *more* desktops with notebooks."	Makes an expansive gesture with both hands
"So, how do we do this? What's next? Well, the Titanium PowerBook is a milestone product, and it's not going away. But we're going to step it up a notch to attract even *more* people from a desktop to a notebook."	Gestures, moving hand in a broad stroke from right to left
"And how do we do that? We do that with *this*."	Pauses
"The new *seventeen-inch PowerBook*. A seventeen-inch landscape screen."	Another expansive gesture, hands pulled apart, palms up
"It's *stunning*."	Pauses
"And when you close it, it is only *one inch* thick."	Makes thin gesture with left hand
"The *thinnest* PowerBook *ever*. Let me go ahead and show you one. I happen to have one right here."	Walks to stage right while maintaining eye contact with audience

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S GESTURES
"It is the most incredible product we have ever made."	Picks up computer and opens it
"The new seventeen-inch PowerBook. It's amazing. Look at that screen."	Holds up computer to show screen
"Look at how *thin* it is. Isn't it incredible? It's beautiful, too."	Shuts computer and holds it up
"This is clearly the most advanced notebook computer ever made *on the planet*. Our competitors haven't even caught up with what we introduced two years ago; I don't know what they're going to do about *this*."	Smiles and looks directly at audience

put his hands into his pockets and proceeded to deliver his comments in a low-key monotone. Worst of all, he pulled note cards out of his jacket pocket and started reading from them word for word. As a result, Sigman's delivery became more halting, and he lost all eye contact with the audience. He continued for six long minutes that seemed like thirty. Observers were fidgeting, waiting for Jobs to return.

A post on CNN's international blog read: "Sigman . . . read stiffly from a script, pausing awkwardly to consult notes. By contrast, the silver-tongued Jobs wore his trademark black turtleneck and faded blue jeans . . . Jobs is one of the best showmen in corporate America, rarely glancing at scripts and quick with off-the-cuff jokes." Bloggers were relentless during Sigman's talk. Among the comments: "Who's Mr. Note Card?"; "Blah, blah, blah, and blah"; "Painfully bad"; and "A snoozer."

Sigman left AT&T that same year. Macworld.com wrote: "Sigman is perhaps best remembered by Apple fans as *completely negating* Jobs's Reality Distortion Field in an incident which left almost half of the entire keynote audience sound asleep. He has been sentenced to a cruel afterlife of being the butt of roughly 99 percent of Scott Bourne's jokes [Bourne is a Mac pundit and podcaster] . . . And what will Stan do in retirement? Word is he's

thinking of giving public speaking workshops to underprivileged youth."[2]

Sigman spent forty-two years at AT&T, rising from the lowest rungs in the company to running its wireless division. Yet, to many people unfamiliar with his leadership, Sigman's appearance at Macworld will be his lasting legacy. It wasn't Sigman's fault. He had to follow the master. And, unfortunately, this book wasn't out yet to help him prepare!

Three Techniques to Improve Body Language

Steve Jobs resigned from Apple in 1985 after losing a boardroom battle for control of the company in a power struggle with then CEO John Sculley. He would remain away for eleven years, returning triumphantly when Gil Amelio, Apple's CEO in 1996, announced that Apple was going to buy Jobs's NeXT for $427 million. "I was hooked by Steve's energy and enthusiasm," Amelio wrote in *On the Firing Line: My Five Hundred Days at Apple*. "I do remember how animated he is on his feet, how his full mental abilities materialize when he's up and moving, how he becomes more expressive."[3]

Jobs comes alive when he is up and moving onstage. He has seemingly boundless energy. When he's at his best, Jobs does three things anyone can, and should, do to enhance one's speaking and presentation skills: he makes eye contact, maintains an open posture, and uses frequent hand gestures.

EYE CONTACT

Great communicators such as Jobs make appreciably more eye contact with the audience than average presenters. They rarely read from slides or notes. Jobs doesn't eliminate notes entirely. He often has some notes tucked out of view during demonstrations. Apple's presentation software, Keynote, also makes it easy for speakers to see speaker's notes while the audience sees the slides displayed on the projector. If Jobs is reading, nobody can

tell. He maintains eye contact with his audience nearly all the time. He glances at a slide and immediately turns his attention back to where it belongs—on those watching.

Most presenters spend too much time reading every word of text on a slide. During demonstrations, mediocre presenters will break eye contact completely. Research has discovered that eye contact is associated with honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and confidence. Avoiding eye contact is most often associated with a lack of confidence and leadership ability. Breaking eye contact is a surefire way to lose your connection with your audience.

Jobs can make solid eye contact with his listeners because he practices his presentations for weeks ahead of time (see Scene 15). He knows exactly what's on each slide and what he's going to say when the slide appears. The more Jobs rehearses, the more he has internalized the content, and the easier it is for him to connect with his listeners. The majority of presenters fail to practice, and it shows.

The second reason why Jobs can make solid eye contact is that his slides are highly visual. More often than not, there are no words at all on a slide—just photographs (see Scene 8 and Scene 17). When there are words, they are few—sometimes just one word on a slide. Visual slides force the speaker to deliver the information to those whom the message is intended to reach—the audience.

OPEN POSTURE

Jobs rarely crosses his arms or stands behind a lectern. His posture is "open." An open posture simply means he has placed nothing between himself and his audience. During demos, Jobs sits parallel to the computer so nothing blocks his view of the audience or the audience's view of him. He performs a function on the computer and immediately turns to the audience to explain what he just did, rarely breaking eye contact for a long stretch of time. In Jobs's early presentations, most notably the 1984 Macintosh introduction, he stood behind a lectern. He abandoned the lectern soon after and has never used one

since (with the exception of his 2005 Stanford commencement address). See Figure 14.1.

HAND GESTURES

Jobs emphasizes nearly every sentence with a gesture that complements his words. Some old-fashioned speaking coaches still instruct clients to keep their hands at their sides. I'm not sure where this started, but it's the kiss of death for any speaker hoping to captivate an audience. Keeping your hands at your sides will make you look stiff, formal, and, frankly, a little weird. Extraordinary communicators such as Jobs use *more* gestures than the average speaker, not fewer. There's even research to back up this observation.

Dr. David McNeill, at the University of Chicago, is known for his exhaustive research in the area of hand gestures. He's made it his passion since 1980. His research has shown that gestures and language are intimately connected. In fact, the *use* of gestures can help presenters speak better by clearing up their thought process. Yes, he says, it actually takes concentrated effort *not* to

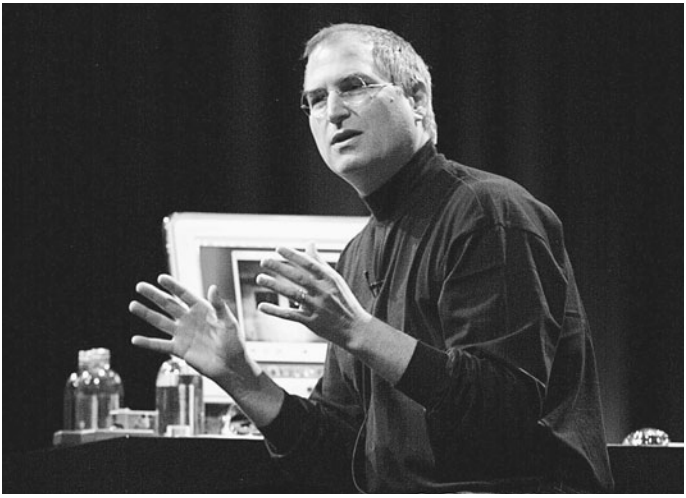

Figure 14.1 Steve Jobs engages his audience with strong eye contact, hand gestures, and an open posture.

JOHN G. MABANGLO/AFP/Getty Images

use gestures. McNeill has found that very disciplined, rigorous, and confident thinkers use hand gestures that reflect the clarity of their thinking—it's like a window to their thought process.

Use hand gestures to emphasize your point. Be careful, however, that your hand gestures do not become robotic or overrehearsed. In other words, don't copy Jobs and his mannerisms. Be yourself. Be authentic.

Say It with Style

Steve Jobs uses his voice as effectively as his gestures. His content, slides, and demos create excitement, but his delivery ties the package together. When he introduced the iPhone in January 2007, he told a magnificently woven story, and his vocal expression provided just the right amount of drama. We reviewed the announcement and its slides in previous chapters. Now let's focus on *how* Jobs said what he said. It is a package

Is That a CEO or a Preacher?

