

1 Powerful techniques

Introduction

- A** Read this extract from a presentation. The presenter works in the human resources department of a multinational manufacturer. The audience are potential graduate recruits.

Summit Programme Presentation Transcript

Thursday, June 28

So, what is our second graduate programme?

This is our high potential Summit Programme that will take the best among you to the top, the very top. This is a very exciting option for those of you who are truly looking for variety, opportunity and challenge. The programme enables you to take on three different assignments in three countries in three years and at the same time study for postgraduate management and language qualifications.

It's a challenge, a real challenge. Your first assignment takes place in your home country, the second at our headquarters in San Diego and the third in another country where we expect you to learn a new language. Of course, we pay for all your relocation and study expenses. In fact, our support is very generous, very generous, indeed more generous than anything else you'll find on the job market. But, in return you have to be flexible, hard-working and self-motivated because this programme is not a holiday but a boot camp. You will work, work, work and study, study, study. We test you and you test us. If you successfully finish the three assignments, you are not simply at the end of your training, but at the beginning of a fast, interesting and rewarding career path on your way to the top, the very top.

Let me give you an example of a Summit success story. This is Milena Gawczynski. She had the best degree of her year from Warsaw University and a MBA that she completed during her year with us in San Diego. Her third year on the Summit Programme was spent in Barcelona where she initiated a project to improve communications between our southern European manufacturing plants. She speaks fluent Polish, Russian, English and Spanish and is currently head of our Central European Services office in Prague.

As you can see, our standards are much higher than other companies. Our assessment centre is far more rigorous than all the others presented to you today. That's because we only want the best and of course you'll get the best from us. Our 'summiteers' earn above average salaries and performance bonuses. Our mentoring scheme, international networks and development programme are second to none. If it's variety, opportunity and challenge you're looking for and you know you are the best, then, our Summit Programme is the one for you. It's the only one that will take you to the top, the very top.

HR Department

- B** Now read the presentation extract aloud. Which sections are more effective in speaking than in writing?

- C Read what six presenters said about some of their favourite techniques they learnt on a presentations seminar. Then answer the questions below.

1 When we're presenting, it can feel unnatural to say the same words over and over again. But, I've noticed that **repetition** really works when I listen to a presentation. It really helps to clarify and consolidate the key points. So, I try to use repetition myself. I think if you can get over the 'unnatural' feeling, it's a really easy technique and it actually makes presenting in English less difficult as you don't have to find different words for the same things.

2 You can repeat a phrase or a slogan like a **mantra**. Sometimes it's this mantra that everyone remembers long after the presentation is over. I learnt that classical orators used this technique and I think one of the most famous modern examples is the Martin Luther King speech where he used the 'I have a dream' mantra. People even call it the 'I have a dream' speech. Mantra has to be precise, to the point and memorable. When you get the mantra right, everyone remembers it.

3 I quite like using **rhetorical questions** as they create expectation and a feeling of dialogue. They're also a useful tool for outlining or signposting the structure. You should use grammatically correct questions though if you're presenting in another language. It's no good asking a question if the audience don't understand it or because you asked something too complex.

4 I really remember the **Rule of Three**. It's so easy. Good presentations often have lists with three different words, three identical words, three phrases or three sentences. Most experts attribute the Rule of Three to Aristotle's Art of Rhetoric in which he referred to 'three types of speeches' and 'three forms of proof'. Pythagoras said three was the 'perfect number'. Lists of three have a sense of completeness and research shows that listeners wait for and expect a third item in a list. As a presenter, I think it's a fairly simple but highly effective technique.

5 One of the things I like to do is give real life **examples** or examples that everybody knows. I think this really 'speaks' to the audience as they remember things when they relate them to themselves, events or people. Examples bring things to life. It's all about creating associations.

6 A number of effective techniques we use today go right back to the classical writers on rhetoric. Take **contrast**, for example – if you compare one thing to another, you are making a contrast. 'We are bigger than our competitors' is an example. Another contrast technique is to use words that are opposites. Kennedy did it in that famous speech, 'symbolizing an end not a beginning' and 'United, there is little we cannot do ... Divided, there is little we can do'. He used 'not ... but' in the same speech too, 'We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom'. From a language point of view, these are really not complicated techniques for non-native speakers to use.

- 1 Can you find examples of techniques 1–6 in the presentation transcript in A on page 50?
- 2 Do you already use any of techniques 1–6 in your presentations?
- 3 Which new techniques would you be able to incorporate in your presentations?
- 4 Would you find any of the techniques difficult to use?

Mantra

- A** 4.02 Svitlana compared three forms of transport in her Step 4 presentation. Can you suggest a mantra for this topic? Now watch the presentation extracts and answer the questions.

- 1 What was Svitlana's mantra?
- 2 Is this mantra 'precise, to the point and memorable'?
- 3 Can you improve the mantra?

Find Your Voice

Develop a mantra for your Step 1, Step 2 and / or Step 3 presentations.

Rhetorical questions

- A** Read the statements below and write a rhetorical question that could go before each of them.

Example

We employ around 150 people in China. *How many people do we employ?*

- 1 We employ around 150 people in China.
- 2 Last year we hired 50 new engineers in the Netherlands.
- 3 We are currently recruiting ten new sales office staff.
- 4 We are going to start recruiting for the Hong Kong office in June next year.
- 5 One solution is to use consultants to examine the problem.
- 6 No, we've never used an external company on this kind of project.
- 7 I strongly recommend buying a new office building.
- 8 The next step is to arrange a meeting with the client.
- 9 In my second point I'll be looking at where we can go from here.
- 10 I am now going to deal with this in my third point.

- B** Read the statements below and write a rhetorical question that could go after each of them.

Example

We've solved the problem. *How did we do this?*

- 1 We've solved the problem.
- 2 The client insists that we increase internal security.
- 3 The plant has had its best year as regards safety.
- 4 We are going to have to go after new business in the next year.
- 5 That brings me to the end of my second point.
- 6 We have increased market share in Europe.
- 7 However, we have lost market share in North America.
- 8 This is the not the first time we have made such a mistake.
- 9 To tell the truth I found this quite a difficult task.
- 10 We thought it was the best campaign we had ever created but the client hated it!