

2 Be dramatic

Introduction

A Read the text below and answer the questions on page 67.

DRAMATIC PRESENTATIONS

“An expert presenter employs a whole range of additional techniques to help communicate the message.”

What characterises an effective presenter?

Effective presenters do a competent job and give well-organised and well-structured presentations. They give solid information to their audiences and explain complex information effectively and logically. An expert presenter employs a whole range of additional techniques to help communicate the message.

Why do effective presenters need to learn more skills?

These presenters often put on their 'business face'. They tend to be formal and objective and this sometimes makes it difficult for audiences to follow and take in information. Such presenters can fail to truly inspire, connect and take their audiences to a different level.

What techniques can they use to inspire and connect?

They can incorporate imagery and storytelling and build on effective presentations by making memorable and striking similes, metaphors and analogy and by relating stories and anecdotes. This means they should give themselves enough time for preparation, be willing to drop the 'business face' and be creative, human and authentic.

If we look at imagery first, what's the difference between simile, metaphor and analogy?

A simile is a comparison between two things, using the word *like*, e.g. *The product is like a shooting star.*

A metaphor also makes a comparison, but doesn't use *like*, e.g. *The product is a shooting star.*

An analogy can be defined as an extended metaphor, e.g. *The product is a shooting star and is the brightest thing in the sky.*

DRAMATIC PRESENTATIONS

How does imagery work?

The presenter takes two seemingly unrelated items and makes a comparison between them. There is a kind of shock effect and the audience begins to resolve this by making a connection between the two items. This creates pictures and associations, fires the imagination and brings the presentation to life. It's no surprise that imagery is often remembered long after a presentation is over.

What kind of presentations work well with imagery?

Imagery can be particularly useful for those presenters who have to make technical or specialised presentations; an effective simile or metaphor can help an audience to understand complex issues without using complex language.

What's a story?

It's a narrative with a beginning, middle and end that frequently brings up unanswered questions, crises or conflicts that are resolved by the end of the story. Humour can be a part of the narrative.

“Stories are very powerful in organising and giving information and in creating meaning.”

Why do stories help audiences understand and remember information?

Stories are very powerful in organising and giving information and in creating meaning. It is easier to understand and recall information when it is part of the flow of a story and connected to other events in a narrative. A story builds a relationship between the audience and presenter and keeps the listeners engaged as they participate in the narrative, wanting to know what happens next and how the story ends. Emotions are addressed and this is also important for memory and learning since the emotional centre of the brain is situated near to the part of the brain responsible for long-term memory. In addition, stories put people in a state of relaxed awareness – an alpha state – which is a more receptive state for absorbing information. It's no coincidence that storytelling has a long oral tradition in most cultures!

What characterises a good storyteller?

Good storytellers are positive, enthusiastic and relate stories that make a relevant point. They make the message clear and make a connection between the story and the presentation.

What's an anecdote?

An anecdote can be defined as a true or a personal story that can also include self-disclosure. When a presenter discloses personal information, he / she shows a human side and the audience empathises. Anecdotes should not be too long or include too much detail. Ronald Reagan was known as 'The Great Communicator' and he used anecdotes extensively.

- 1 Do you already use imagery and storytelling techniques?
- 2 Do you think you put on a 'business face' when you present?
- 3 In principle, do you agree that imagery and storytelling should be used in presentations?
- 4 If you don't use imagery or storytelling, can you remember a presentation where a presenter used such techniques?

Techniques

Simile

A Complete the similes.

Example

A presentation is like a gift because *you need to think about the recipient and packaging the content.*

- 1 A presentation is like a gift because ...
- 2 A presentation is like a road because ...
- 3 A presentation is like a forest because ...
- 4 A presentation is like a fairy story because ...
- 5 A presentation is like chewing gum because ...
- 6 A presentation is like an oyster because ...
- 7 Working in our industry is like playing football because ...
- 8 Our organisation is like a ship because ...
- 9 My job is like a banana because ...
- 10 My team is like ...
- 11 Our main competitor is like ...
- 12 Our main product is like ...

Metaphor and analogy

B 5.02 Watch an extract from Zhan's Step 5 presentation. Zhan presented his research to an audience of non-specialists.

- 1 Describe Zhan's metaphor / analogy in your own words.
- 2 Was his analogy clear and simple?
- 3 Did the analogy get your attention?



C Develop and extend the metaphors below.

- 1 two methods as apples and oranges
- 2 a process as a journey
- 3 a job as a book
- 4 customer service as a game of golf
- 5 the problem as mice, the solution as a cat, a competitor's solution as a dog

Find Your Voice

Find a metaphor / analogy to describe an aspect of your work or area of study to a group of non-specialists. Develop this. Take your time – Zhan developed his analogy over some days. Present this.