Few among us have the public-speaking confidence to rival Cisco CEO John Chambers. People are often shocked the first time they watch him give a presentation. Like a preacher, Chambers roams among the audience. He spends only a minute or two onstage at the beginning of his presentation before stepping into the crowd. Chambers walks right up to people, looks them in the eye, calls some by name, even places his hand on someone's shoulder. Very few people have the confidence to pull this off.

I know as a fact that Chambers's confidence is the result of hours of relentless practice. He knows every word on each of his slides, and he knows exactly what he's going to say next. Observers have said watching a Chambers presentation is an "astonishing" experience. Be astonishing. Rehearse your presentation, and pay close attention to your body language and verbal delivery.

deal, after all. Great slides mean little without a great delivery. A great story will fall flat if delivered poorly.

Table 14.2 illustrates Jobs's vocal delivery. It's from the same iPhone presentation featured in Scene 13, with a focus on his actual delivery. The words Jobs chose to emphasize are italicized in the first column; the second column lists notes on his delivery, including the moments when he pauses right after a phrase or sentence.[4] Pay particular attention to pacing, pausing, and volume.

Jobs varied his delivery to create suspense, enthusiasm, and excitement. Nothing will do more to destroy all of the work you put into crafting a spectacular presentation than to deliver it in a boring monotone, which Jobs most certainly does not.

Jobs's voice complemented the drama of the plot. He uses similar devices in every presentation. This section details four related techniques that Jobs uses to keep his listeners engaged: inflection, pauses, volume, and rate.

INFLECTION

Jobs changes his inflection by raising or lowering the pitch of his voice. Think about how flat the iPhone launch would have sounded if all of his words had been delivered with exactly the same tone. Instead, Jobs raised his pitch when he said, "Are you getting it?" and "This is one device." Jobs has some favorite descriptors that find their way into many of his presentations: *unbelievable*, *awesome*, *cool*, and *huge*. These words would not carry the same impact if the tone in which they are delivered sounds exactly like the rest of the sentence. Jobs modifies his tone frequently, keeping his listeners on the edge of their seats.

PAUSES

Nothing is more dramatic than a well-placed pause. "Today we're introducing a third kind of notebook," Jobs told the Macworld audience in January 2008. Then he paused a few beats before saying, "It's called the MacBook Air." He paused again before the delivering the headline: "It's the world's thinnest notebook." [5]

Jobs does not rush his presentation. He lets it breathe. He will often remain quiet for several seconds as he lets a key point

TABLE 14.2 JOBS'S 2007 iPHONE PRESENTATION

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S DELIVERY
"This is a day I've been looking forward to for two and a half years."	Pause
"Every once in a while, a revolutionary product comes along that *changes everything*."	Pause
"Apple has been very fortunate. It's been able to introduce a few of these into the world. In 1984, we introduced *Macintosh*. It didn't just change Apple; it changed the whole computer industry."	Pause
"In 2001, we introduced the first *iPod*."	Pause
"It didn't just change the way we all listen to music; it changed the entire *music* industry."	Pause
"Well, today we're introducing *three* revolutionary products of this class. The *first* one"	Pause
"is a wide-screen iPod with touch controls. The *second*"	Pause
"is a *revolutionary mobile phone*."	Voice grows louder
"And the *third*"	Pause
"is a *breakthrough* Internet communications device. So, three things: a wide-screen iPod with touch controls, a revolutionary mobile phone, and a breakthrough Internet communications device."	Pause
"An iPod, a phone, and an Internet communciator."	Voice grows louder
"An iPod, a phone—are you getting it?"	Speaks faster, voice grows louder
"These are not three separate devices. This is *one* device,"	Voice grows louder still
"and we are calling it *iPhone*."	Voice gets even louder
"Today Apple is going to *reinvent* the *phone*!"	Loudest volume of the presentation

sink in. Most presenters sound as though they are trying to rush through the material. In many ways, they are, because they scripted more material than the time allows. Jobs never hurries. His presentation is carefully rehearsed to give him plenty of time to slow down, pause, and let his message take hold.

VOLUME

Jobs will lower and raise his voice to add drama. He typically does this when introducing a hot new product. He often lowers his voice as he builds up to the announcement and then raises his volume to hit the big note. He'll do the opposite as well. When he introduced the first iPod, he raised his voice and said, "To have your whole music library with you at all times is a *quantum leap* in listening to music." He then lowered his voice and delivered the knockout: "But the coolest thing about iPod is your entire music library fits in your pocket."[6] Just as inflections and pauses keep your audience riveted to your every word, so does the volume of your voice.

RATE

Jobs speeds up the delivery of some sentences and slows down for others. Demonstrations are typically delivered at his normal rate of speech, but he slows down considerably when he delivers the headline or key message that he wants everyone to remember. When Jobs introduced the iPod for the first time, he lowered his voice nearly to a whisper to emphasize the key takeaway. He also slowed the tempo of his sentences to build the drama. Table 14.3 offers highlights.[7]

Act Like the Leader You Want to Be

Do not make the mistake of believing body language and vocal delivery are unimportant, "soft skills." UCLA research scientist Albert Mehrabian studied expression and communication for his book *Silent Messages*.[8] He discovered that nonverbal cues carry the most impact in a conversation. Tone of voice—vocal expression—was the second most influential factor. The third, and least important, were the actual words spoken.

TABLE 14.3 EXCERPT FROM JOBS INTRODUCING THE iPOD, WITH DELIVERY NOTES

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S DELIVERY
"Now, you might be saying, 'This is cool, but I've got a hard disk in my portable computer, my iBook. I'm running iTunes. I'm really happy. I don't get ten hours of battery life on my iBook, but iBook has better battery life than any other consumer portable.' "	Slows down rate of speech
" 'So, what's so special about iPod here?' "	Pauses and lowers volume
"It's ultraportable. An iBook is portable, but this is *ultra*portable. Let me show you what I mean."	Speeds up rate of speech
"iPod is the size of a deck of cards. It is 2.4 inches wide. It is four inches tall. And barely three-quarters of an inch thick. This is tiny. It also only weighs 6.5 ounces, lighter than most of the cell phones you have in your pockets right now. This is what's so remarkable about iPod."	Slows down and lowers voice
"It is ultraportable."	Almost at a whisper

To a large extent, how Steve Jobs speaks and carries himself leaves his audience with a sense of awe and confidence in him as a leader. U.S. president Barack Obama once said the most valuable lesson he learned as he worked himself up from a community organizer to the most powerful person on the planet was to "always act confident."

People are making judgments about you all the time, but especially in the first ninety seconds of meeting you. How you deliver your words and what your body language says about you will leave your listeners disillusioned or inspired. Steve Jobs is an electrifying communicator because he is expressive in both voice and gesture.

Bueller? Bueller?

Ben Stein provides us with one of the best examples of a horribly dull, monotone vocal delivery. In the 1986 movie *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, Ben Stein played a boring economics teacher. Stein's most famous line in the movie occurred when he was taking attendance and Bueller (the Matthew Broderick character) was nowhere to be found. In the driest monotone on film, Stein asked, "Bueller . . . ? Bueller . . . ? Bueller . . . ?" as the camera flashed to an empty chair. In another scene, Stein discussed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act and voodoo economics. The looks on the students' faces are hilarious. One kid has his head on the desk as drool is coming out of the side of his mouth. Stein's character is so boring, it's funny.

If Stein were to read a transcript of a Steve Jobs presentation in the same manner in which he played the teacher, it would surely be one of the longest, dullest presentations in the history of corporate America. This proves once again that words matter, but an effective delivery makes the difference.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Pay attention to your body language. Maintain eye contact, have an open posture, and use hand gestures when appropriate. Don't be afraid of using your hands. Research has shown that gestures reflect complex thinking and give the listener confidence in the speaker.
- Vary your vocal delivery by adding inflection to your voice, raising or lowering your volume, as well as speeding up and slowing down. Also, let your content breathe. Pause. Nothing is as dramatic as a well-placed pause.
- Record yourself. Watch your body language, and listen to your vocal delivery. Watching yourself on video is the best way to improve your presentation skills.

