

PROGRESSIVE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PRESENTS:

CREATING
POWERFUL
PRESENTATIONS



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WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Creating Powerful Presentations:

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Creating Powerful Presentations

A corporate executive bobs her head continually as she speaks.

A female CEO concludes a powerful speech with “I hope that was helpful.”

A female presenter gets interrupted during an all-male executive board meeting.

Often even brilliant women, with powerful ideas to contribute and important corporations to run, unwittingly sabotage themselves or get sabotaged in attempts to command power during a presentation. Some equivocate, apologize or look away as they speak.

Strong presentation skills are essential for today’s woman leader who needs to find her own powerful and authentic voice, particularly in a male-dominated work environment.

While presentation skills require more of an authoritative presence, this doesn’t mean women should become someone they’re not. Becoming a powerful presenter is about developing true genuine leadership. The more you know yourself, the easier it will be to display a powerful presence – one that will be memorable. It’s about finding your own style to present yourself powerfully.

She Said It:

What’s the Point?

“ People won’t remember every little factoid you say, but they will remember your take-home message, so make sure it’s clear and make sure you make it the star of your talk. ”

–Robin Berzin, MD, founder, Parsley Health

It’s about becoming a powerful leader who can inform, educate and entertain during a presentation, but most importantly, get others to take action as a result of your spoken words. And it’s about learning how to exude courage and confidence, no matter how jittery you may feel inside.

In this Progressive Women’s Leadership Handbook, you’ll discover that there is no presentation idea or concept that is too big or too complicated that it can’t be packaged in such a way that your audience not only understands it, but embraces it. You’ll learn how to take those concepts that are in your head and implant them in your audience’s heart.

She Said It: Take a Bite Out of Fright

“Start with ‘why.’ You need to ask yourself: ‘Why are you there to speak? What do I hope to achieve?’ When it isn’t about you, it’s much easier to reduce stage fright and convey the information in an interesting and engaging way. Keep the ‘why’ at the center of your presentation.”

–Michelle Stansbury, founder and CEO, Little Penguin Public Relations

You’ll stop thinking of a presentation as a routine event and start thinking of it as a little miracle. When it’s a success – that is, your audience “gets” what you’re trying to convey – people will see their world a bit differently afterward. What follows are strategies for you to take the stage mentally, verbally, vocally and physically, so that you can deliver a powerful presentation every time you step up to the podium.

1. Frame Your Story

Why am I giving this talk? Presentations often have more than one purpose, but knowing what kind of presentation you need to prepare is half the battle.

Remember, there are three basic purposes for giving presentations:

- to inform
- to persuade, and
- to promote goodwill.

Here’s a rundown of each.

- **Informative Presentations:** You have two distinct categories of informative presentations: A reporting presentation, which brings the audience up to date on projects or events and might include sharing minutes from shareholder meetings, executive briefings or sales reports; and an explanatory presentation, which provides information about products and procedures, rules and regulations, and operations.
- **Persuasive Presentations:** You need to convince the audience to buy your product or service, to support your goals or to motivate your employees to support changes. There’s often a call to action at the end.
- **Goodwill Presentations:** Departments or teams within an organization get rewarded for their success at meetings where their stellar work is showcased. Your purpose is for peers, colleagues and superiors to build goodwill, to make people feel good about themselves and to build respect for the organization.

Talking Nerdy: Breaking Down Complex Ideas

In a world of two-minute sound bites and 140 characters, how do you explain a complex concept? Just as you would with any other information, it needs to be clear, concise and told in a compelling way.

Some ways to boil down your concept:

Twitter-ize it: Once you have a key message statement, do the Twitter test and try to reduce each important point in the presentation down to 140 characters.

Tell a story: Neurologists say our brains are programmed much more for stories than abstract ideas. Craft the information into a story to engage the audience.

Keep asking “So what?”: Challenge each of your key points to ensure that you’re relating it to your listeners.

What Message Do You Want to Convey?