SCENE 15

Make It *Look* Effortless

Practice isn't the thing you do once you're good.
It's the thing you do that makes you good.

—MALCOLM GLADWELL

Steve Jobs is a master showman, working the stage with precision. Every move, demo, image, and slide is in sync. He appears comfortable, confident, and remarkably effortless. At least, it *looks* effortless to the audience. Here's his presentation secret: Jobs rehearses for hours. To be more precise: many, many hours over many, many days.

"Jobs unveils Apple's latest products as if he were a particularly hip and plugged-in friend showing off inventions in your living room. Truth is, the sense of informality comes only after grueling hours of practice," observed a *BusinessWeek* reporter. "One retail executive recalls going to a Macworld rehearsal at Jobs's behest and then waiting four hours before Jobs came off the stage to conduct an interview. Jobs considers his keynotes a competitive weapon. Marissa Mayer, a Google executive who plays a central role in launching the search giant's innovations, insists that up-and-coming product marketers attend Jobs's keynotes. 'Steve Jobs is the best at launching new products,' she says. 'They have to see how he does it.' "[1]

How does he do it? The *BusinessWeek* reporter provided the answer in the article: Steve Jobs puts in *hours of grueling practice*. When was the last time you could say that you devoted hours

of grueling practice to prepare for a presentation? The honest answer is probably "never." If you really want to talk the way Jobs does, plan on spending more time rehearsing every portion of your presentation.

Glimpse Behind the Magic Curtain

In an article published in the *Guardian* on January 5, 2006, former Apple employee Mike Evangelist wrote about his personal experience rehearsing a portion of a demonstration for a Jobs keynote: "To a casual observer these presentations appear to be just a guy in a black shirt and blue jeans talking about some new technology products. But they are in fact an incredibly complex and sophisticated blend of sales pitch, product demonstration, and corporate cheerleading, with a dash of religious revival thrown in for good measure. They represent weeks of work, precise orchestration, and intense pressure for scores of people who collectively make up the 'man behind the curtain.' "[2]

According to Evangelist's first-person account, Jobs begins his preparation weeks in advance, reviewing products and technologies he is going to talk about. Evangelist had been tapped to demo the new iDVD, Apple's DVD-burning software, for Macworld 2001. Evangelist said his team spent hundreds of hours preparing for a segment that lasted five minutes. That's not a typo: *hundreds* of hours for a five-minute demo.

Evangelist said Jobs rehearsed for two full days before the presentation, asking for feedback from the product managers in the room. Jobs spends a lot of time on slides, personally writing and designing much of the content, along with some help from the design team. "On the day before show time, things get much more structured, with at least one and sometimes two complete dress rehearsals. Throughout it all Steve is extremely focused. While we were in that room, all his energy was directed at making this keynote the perfect embodiment of Apple's messages."[3]

In the weeks before the keynote, Evangelist saw the full range of Steve's emotions from disappointment to elation. "I believe it

is one of the most important aspects of Steve Jobs's impact on Apple: he has little or no patience for anything but excellence from himself or others," Evangelist concluded.[4]

In October 1999, *Time* magazine reporter Michael Krantz was interviewing Jobs one day before the introduction of a line of multicolored iMacs. Jobs was rehearsing the big moment when he would announce, "Say hello to the new iMacs." The computers were then supposed to glide out from behind a dark curtain, but according to Krantz, Jobs was unhappy with the lighting. He wanted the lights to be brighter and to come up sooner. "Let's keep doing it till we get it right, OK?" said Jobs.[5] The show's lighting folks practiced again and again as Jobs grew increasingly frustrated.

"Finally," Krantz reports, "they get it right, the five impeccably lighted iMacs gleaming as they glide forward smoothly on the giant screen. 'Oh! Right there! That's great!' Jobs yells, elated at the very notion of a universe capable of producing these insanely beautiful machines. 'That's perfect!' he bellows, his voice booming across the empty auditorium. 'Wooh!' And you know what? He's right. The iMacs do look better when the lights come on earlier."[6] The scene that Krantz described could be interpreted in one of two ways: either Jobs is a micromanager or, as one of Jobs's friends observed in the article, "he is single-minded, almost manic, in his pursuit of quality and excellence."

What Steve Jobs, Michael Jordan, and Winston Churchill Have in Common

Psychology professor Dr. K. Anders Ericsson has studied top athletes such as Michael Jordan as well as superachievers in other walks of life: chess players, golfers, doctors, even dart throwers! Ericsson discovered that star performers refine their skills through *deliberative practice*. In other words, they do not just do the same thing over and over, hoping to get better. Instead,

they set specific goals, ask for feedback, and continually strive to improve over the long run. From Ericsson's research, we have learned that star performers practice specific skills again and again over many, many years.

Ordinary speakers become extraordinary because they practice. Winston Churchill was one of the foremost communicators of the twentieth century. He was a master of persuasion, influence, and motivation. Churchill, too, deliberately practiced the skills required to inspire millions of British during the darkest days of World War II. "He would prepare in the days before a big parliamentary speech, practicing quips or parries against any number of possible interjections. Churchill practiced so thoroughly that he seemed to be speaking extemporaneously . . . he held his audience spellbound," wrote Churchill's granddaughter Celia Sandys and coauthor Jonathan Littman in *We Shall Not Fail*. "The lesson is simple but requires lots of hard work. Practice is essential, particularly if you want to sound spontaneous."[7] The world's greatest communicators have always known that "spontaneity" is the result of planned practice.

You *can* speak the way Jobs does, but it takes practice. Jobs makes an elaborate presentation look easy because he puts in the time. In *The Second Coming of Steve Jobs*, Paul Vais, a NeXT executive, was quoted as saying, "Every slide was written like a piece of poetry. We spent hours on what most people would consider low-level detail. Steve would labor over the presentation. We'd try to orchestrate and choreograph everything and make it more alive than it really is."[8] Making your presentation "more alive" takes practice. Once you accept this simple principle, your presentations will stand out in a sea of mediocrity.

Ten Thousand Hours to Mastery

There are no "naturals." Steve Jobs is an extraordinary presenter because he works at it. According to Malcolm Gladwell in *Outliers*, "Research suggests that once a musician has enough ability to get into a top music school, the thing that distinguishes one performer from another is how hard he or she works.

That's it. And what's more, the people at the very top don't work just harder or even much harder than everyone else. They work much, *much* harder."[9] Although the observation Gladwell makes in *Outliers* applies specifically to musicians, the vast amount of research on the subject of peak performance shows that practice is the common thread among all individuals who excel at a particular task. Neuroscientist and musician Daniel Levitin believes that the magic number is ten thousand.

"The emerging picture of such studies is that ten thousand hours of practice is required to achieve the level of mastery associated with being a world-class expert—in anything . . . In study after study, of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice-skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals, and what have you, this number comes up again and again. Of course, this doesn't address why some people don't seem to get anywhere when they practice, and why some people seem to get more out of their practice sessions than others, but no one has yet found a case in which true world-class expertise was accomplished in less time. It seems that it takes the brain this long to assimilate all that it needs to know to achieve true mastery."[10]

The ten-thousand-hours theory is consistent with what we know about how the brain learns, according to Levitin and Gladwell. They say that learning requires consolidation in neural tissue; the more experiences we have with a particular action, the stronger those connections become.

Now let's do the math. Ten thousand hours is equivalent to roughly three hours a day, or twenty hours a week, over a period of ten years. To substantiate this theory, Gladwell tells the story of the Beatles, who performed together in Hamburg over a long period before they hit it big. According to Gladwell, before the Beatles enjoyed their first success in 1964, they had performed live together some twelve hundred times, sometimes for eight hours at a stretch. This is an extraordinary feat, because most groups don't perform that often in their entire careers. The band members became better and more confident the longer they played together. "Incidentally," writes Gladwell, "the time that elapsed between their founding and their arguably greatest

artistic achievements—*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and *The Beatles* [White Album]—is ten years."[11]

With the ten-thousand-hours theory in mind, let's turn our attention once again to Jobs. Although Apple was founded in 1976, Jobs and friend-cofounder Steve Wozniak started attending meetings of the Homebrew Computer Club in 1974. Homebrew was an early computer-hobbyist club in Silicon Valley, California. It was at Homebrew that Jobs began tinkering and talking about how computers could change the world. Exactly ten years later, Jobs gave an outstanding presentation—the introduction of the Macintosh in 1984. Most people who saw that presentation consider it to be a magnificent achievement, packed with suspense, drama, and excitement. But remarkably, Jobs continued to practice, refine, and improve his presentation style.

A decade later, in 1997, Jobs had returned to Apple and was onstage at Boston's Macworld to discuss the steps he had taken to restore Apple to health. Everything about his performance that day was more polished and natural than it had been in previous years. He had lost the lectern, walking comfortably across the stage, and had started creating more visually engaging slides.

Flash forward another ten years to Macworld 2007, which, in my opinion, is Jobs's greatest presentation to date if you take into account every element of the keynote from start to finish. He hits home runs in every presentation, but he hit a bases-loaded homer in 2007. Everything clicked. Several sections of the presentation have been discussed throughout this book. The overall presentation was smooth and polished, with dramatic highs and lows, confident body language, captivating verbal delivery, and gorgeous slides. The iPhone announcement had even overshadowed every product at the vastly larger Consumer Electronics Show, held the same week in Las Vegas.

The chief misconception about Jobs is that he is a natural presenter, that he was born with the charisma that he exhibits onstage. Not true. As research has shown, nobody is a natural. You can achieve the same level of proficiency of the world's greatest communicators if you work at it much, *much* harder than everyone else.

Flushing Away $25,000

I once saw the executive of a major publicly traded company give a keynote presentation to a large audience of customers, press, and analysts. I later learned that the company had spent upwards of $25,000 for professional designers to create slick, animated slides. That figure did not account for the lighting, audio, and venue. The most creative slides will fail to impress your audience unless you practice your delivery; this guy did not practice, and it showed. Since he had not practiced coordinating his words to the animation, the slides were off, and he lost his place numerous times. He stumbled through most of the presentation and at one point threw up his hands in exasperation! If you spend money and time on a presentation—and time is money—you owe it to yourself to practice, practice, and practice some more!

Make Video Your Best Friend

Nearly every year, I'm asked to work with CEOs who give major presentations at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The conference is usually scheduled for the first full week in January, which means we're rehearsing over the holidays, often while the rest of the company's employees are off. Regardless, CEOs will show up for practice, because they know how important it is.

In one particular year, after several days of rehearsals, one of my CEO clients took the stage in Vegas but had trouble with the slides. The clicker had failed, and the slides were not advancing. Most amateur speakers who don't spend enough time practicing would have frozen, calling even more attention to the problem. Not this guy. He was so well prepared that he casually motioned to an assistant to advance the slides for him (we rehearse contingency plans). He didn't miss a step and kept talking. It didn't end there: something was wrong with the computer; it had locked and would have to be rebooted for the

slide show to continue. The assistant simply shook his head, but the CEO stayed the course. He continued to deliver the rest of the presentation with no slides. He did so effortlessly and confidently.

He later told me that without practice (which I had urged him to do), he would have lost his confidence and floundered in front of employees, analysts, investors, customers, and the media. When I asked employees after the presentation what they had thought, none of them realized that anything had gone wrong.

VIDEO TRAINING TIPS

We had used a video camera during rehearsals. Very few presenters watch themselves on camera, even though perfectly appropriate camcorders are available for less than $300. I know that watching yourself on TV, especially a wide-screen, is not the most pleasant experience, but take my word for it: it's essential. Record your presentation and play it back. If possible, find objective friends and colleagues who will offer honest feedback. Use an external, clip-on microphone instead of the built-in microphone standard on all camcorders. Your voice will sound louder, clearer, and more resonant.

As you watch the video, pay close attention to these five areas:

- **Eye contact.** Commit most of your presentation to memory to avoid reading from notes. Your slides should act as your cue. Public-speaking expert Andrew Carnegie observed that notes destroy the intimacy between speaker and audience and make the speaker appear less powerful and confident. Notice that I didn't tell you to give the presentation "completely" without notes. Steve Jobs keeps notes out of his audience's sight. Only a careful observer would spot him glancing at them. He refers to notes during demonstrations, but since the audience's attention is on the demo itself, his notes do not detract from the presentation. The notes he does keep onstage are also unobtrusive and simple. He just needs to glance at them to find his place. Although it's easier in Keynote than PowerPoint to have

a notes page for the speaker's view, you should still strive to deliver most of your presentation with no notes at all.

- **Body language.** Is your body language strong, confident, and commanding? Are your arms crossed or open? Are you keeping your hands in your pockets instead of keeping an open posture? Do you fidget, rock, or have other distracting habits? Are your gestures natural and purposeful or stiff and wooden? Remember that body language and verbal delivery account for the majority of the impression you leave on your listeners. Your body language should reflect the confidence of your words.
- **Filler words.** Are you constantly using "um," "ah," and "you know" to fill the space between thoughts? Just as text shouldn't fill every inch of your slide, your words shouldn't fill every pause between sentences. Reviewing your performance is the best way to eliminate these often distracting fillers. Once you catch yourself a few times, you will be more aware of the habit next time. Awareness is more than 90 percent of the solution!
- **Vocal delivery.** Vary the volume and inflection of your voice to keep the attention of your audience riveted on your words. Raise and lower your volume at different points in your presentation. Change your cadence. Varying the speed at which you talk will keep your presentation from sounding monotone. Speed up at certain points and then slow down. Pause for impact. Again, nothing is as dramatic as a well-placed pause. Don't sound rushed. Let the presentation breathe.
- **Energy.** Do you look as if you rolled out of bed on a Sunday morning, or do you appear vibrant, enthusiastic, and genuinely thrilled to be sharing your story with the audience? We all enjoy being around people with energy. They inspire us. They are stimulating, fun, and uplifting. An energetic person has passion in his voice, a bounce in his step, and a smile on his face. Energy makes a person likable, and likability is a key ingredient in persuasive communications. Many business professionals underestimate the energy level required to generate enthusiasm among their listeners. Electrifying speakers such as Jobs bring it. Jobs always has more energy than most other speakers who share the stage with him.

LEAVE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Most business professionals could use an energy boost. But how do you project the right level of vigor without seeming over the top? By weighing yourself on an energy scale. And on this scale, more is better.

I often ask clients, "On a scale of one to ten—one being fast asleep and ten being wildly pumped up like motivational speaker Tony Robbins—tell me where you are right now."

"A three," most of my clients reply.

"OK," I say, "what would it feel like to be a seven, eight, or nine? Give it a try."

If they're being honest, most presenters place themselves at a three to six on the energy scale. That means there is plenty of room to raise their energy level.

Energy is hard to describe, but you know it when you see it. Television host Rachael Ray has it. President Barack Obama and Tony Robbins have it as well. These three individuals have different styles, but they speak with energy.

Try this exercise—practice leaving your comfort zone: Record several minutes of your presentation as you would normally deliver it. Play it back, preferably with someone else watching. Ask yourself and the observer, "Where am I on the energy scale?" Now try it again. This time, break out of your comfort zone. Ham it up. Raise your voice. Use broad gestures. Put a big smile on your face. Get to a point where you would feel slightly awkward and uncomfortable if you actually delivered the presentation that way. Now watch it again. Odds are your energy will be just right. You see, most people underestimate how little energy they actually have during a presentation. When they are asked to go "over the top" and to leave their comfort zone, they hit the right note.

Five Steps to Rehearsing "Off-the-Cuff" Remarks

With the economy plunging deeper into a recession, 2009 was a tough year to introduce a new car, but automobile companies

Caroline Kennedy's, ah, um, You Know, Performance

Filler words such as "ah," "um," and "you know" should not disqualify someone from public office, nor should they limit a person's effectiveness as a business leader. All too often, though, fillers will diminish your influence in the eyes of others. In early 2009, Caroline Kennedy had expressed interest in the New York Senate seat vacated by Hillary Rodham Clinton, who became U.S. secretary of state. The media skewered Kennedy's performance because of her verbal tendency to pack her remarks with, um, you know, like, fillers. Kennedy said "you know" more than thirty times in a two-minute interview. Listening for her filler words became sport among bloggers and radio talk-show hosts. She soon withdrew her name from consideration.