The key to getting your message across is being able to summarize your point in a single sentence for all to understand. So simplify the message! Start by asking yourself:

- Why am I giving this talk?
- Is it to introduce the audience to a new concept?
- Is it to challenge an accepted way of doing something?

Once you can explain that, you have your key message statement and are ready to create your presentation.

Three characteristics of a key message:

- created specifically for the audience
- one sentence long (no more than 50 words), and
- simple enough to be memorable.

The key message statement is what you would say if you only had 10 seconds to say it. It’s the one thing you want the audience to remember. If, after the presentation, you were to ask a member of the audience to tell you the most important thing you were trying to communicate, the answer would be the key message statement. For example:

- “How our ABC Project will help you answer nine out of 10 customer queries.”
- “International business communication is made easier through our video conferencing.”
- “Our new software will change the way you can access your reports.”

The most important words you can put into a key message statement are: “you”, “we,” “us” or “our” in the context of your team, department or organization.

The one-sentence summary serves as a compass, bringing everything you say back home. It is focused, precise and succinct.

She Said It:

Power Structure Rules

“Once I have the timing lined out for a presentation, I fill in content in a rough outline on a piece of paper. For the next few days I will carry this paper with me and consider both the bigger themes and the finer details. Once I am teaching or speaking, I let go of the exact plan, but keep the structure as a backbone to keep me on time. When I started out, I improvised completely, which made for a dynamic presentation, but often caused me to leave out important key points in order to meet timing considerations. If I had known the power of structure back then, I would’ve saved myself much stress.”

–Michaela Boehm,
Intimacy & Spirituality Expert

A key message statement has two purposes for you as presenter/speaker:

1. To make it easier for you to decide what to exclude from your presentation.
2. To help you write the introduction, summary and conclusion of your presentation quickly and efficiently.

Now, give some thought to exactly what key message you’d like to convey for your next presentation.

Exercise: Put Your Key Message Statement to the Test

Write your key message statement for your next presentation:

Is it clear and precise? Ask yourself:

Why am I talking about this?

What am I adding to the discussion?

What value will people walk away with?

Does my message create a sense of urgency or involvement?

Exercise: Take Note: An Outline Keeps You Focused

Once you write your key message statement, you can start constructing your outline, which will ground you, keep you on topic and help you remember all your main points. Fill in information below to get you started on your next presentation.

1. Introduction

What the presentation is about:

Why it's important:

Presentation agenda (what they will get out of it, your credentials):

2. Background

Review the issue:

Exercise: Take Note: An Outline Keeps You Focused
(Continued)

Why discussing now:

Reference research:

3. Main points

Introduce main points

Add supporting material (anecdotes, examples, demonstrations).

Conclusion/Call to Action

Summarize your main message and key points

(pose questions, invite questions)

2. Start Strong

The hardest part of any presentation is the beginning. Understanding the right way to start a presentation will help you attract your audience's attention and prepare them for what comes next.

The first 2-3 minutes are the most important. The audience wants to like you and they will give you a few minutes to engage them – don't miss this opportunity.

"Open with a sweeping idea or the most interesting fact or conclusion," writes Charlotte Beers, former Ogilvy & Mather CEO, in her book, *I'd Rather Be in Charge*.

The first thing someone hears or sees should clearly present your message to your audience. This requires you to develop and rehearse a well-crafted attention-getting opener.

You have plenty of approaches. Consider these proven ways to start a powerful presentation:

Establish credibility: Use a short story about your background related to the topic, share an experience that shaped the presentation or even reveal the references that support your information.

Include a goal upfront: If your audience knows the goal from the start, they are more likely to relate what you have to say with that purpose as you present the material. This makes it easier at the end to get the action you want, whether it's funding, approval or changing minds.

Ask a question (rhetorical or thought-provoking): This will get them thinking about the material in the context you want. For instance, you could say, "Ever wonder why...?" or "How much longer should we...?" You don't necessarily expect the audience to answer aloud, rather silently to themselves.