Here are three ways to eliminate fillers from your remarks before they detract from your message:

- **Ask for feedback.** Most of your colleagues are afraid of offending you. When someone asks me for advice and I see some real areas for improvement, I will be tough. At the same time, as is true of most other people, I hesitate to offer unsolicited advice even when I'm dying to say something that can improve someone's presentation skills. Likewise, since most of your family, friends, and peers avoid critiques for fear of "insulting" you, they will not voluntarily tell you that your mannerisms are annoying! Perhaps if Kennedy had asked for honest feedback, someone may have said, "Caroline, before you pitch yourself to the governor as the next New York senator, we need to work on how you answer the inevitable questions. Your answers must be specific, inspiring, and free from the filler words you use in everyday conversation."
- **Tap the glass.** I came across this technique entirely by chance, and it worked out extremely well. I was helping a woman rehearse a presentation and noticed that every other word was "ah" or "um." It became very distracting, so I told her I would tap a water glass with a spoon every time she used a filler word. My tapping became frequent—and irritating—prompting

her to eliminate the fillers almost immediately. I've used it a few times since with equal success. Of course, this technique requires a second person to watch you and to tap the glass during your presentation rehearsal.

» **Record yourself, and play it back in the presence of others.** If you are serious about improving your presentation skills, record yourself on video, and replay it with someone else in the room. You don't have to tape your entire presentation, just the first five minutes. That should give you all the information you need to make some adjustments. You might be floored to hear how many filler words you use. For most people, simply watching themselves on video is enough to overcome some issues. Video feedback is even more effective in the presence of others who can pick up on some verbal mannerisms you might overlook.

A few "um"s and "ah"s from time to time will not detract from your ability to persuade an audience, but a steady stream of fillers can damage your efforts. The good news is that once you are made aware of the problem, you can easily follow the suggestions here to reduce or eliminate them.

can't put the brakes on designs and plans set in motion years ago. In January, I spoke to a group of auto executives who were designated spokespeople for new car models arriving soon to showrooms in North America. They were looking for advice on how to answer tough questions from the media. The same day, U.S. secretary of state–designate Hillary Clinton was fielding questions from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a confirmation hearing. The Associated Press called her performance "smooth," and NBC's Tom Brokaw said Clinton is known for her "legendary" preparation. I told the auto execs to prepare for tough questions in the same way that Clinton had probably prepared for her five-hour appearance.

It's a technique I call the "bucket method," and it is used in one form or another by CEOs, politicians, and, yes, Steve Jobs,

who seems to have ready answers to any question. You can use it to prepare for presentations, pitches, sales calls, or any other situation in which you anticipate difficult or sensitive questions.

1. Identify the most common questions likely to be raised. Clinton expected a question about her husband's international foundation and its list of donors. Critics had widely publicized the issue, saying her appointment would be a conflict of interest. She also knew that each of the world's hot spots at the time would be fair game: Gaza, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and others. For the car executives, the most common question would be along the lines, "How do you expect to sell cars in this economy?" Or, "Will 2009 only get worse for the auto industry?"
2. Place the questions into "buckets," or categories. There might be only one question in a bucket, as in the case of the Clinton Foundation, or there might be several, as in the case of the carmakers and the economy. The point is to reduce the number of questions for which you must prepare. It's uncanny, but in my experience training thousands of speakers, the majority of questions will fall into about seven categories.
3. Create the best answer you have for the category. And this is critical—the answer must make sense regardless of *how* the question is phrased. You must avoid getting pulled into a detailed discussion based on the wording of the question. For example, here is Clinton's answer about her husband's fund-raising efforts: "I am very proud to be the president-elect's nominee for secretary of state, and I am very proud of what my husband and the Clinton Foundation and the associated efforts he's undertaken have accomplished, as well."[12] She would have said exactly the same thing regardless of how pointed the question from Republican senators was.
4. Listen carefully to the question, and identify a key word—a trigger—that will help you isolate the correct bucket from which to pull to your answer.
5. Look the person in the eye and respond with confidence.

"Well-prepared" speakers do not memorize answers to hundreds of potential questions. Instead, they prepare answers to *categories* of questions. The *way* a question is phrased is secondary. Think about it this way: your goal is to launch a minipresentation within a presentation.

You can use the bucket method to reframe the question in your favor. Let's assume that your company's product is more expensive than a similar offering by one of your competitors. Let's also assume that there is a good reason behind the higher price. The way the question is phrased is not as important as the answer you have created for the category, which is "price." A conversation might sound like this:

CUSTOMER: Why are you charging 10 percent more for the same product that I can get from company X?

YOU: You're asking about price. [Here, "charging more" is the trigger for the answer that you prepared on "price." Although the wording the customer chose is different from the term you chose, it triggers your prepared response on the subject.] We believe our product is priced competitively, especially for a product that improves the bottom line for our clients by 30 percent on average. It's important to remember that we have the best service team in the industry. That means when you need support, you'll get it. Our team is available to you 24-7. None of our competitors can say that.

I know the CEO of a large publicly traded company who uses this method very effectively. For example, during one tough meeting, an analyst asked him to respond to some unfavorable comments made by his largest competitor. "Competition" was his trigger word. This CEO smiled and confidently maintained the high road by saying, "Our view on competition is different from many others. Our view is that you play with class. We compete by giving our customers superior service and sharing our vision for where we see this industry going. As we get more successful, we see more competitors entering the market. It's

part of the process of being a leader." With this one response, the CEO deflected his competitor's comments and reframed the issue to focus on his company's leadership.

When former secretary of state Henry Kissinger was asked how he handled media questions, he said, "What questions do you have for my answers?" He had his answers already prepared. The media is a tough audience, and these days so are your customers. Don't let uncomfortable questions throw you off your game.

Best Antidote to Nerves

Relentless preparation is the single best way to overcome stage fright: know what you're going to say, when you're going to say it, and how you're going to say it. Too many people focus inward during their presentations, creating even more anxiety for themselves. They'll ask themselves, "Is my shirt wrinkled? What is that person in the third row thinking?" In other words, it's all about you. Instead, go from "me" to "we." Shift the focus to what your product or service means to the lives of your listeners, and be confident in your preparation. I have worked with several executives who are worth millions (in some cases, billions) of dollars. Guess what? They get nervous speaking in front of groups. Funny thing about nerves, though—the more you practice, the less nervous you will be.

I know a world-famous business leader who gets very nervous before major presentations. He gets over it by preparing to the extreme. He knows the content on every slide and exactly what he is going to say. He arrives early to the venue so that he can test the audio and projector and advance through his slides. This particular executive even knows where the lights are in the room, so he is never in shadow. That's preparation! He might get nervous, but his routine makes him feel much more confident, and he is considered one of the best speakers in corporate America.

Golfer Vijay Singh hits thousands of balls a day to prepare for a tournament. Olympic gold-medal winner Michael Phelps

swims fifty miles a week to prepare for a competition, and Steve Jobs spends hours of grueling practice before a keynote presentation. Superstar performers in all fields leave nothing to chance. If you want to thrill any audience, steal a page from the Jobs playbook and start practicing!

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Practice, practice, and practice some more. Don't take anything for granted. Review every slide, every demo, and every key message. You should know exactly what you're going to say, when you're going to say it, and how you're going to say it.
- Record your presentation. Spend a couple of hundred bucks on a camcorder and record yourself. You don't need to record the entire presentation. The first five minutes should give you plenty of information. Look for distracting body language and verbal tics, or fillers. When possible, review the video with someone else.
- Use the bucket method to prepare for tough questions. You will find that most lines of questions will fall into one of seven categories.

SCENE 16

Wear the Appropriate Costume

It is hard to think that a $2 billion company with 4,300-plus people couldn't compete with six people in blue jeans.

—STEVE JOBS, RESPONDING TO AN APPLE LAWSUIT AGAINST HIM AFTER HE RESIGNED TO FORM NeXT

Steve Jobs is the anti-Cher. In her Vegas concert, Cher and her dancers had 140 costume changes; Jobs has one costume for every performance. For presentations, Jobs *always* wears a black mock turtleneck, faded blue jeans, and white sneakers. If you want to get more specific, he wears a *St. Croix* sweater, *Levi's 501* blue jeans, and *New Balance* running shoes. Not that it matters much, because you're not going to dress like him. He can get away with it because he's Steve Jobs and you're not. Seriously. When you're a business legend who is credited with reinventing the entire computer industry, you can show up in pretty much anything you want.

Although most people are familiar with Jobs's black shirt and blue jeans attire (even "The Simpsons" cartoon creators dressed the Jobs character in jeans and a black mock for an episode in 2008), Jobs did not always dress this way. When Jobs was a young man trying to be taken seriously by investors and the public, he dressed much more conservatively. The Jobs of

1984 looked a lot different from the Jobs of 2009. The first cover of *Macworld* magazine in January 1984 showed Jobs standing behind a desk with three of the original Macintosh computers. He was wearing a brown pin-striped suit, brown tie, and white shirt. Yes, Jobs once donned pinstripes. He wore an even more conservative outfit for the actual presentation when he unveiled the Macintosh, appearing in a white shirt, gray slacks, a dark blue double-breasted blazer, and a green bow tie. Imagine, Jobs in a bow tie! It's true.

Jobs is smart. His wardrobe always reflected the leader he wanted to become. He was well aware of the impression clothes could leave on people. While Jobs was away from Apple, he pitched his new company, NeXT, to Bank of America. Dan'l Lewin, NeXT's marketing executive, showed up at Jobs's house in blue jeans to accompany him to the meeting. Jobs walked out wearing an expensive Brioni suit from Wilkes Bashford. "Hey," Jobs said, "we're going to the bank today."[1] For Jobs, jeans were appropriate for the office, but not the bank. Now you might be confused. Jobs wore a suit to the bank and jeans in the office. What lesson does this hold for the rest of us? A true military hero, former U.S. Army ranger Matt Eversmann, once gave me the best piece of wardrobe advice I'd ever heard. Eversmann led troops in a fierce battle in Mogadishu, Somalia, in October 1993. The battle was turned into a movie called *Black Hawk Down*. I met Eversmann at a business conference and asked him for some leadership advice I could share with my readers. Eversmann told me that great leaders dress a little better than everyone else. He said that when he would meet a subordinate for the first time, his shoes were shinier, his whites were whiter, and his pants were better pressed.

I never forgot that piece of advice. I later interviewed George Zimmer, the founder of the Men's Wearhouse clothing chain. Zimmer agreed with Eversmann but added, "appropriate for the culture." It makes sense: you wouldn't show up for the company picnic in the same attire that you wear to the office. Also, different companies have different cultures. Apple is rebellious, creative, and committed to "think different." It's OK for an

Apple employee to wear more informal attire than a Wall Street executive.

Once you invent a product that changes the world, we can talk about dressing down. For now, here's the best wardrobe advice you'll ever hear: always dress a little better than everyone else, but appropriate for the culture.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Dress like the leader you want to become, not for the position you currently have. Great leaders dress a little better than everyone else in the room. Remember, when Jobs was looking for funding at the bank, he dressed in an expensive suit.
- Wear clothes that are appropriate for the culture. Steve Jobs can get away with a black mock, blue jeans, and running shoes because everything about his brand is built on the concept of disrupting the status quo.
- If you're going to dress like a rebel, dress like a well-off rebel. Jobs wears St. Croix sweaters. It might look like a black T-shirt—but at least he spends money on it.

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SCENE 17

Toss the Script

Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected.

—STEVE JOBS

Steve Jobs is the consummate presenter for twenty-first-century audiences who want to engage in conversations, not lectures. Jobs has a casual speaking style, an informality that, as discussed in the preceding chapter, comes from hours of practice. Practice allows him to work largely without a script. During demonstrations, Jobs conceals notes discreetly from the audience but never reads them word for word. The notes serve only as cue cards for the next step in the demonstration. Jobs performs largely without notes for the majority of his presentation.

As suggested in Scene 8, most presenters create "slideuments": documents masking as slides. Slideuments act as a crutch for mediocre presenters who read every word on the slide, often turning their backs to the audience to do so. Jobs does have a script—largely in his head. His slides, which are highly visual, act as a prompter. Each slide has one key idea and one idea only.

After Jobs pulled the new MacBook Air from a manila envelope in the "holy shit" moment at Macworld 2008, he explored the new computer in more detail. As you can see in Table 17.1, his slides contained very few words but contained just enough information to act as a prompter for one idea—one theme per slide.[1]

Jobs went on to explain that MacBook Air had the same processor used in all of Apple's other notebooks and iMacs. He marveled at the fact that Intel could step up to the challenge,

TABLE 17.1 ONE THEME PER SLIDE AT JOBS'S MACWORLD 2008 PRESENTATION

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S SLIDES
"It's the world's thinnest notebook."	Text only: "World's thinnest notebook"
"Open it up and it has a magnetic latch; no hooks to catch on your clothing."	Photo of computer with the words "Magnetic latch" on left side of screen
"It's a got a full-size, 13.3-inch wide-screen display."	Photo of computer with the words "13.3 inch widescreen" in the middle of a black display
"The display is gorgeous. It has an LED-backlit display. It saves power, it's bright, and it's instant on the minute you open it."	Photo of computer with the words "LED backlight " on left side of screen
"On top of the display is a built-in iSight camera for videoconferencing right out of the box."	Photo of computer fades, revealing iSight camera on top of display
"Flip it down and there is a full-size keyboard. This is perhaps the best notebook keyboard we've ever shipped. It's a phenomenal keyboard."	Photo of keyboard with the words "Full size keyboard" on left side of screen
"We've got a very generous track pad, which is great. We've also built in multi-touch gesture support."	Photo of computer's track pad with the words "Multi-touch gestures" on left side of screen
"Again, you can see how beautiful and thin this product is. Now, how did we fit a Mac in here? I'm still stunned that our engineering team could pull this off."	Photo of computer from its side with the words "How did we fit a Mac in here?"
"The real magic is in the electronics. This is a complete Mac on a board. What's so special about that? This is how big the board is [does not mention pencil; let's the visual speak for itself]. It's really tiny. To fit an entire Mac on this thing was an amazing feat of engineering."	Photo of motherboard with image of a pencil alongside it—the board is smaller than the length of the pencil

STEVE'S WORDS	STEVE'S SLIDES
"We didn't compromise on performance. MacBook Air has the Intel Core 2 Duo. This is a really speedy processor . . . a 'screamer.'"	Photo of Intel Core 2 Duo microprocessor

creating a chip with the same power but in a package that was 60 percent smaller. Jobs then introduced Intel CEO Paul Otellini, who gave Jobs a sample processor. The chip was barely visible to anyone sitting past the front row, but Jobs lit up the auditorium with his smile. "This is awesome technology," he said, making no attempt to conceal his enthusiasm. See Figure 17.1.

Figure 17.1 Jobs shows genuine enthusiasm as he holds up the tiny Intel processor from the MacBook Air.

TONY AVELAR/AFP/Getty Images

Five Steps to Tossing the Script

Great actors rehearse for months before opening night. The audience would walk out if an actor appeared onstage with a script in hand. We expect actors to speak naturally, not as though they had memorized lines, even though that is exactly what they did. Your audience expects the same—a conversational speaker who, instead of rambling, hits each mark precisely. Following are five steps that will help you memorize your script while making you appear as natural as a gifted actor or a gifted presenter such as Steve Jobs:

1. **Write your script in full sentences in the "notes" section of PowerPoint.** This is not the time for extensive editing. Simply write your ideas in complete sentences. Do try, however, to keep your ideas to no more than four or five sentences.
2. **Highlight or underline the key word from each sentence, and practice your presentation.** Run through your script without worrying about stumbling or forgetting a point. Glance at the key words to jog your memory.
3. **Delete extraneous words from your scripted sentences, leaving only the key words.** Practice your presentation again, this time using only the key words as reminders.
4. **Memorize the *one* key idea per slide.** Ask yourself, "What is the one thing I want my audience to take away from the slide?" The visual on the slide should complement the one theme. In this case, the visual becomes your prompter. For example, when Jobs talked about the Intel Core 2 Duo as the standard processor built into the MacBook Air, his slide showed only a photo of the processor. The "one thing" he wanted the audience to know was that Apple had built an ultrathin computer with no compromise in performance.
5. **Practice the entire presentation without notes, simply using the slides as your prompter.** By the time you execute these five steps, you will have rehearsed each slide four times, which is much more time than the average speaker commits to practicing a presentation.