Tell a captivating story: Of all the starters, storytelling is among the most powerful. Brain scans reveal that stories stimulate and engage the human brain, helping the speaker connect with the audience and making it much more likely that the audience will agree with your point of view. Stories connect us. Start with a brief 60- or 90-second narrative that captivates your listeners, making sure the story encapsulates the key point of your message. The story can be about you personally, which tells the audience firsthand why you're invested in and passionate about the topic. Or you can tell a story about another person whom the audience can learn from.

She Said It:

Just A Minute!

“ When we speak, we have about 60 seconds to capture our audience’s attention, establish credibility, orient them to our topic, and motivate them to listen. ”

–Darlene Price, president of Well Said! Presentations

State a shocking statistic or headline: The statistic, bold claim or headline needs to be directly related to the main purpose of the presentation. Its impact ideally should persuade the audience to listen and respond positively to your recommendation and next steps. Some examples: “A Little Mistake That Cost a CEO \$50,000 a Month” or “There Are Only 4 Types of Employees You Ever Want to Hire – Which Group Are Your Employees in?”

Use a powerful quote: Employ the wise words of a well-known person because the name allows you to tap into his or her credibility, likeability and notoriety. It must have meaning and relevance to the audience. A few places to search: BrainyQuote or QuotesGram.

Show a gripping photo: A picture is worth a thousand words, so choose one that will increase comprehension, engage the audience’s imagination and powerfully get your message across.

Play a short video: Kick off a product management meeting with a video of compelling customer testimonials. Videos evoke emotional response.

Exercise: What's Your Story?

Stories are experiential – we feel them. They create a lasting impression on listeners.

Not sure how to craft your presentation story? Follow the classic three-act storytelling structure. Build a simple tale that connects easily with your one-sentence summary.

The 3-act structure for storytelling

Act 1: The setup:

Act 2: The confrontation:

Act 3: The resolution:

3. *Getting Your Message Across*

When you transform the elements of your presentation outline into a speech, use simple words. Pretend your presentation will be delivered to an audience of children. Steve Jobs, renowned for his excellent public speaking, spoke at a 5th grade level. So break down your message into its most basic and understandable components, since getting your message across is the most important thing about your presentation.

Practice Makes Perfect

“Practice: yes, in front of a mirror,” says Jess Scully, curator of TEDxSydney. “See where your tongue trips over words and rewrite those sentences. If you can, make the language as simple and direct as conversation. Short sentences work best in speeches.

“This helps cut out the ‘umm,’ ‘like’ and ‘just’ out of your talk. Those words are crutches women tend to lean on. It’s better to pause and check your notes when you have a blank than to use these filler words.”

Don’t Sabotage the Message

Sometimes women unknowingly use certain patterns of speech that can undermine their presentation. Here are some tips from Tara Sophia Mohr, author of *Playing Big*, on how to begin changing these discrediting speech patterns:

- **“I’m just...”** “Just” demeans what you have to say and shrinks your power.
- **“I actually have an idea...”** “Actually” communicates a sense of surprise that you have something to say.
- **“I’ll just take a minute...”** It sounds apologetic and implies you don’t think what you are about to say is worthy of time and attention. Take a minute or two, but skip the phrase “just a minute.”

Are They Getting the Message?

There is a saying that goes along with public speaking: “Tell them what you’re *going* to tell them, *tell* them, then tell them *what you told them*.” Get to the point and repeat your point. Using repetition and emphasis is the best way to ensure a message sticks.

For maximum impact, introduce each separate topic or idea with a relevant quote or full screen image that evokes the topic. A strong quote or image will stick in their minds as they listen to the related material. It also breaks up the presentation, particularly if you have no choice but to include dry material like sales graphs or bullet points in your PowerPoint presentation.

Seeing Is Believing! Choosing the Right Visuals

Visuals are scientifically proven to help your audience remember your message. When combined with images, text-based information is 42% more memorable, several studies have shown.

Some of us favor auditory learning while others are visual or kinesthetic learners. This means that some portion of your audience is always going to learn better through seeing or doing. But don't over rely on any of the following visuals:

PowerPoint & Prezi: PowerPoint's new Designer feature lets you create beautiful slides fairly quickly, while its Morph feature can animate text, images and even 3D shapes. Prezi offers a map-like, collage style to a presentation, which allows you to zoom in on the bubbles for a dynamic effect. Prezi's also helpful because it allows users to integrate media such as video clips and images more easily into their presentations.