Now let's put the five-step method into practice. I came across an ad for Vanguard no-load mutual funds.[2] It showed two glasses of water; the glass on the left contained a small amount of water, and the glass on the right was completely full. The headline read: "The lower the cost, the more you keep." Ads such as this one provide excellent examples of how to create compelling visual slides. Assume the ad is one slide: Table 17.2 shows what a hypothetical script written with the five steps in

TABLE 17.2 APPLYING THE FIVE-STEP METHOD TO TOSSING THE SCRIPT

STEP	PRESENTATION SCRIPT
1	How much your investment costs is very important and could have an impact on how much money you make over the long run. In general, the lower the cost, the more you keep. Many investment firms say they are low cost, but the fact is they charge six times more than we do. This can cost you thousands of dollars. For example, if you invest $10,000 for twenty years at an 8 percent return, you would keep $58,000 more with our fund versus the industry average.
2	Your *investment costs* are very *important* and could have an impact on how much money you make over the long run. In general, *the lower the cost, the more you keep*. Many investment firms say they are low cost, but the fact is they charge *six times more* than we do. This can cost you thousands of dollars. For example, if you invest $10,000 for twenty years at an 8 percent return, you would *keep $58,000 more* with our fund versus the industry average.
3	Investment costs important Lower the cost, the more you keep Six times more Keep $58,000 more
4	The lower the cost, the more you keep.
5	Rehearse presentation with no notes. The slide of two water glasses—one empty, one full—should be enough to prompt you to deliver the information: the four bullets in step 3.

mind might look like. (I created the content based on information in Vanguard's marketing material.)

When you're actually delivering the final presentation, if the notes give you peace of mind, by all means, keep them available. A major benefit of Apple's Keynote presentation software is that it allows the speaker to see notes on the computer screen while the audience sees the slide on the projector. This is harder, but not impossible, to do with PowerPoint. However, regardless of the software you use, if you practice enough, you will find that you don't need to rely on your notes at all.

How to Use Notes When Notes Are a Must

Notes are not inherently bad. In a rare glimpse at how Jobs actually does use notes, a blogger took a photograph of Jobs's demo

How Joel Osteen Inspires Millions

Joel Osteen is the hugely popular pastor of Houston's Lakewood Church. He preaches to some forty-seven thousand people a week who show up to see him in person and to millions of others on television. Osteen speaks in a natural, conversational style and rarely misses a beat, despite creating thirty minutes of content every week. How does he do it? First, he commits. Osteen begins working on sermons on the Wednesday prior to his appearance and spends the better part of four days practicing. Second, he uses notes but glances at them very discreetly. He places notes on a lectern but never stands behind the lectern. This approach lets him keep eye contact with the audience and maintain an open posture. He never reads a full sentence from his notes. Instead, he walks behind the lectern, glances at his notes, and keeps walking to the opposite side, delivering his messages directly to worshippers.

notes at Macworld 2007, famous for the release of the iPhone. The notes were neatly bound, and color-coded tabs separated the sections. The blogger's photo showed the booklet opened to the page where Jobs demonstrated the Internet capabilities of iPhone. Four categories were clearly marked in bold and a larger font: Mail, Safari, Widgets, and Maps.[3] Under each main category, there were two to five supporting points. Let's take one in particular, the Maps section. Here is exactly what was printed on the page:

MAPS

- Moscone West
- Starbucks order 4,000 lattes to go
- Washington Monument
- Show satellite
- Eiffel Tower, Colosseum

That's it. These notes were all the prompting Jobs needed to walk his audience through a particular section of the demo.

Jobs began by telling his audience that he wanted to show them something "truly remarkable," Google Maps on iPhone. First, he opened up the application and zoomed in to a street-level view of San Francisco and Moscone West, the site of Macworld.

The second thing he did was to type "Starbucks" to search for a nearby coffee shop. He then called Starbucks on the iPhone and played the prank discussed in Scene 12, ordering four thousand lattes to go. (I had no idea that the lattes gag was scripted until I saw the photograph of Jobs's notes on the stage. He played it off as if it was a spontaneous moment, showing, once again, that Jobs takes nothing for granted.)

The third thing he did was visit the Washington Monument, double-tapping the screen to bring the map closer. Fourth, he selected the option to replace the map with satellite photographs. He brought up a live image of the Washington Monument. "Isn't that incredible, right on my phone?" he said. Finally, he visited the Eiffel Tower and Roman Colosseum and showed both in the satellite view. He concluded by saying, "Satellite imagery right

on our phone. Unbelievable. Isn't that incredible?"[4] Jobs did rely on his script for the demo, but it had been written and rehearsed extensively so that only a few key words were all he needed to prompt him.

Yes, Steve Jobs appears conversational, but by now you should know that being "conversational" requires a lot of practice. And *how* you practice makes all the difference. Use the slides as your teleprompter, sticking to one theme per slide and several supporting points. If you forget some of your supporting points, you will at least have hit the main theme. Above all, toss the script. Notes will interfere with the emotional connection you need to establish with your audience, detracting from the presentation experience. Theatrics can turn an average presentation into an extraordinary event. A script gets in the way.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Don't read from notes except in special circumstances in which you must follow a step-by-step process, such as a demonstration.
- When you must read from notes, create no more than three or four large-font bullet points on one note card or sheet of paper. Create one note card per slide. If you're using speaker's notes in Keynote or PowerPoint presentation software, keep your bullet points to no more than three or four. One is even better.
- Use the visuals on your slide to prompt you to deliver just one key theme—one main message—per slide. Think "one theme per slide."

SCENE 18

Have Fun

Everyone wants a MacBook Pro because they are so bitchin'.

—STEVE JOBS

In 2002, the Mac OS X was brand new, and Apple was striving to get customers and developers to embrace it. Jobs decided to put the issue to rest, literally, at the Worldwide Developers Conference.

As the presentation began, Jobs was not onstage. Instead, white smoke surrounded a casket. Gloomy pipe-organ music played in the background. Jobs finally emerged from behind a curtain, walked to the casket, lifted the lid, and pulled out a large-scale copy of OS 9, Apple's previous operating system. The audience got the joke immediately and started laughing and applauding.

Jobs was committed to the joke and took it further. With a copy of OS 9 lying in the casket, Jobs pulled out a sheet of paper and eulogized the software. "Mac OS 9 was a friend to us all," he started.

> He worked tirelessly on our behalf, always posting our applications, never refusing a command, always at our beck and call, except occasionally when he forgot who he was and needed to be restarted. He came into this world in October of 1998 . . . We are here today to mourn the passing of OS 9. He is in the great bit bucket in the sky, no doubt looking down upon this with that same smile he displayed every time he booted. Mac OS 9 is survived by his next generation, Mac

> OS X . . . Please join me in a moment of silence as we remember our old friend, Mac OS 9."[1]

Jobs walked back to the casket, put the box back in, closed the lid, and gently laid a rose on the top. The audience ate it up. Jobs made his point, and he had a lot of fun doing it.

Jobs has fun, and it shows. Despite relentless planning and preparation, hours and hours of rehearsal, and near-fanatical devotion to getting every slide and every demo just right, sometimes things go wrong, but Jobs doesn't let the small stuff get to him. He's going to have fun, whether a demo works or not.

"Let's take a look at how big this market is," said Jobs as he described the market opportunity for the iPhone at Macworld 2007. Suddenly, his slides failed to advance. "My clicker's not working," he said. As he walked to the right of the stage to check the computer, the slide seemed to advance. "Oh, maybe it is working. No, it's not." Jobs picked up another clicker but it, too, failed to work. He smiled and said, "The clicker is not working. They're scrambling backstage right now."[2] The audience laughed, and after a few more seconds of trying to fix the clicker, Jobs simply paused, smiled, and told the following story:

> You know, this reminds me, when I was in high school, Steve Wozniak and I—mostly Steve—made this little device called a TV jammer. It was this little oscillator that put out frequencies that would screw up the TV. Woz would have it in his pocket. We would go out to a dorm at Berkeley, where he was going to school, and a bunch of folks would be watching "Star Trek." He would screw up the TV, someone would go to fix it, and just as they had their foot off the ground, he'd turn it back on, and then he'd screw up the TV again. Within five minutes, he'd have someone like this [contorts his body; see Figure 18.1] . . . OK, it looks like it's working now.[3]

In this one-minute story, Jobs revealed a side of his personality that few people get to see. It made him more human, engaging, and natural. He also never got flustered. I have seen even some experienced presenters get derailed over smaller problems.

A YouTube user posted a five-minute clip showing dozens of Jobs "bloopers."[4] The number of things that have gone wrong is surprising given the level of extraordinarily detailed practice that goes into a Steve Jobs keynote. This blooper reel proves that even the best-laid plans go awry from time to time: a slide may not advance, a wrong slide may come up, and a demo may not work. These things happen to even the best-prepared presenter, and they can, and probably will, happen to you at some point.

The difference between mediocre presenters and a true master such as Jobs is that when demonstrations do not turn out as planned, Jobs reacts with a cool confidence. The audience sees a showman in complete control of his material. If something fails to work, Jobs does not dwell on it or call undue attention to the

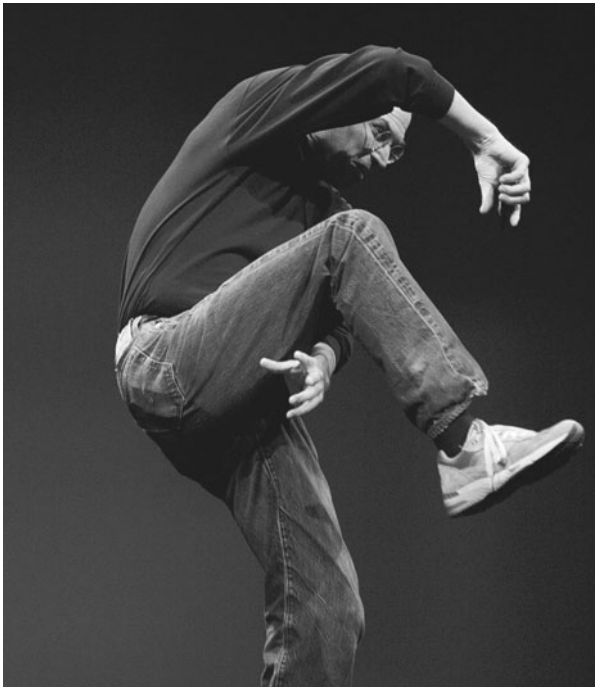

Figure 18.1 Jobs demonstrates a prank he and Apple cofounder Steve Wozniak would pull on unsuspecting college students.

David Paul Morris/Getty Images

issue. He smiles, has fun, explains to the audience what they should have seen, and moves on.

Don't Sweat the Small Stuff

During a demonstration of Apple TV at Macworld 2008, Jobs brought up a live connection to Flickr, a photo-sharing site. Jobs selected several categories to show the audience how photographs could be served from the site and displayed on a wide-screen television in a living room. Unfortunately, the screen went black. After about twenty seconds of trying to retrieve the images, Jobs simply turned to the audience, grinned, and said, "Well, I'm afraid Flickr isn't serving up photos on that one."[5]

Jobs doesn't let anything ruffle him onstage. Instead, he acknowledges the problem, continues the presentation, summarizes the material, and enjoys himself. He concluded the Apple TV demonstration by saying, "All of this from your wide-screen: movies, TV shows, music, podcasts, photos from dot-Mac and—when they're serving up photos—Flickr! So, that's what I wanted to show you today. Isn't that incredible?"[6] Jobs never loses his enthusiasm. The demo might not have gone perfectly, but that doesn't diminish the joy he has for the product.

No matter how much you prepare, something might, and probably will, go differently from how you had planned. Notice that I did not say something will go "wrong." It goes wrong only when you call attention to the issue or you let it ruin the rest of your presentation. People are there to hear you, to learn something new about a product, service, or initiative that could improve their lives.

When a demo fails to come off as smoothly as Jobs had rehearsed, he never loses his cool. He says something like, "Oops, that's not what I wanted" or "I need some help here, guys; this thing isn't working." He will take a few moments to get it working, and he will do so very calmly.

In one presentation, Jobs could not get a digital camera to work, so he had some fun with it, tossed it to an Apple employee in the front row, and said, "I need an expert to fix it. It's too

technical for me. It's pretty awesome when it works."[7] That's it. *It's pretty awesome when it works.*

Think about watching an ice-skater perform an intricately choreographed routine. You know that the slightest mistake could land the skater on her butt. When it happens, you wince, but you hope the skater gets up to finish her routine on a high note. The same applies to your audience. Nobody expects perfection except you. Your audience will forgive a blooper as long as you get back on your feet.

During Jobs's leave of absence for a liver transplant, much had been written about what he revealed, how much he should have revealed, and whether he should have revealed it sooner. Jobs was clearly frustrated with the press, calling some reporters to chastise them about covering matters he wanted to keep private. While bloggers and reporters were scrambling to get the scoop on the exact nature of his illness, I was struck at how Jobs kept his trademark good humor.

In September 2008, Jobs walked onstage at the WWDC and said, "Good morning. Thank you for coming this morning. We have some really exciting stuff to share with you. Before we do, I just wanted to mention this." He pointed to the slide behind him, which had only one sentence: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." "Enough said," Job told the audience, and he promptly continued with his presentation.[8] The audience laughed and cheered. The media and investors wanted more information, of course, but that's all that Jobs would give them at the moment, and he had fun with it at their expense.

Now, That's Infotainment!

Most business communicators lose sight of the fact that their audiences want to be informed *and* entertained. Jobs approaches presentations as infotainment; he teaches you something new and has fun doing it. It's the best of all worlds for his audience. Most business professionals do not smile nor relish the moment as much as they should. They get too caught up in "presentation mode" and lose the enthusiasm they really have about

their company, product, or service. Jobs always walks onstage with a broad smile, an easy laugh, and a joke or two (often at Microsoft's expense).

On October 16, 2003, Jobs had finished the discussion of a new music alliance with AOL and an explanation of the new iTunes features. The audience thought he was done, but Jobs had "just one more feature" to talk about. He said it was a feature that "a lot of people thought we would never add till this happened." He pointed to the slide, which read: "Hell froze over." He said, "I'm here to report to you today that this has happened."[9] And with that introduction, Jobs announced iTunes for Windows. The audience laughed even harder when Jobs said, "iTunes for Windows is probably the best Windows app ever written!" The audience was thrilled, and Jobs himself was clearly enjoying the reaction.

Apple cofounder Steve Wozniak has said he and Jobs loved two things in common: electronics and pranks. From the early seventies when Jobs and "Woz" were building computers together in their parents' garages, Jobs had a passion for bringing personal computing to the masses. That "spirit" comes across in every Steve Jobs presentation. A Steve Jobs presentation is passionate, exciting, informative, and, above all, fun. In many ways, it comes naturally, because it's the way he has lived his life.

When Jobs took his leave of absence in 2009, Apple's shares plummeted on speculation over Jobs's health, a possible lack of new and exciting products, and potential management changes. Observers wondered, would Apple without Jobs be successful?

Richard the Fun-Hearted

I have no secret. There are no rules to follow in business. I just work hard and, as I always have done, believe I can do it. Most of all, though, I try to have fun.

—RICHARD BRANSON

One analyst, Shaw Wu, had a different take on all of it. Apple without Jobs would prosper, he argued, because his spirit had been "institutionalized." Wu said Apple had an uncanny ability to attract hardworking entrepreneurs who are looking to change the world.

PC World said that Jobs, a master showman, had raised new product presentations to an art form and wished him a "speedy return to health" so Jobs could head up the company again and take the stage once more.[10]

For more than three decades, Jobs has cast his spell on the world. And whether you're a "Mac" or a "PC," we all owe Jobs a debt of gratitude for a chance to join him on his "magic swirling ship," to quote his favorite musician, Bob Dylan.[11] It's been a magnificent ride, and if you pay close enough attention, Jobs can help you sell your ideas more successfully than you ever thought possible.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Treat presentations as "infotainment." Your audience wants to be educated and entertained. Have fun. It'll show.
- Never apologize. You have little to gain from calling attention to a problem. If your presentation hits a glitch, acknowledge it, smile, and move on. If it was not obvious to anyone but you, do not call attention to it.
- Change your frame of reference. When something does not go exactly as planned, it did not "go wrong" unless you allow it to derail the rest of your presentation. Keep the big picture in mind, have fun, and let the small stuff roll off your back.

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