Pictures: Showing a picture with minimal text will resonate with your audience much more than a few letters on a slide. But don't read from your slides. Use different text to add another layer of meaning to your oral or visual content.

Charts: A great form of visual communication, a chart shows the trend or pattern in data, along with the data itself. However, narrow down your selection of charts to just the few that convey an interesting point.

Short video clip: Video can be very effective. A clip needs to be short – if it's more than 60 seconds, you risk losing people. Beware of videos that sound self-promotional, come with a soundtrack or anything that shows you in it (keep the focus on the topic, not you).

A quality photo adds aesthetic appeal, increases comprehension, engages the audience's imagination and makes the message more memorable. Try to select a photo that you've never seen before or one that evokes emotion (rather than an unnatural looking stock photo). To help select a good quality photo, ask yourself:

- Does it support/reinforce the key point or message?
- Will the image stand out and get noticed by my audience?

Whatever methods you use – a story, research, quotes, etc. – it's always essential to look at every single aspect of your presentation and ask yourself, "Does this communicate my message effectively?"

Zoom in on the Room

If at all possible, find out about the size of the room, the seating arrangements and the audio-visual elements. It will help you decide whether you can move around, help you understand how easy or difficult it will be to maintain eye contact, whether you can hear questions, etc.

"Find out about the setup," says Lydia Graham, Graham & Associates CEO. "Check the room temperature. Remember, hot rooms put people to sleep."

Getting as much information as possible will determine whether the presentation is a more traditional lecture or if you can incorporate some audience participation.

Captivate Your Audience

People want to learn, they want the information you have and they want you to wow them with a great presentation. Ultimately, your message and presentation revolves around your audience, not you. You should always think from their perspective, concentrating all your efforts in packaging your message to tailor fit your audience. Know your audience and what is important to them.

She Said It:

Put Some Life into It!

“ Dare to bring the drama and energy of real, raw life back into a dry presentation. Put people back in your presentations by using tapes of them speaking, photographs, or quotes. In other words, put the people behind your data and argument in the room with your audience, virtually. ”

–Charlotte Beers,
author of *I'd Rather Be in Charge*

“I like to know as much about the audience as possible,” says Lori Graver, former NASA Deputy Administrator, “and what they are most interested in learning from the talk. If you have a good understanding of what your audience already knows, you can provide them with new information – or at least a new way of looking at the subject. I try to respect the audience’s time and use humor or audience interaction to keep them engaged.”

Remember, people in the audience are intelligent. Let them figure some things out for themselves. Let them draw their own conclusions – as long as you’ve made your key takeaway clear.

Exercise: But Is It a Crowd Pleaser?

Take time to understand your audience's mindset, since this may completely change how you present your message.

Ask yourself these questions:

How much do they know?

Why should they care?

What do you want them to do when they leave the presentation?

Perfecting the 5-Minute Pitch

Creating a compelling, focused speech with a single message is the ultimate goal of a 5-minute presentation.

Dig deep: Do enough research to understand your topic and extract the essence of your talk.

Keep it simple: Once you have the materials, narrow down your topic to one core concept.

Practice, practice, practice: You have no time to pause or collect your thoughts. You need to be smooth and steady.

Lead with a wow: Lead with a compelling or controversial position. Make them think right off the bat.

Tell a story: Too many facts, figures and statistics will quickly lose your audience.

4. Plan Your Delivery

Need to schedule that presentation? If you're given a choice when to book that conference room, pick the right time – research shows that 10:30 a.m. (when both early birds and night owls are most receptive) on a Tuesday (when people are in the full swing of the work week) works best. And always keep it short – never add content to lengthen when it's not necessary.

If you have control over the length of time, stick to the 18-minute rule, says TED curator Chris Anderson. That's the ideal length of time to get your point across because researchers have discovered that “cognitive backlog” (too much information) prevents the successful transmission of ideas. Eighteen minutes is “long enough to be serious and short enough to hold people's attention,” says Chris.

Find Your Voice

A woman's pitch and tone of voice make all the difference when giving a presentation. Often women don't use their voices in a way that projects confidence. Christine Jahnke, author of *The Well-Spoken Women*, offers these suggestions:

Keep the pace: Maintain a conversational rate (about 140 words per minute), which will make you sound comfortable with your content.

Switch the pitch: Avoid speaking in an overly high-pitched voice. Try lowering your tone. To do this, you must speak from your chest. Say the word “whoa” in a very deep voice. Place your hand on the chest area and feel for the vibrations as you speak the sound. Do this several times before your presentation.

Pause, please: Take a second to catch your breath – and to save you from replacing those spaces with “um,” “you know” and other fillers.

Pump up the volume: Raise or lower your voice to add interest to the conversation. Drop the volume, for example, to increase intensity, pull people in and call attention to what you're saying.

‘Oops’ Moment? 6 Words That Get You Back on Track

Despite your best efforts to energize the audience or convey yourself in authentic and enthusiastic terms, sometimes you may find yourself adrift – and you can’t gain traction.

That’s when you pause thoughtfully, eye your audience and let these six words roll off your tongue:

“Let me tell you a story.”

Because stories are concrete – the opposite of a drab and hazy abstract idea – and tend to arouse pictures which vivify an idea, it’s guaranteed to get you back on track.

Set the (Conversational) Tone

It’s usually best to sound conversational during a presentation – and just be you. Here’s how to keep it chatty:

- Involve the audience - say, “Let me see a show of hands if you ever knew someone who ...”
- Try injecting humor.
- Make an emotional connection: When you use emotions and mental pictures, people internalize the message and it stays in their mind.
- Remove business jargon, acronyms and business clichés.
- Use metaphors to make your points and get people interacting with you.

Get the Word Out: You’re in Charge

Some women presenters unwittingly diminish themselves with vocal mannerisms, like speaking in a childlike high-pitched voice or monotone, using an uptalk inflection at the ends of sentences and speaking too fast with too little articulation of consonants.

Sometimes when women are nervous during a presentation, they tend to rush and never leave a moment without words. But brief pauses between your sentences connotes confidence and a sense of comfort in the role of speaker. They allow the listener to absorb what you are saying and give you a moment to gather a deep breath and collect your thoughts.

“I used to think a seamless flow was the mark of a good presenter,” says Charlotte Beers, author of *I’d Rather Be in Charge*, “but I learned that a deliberate pause, a hesitation, returns an audience from its wanderings.”

It’s best to vary your tone throughout the presentation to help engage your audience. Emphasize key words and points. Pause where appropriate to build the anticipation – you want it to appear conversational and natural.

Try breaking bigger concepts into smaller nuggets of information that can be packaged as individual moments for the audience to process. The silence can last for a breath or several seconds. Sometimes a long pause is exactly what you need to add emphasis; other times, you want to keep your momentum so an almost imperceptible pause is the best option.

She Said It:

The Art of the Pitch

“ It has to feel like you’re having a live conversation with the audience, not just regurgitating something you already thought about before. Doing that really well, especially with the backdrop of all that prep – that’s the art. ”

-Sally Kohn,
CNN Political Commentator

Wow Factor Analysis

The human brain loves novelty. By putting a surprising “wow” moment into every presentation, you’ll be able to keep your audience engaged and enthused because they’ll never know what to expect next. It could be something as simple as a story, prop or demo, but try to find some way to create a special effect:

Teach your audience something new. An unfamiliar, unusual or unexpected element in a presentation jolts the audience out of their preconceived notions and quickly gives them a new way of looking at the world.

Create a jaw-dropping moment. Anything in a presentation that elicits a strong emotional response such as joy, fear, shock or surprise. It grabs the listener’s attention and is remembered long after the presentation is over.

Exercise: Who Said It Best?

Think back to recent presentations you've sat through:

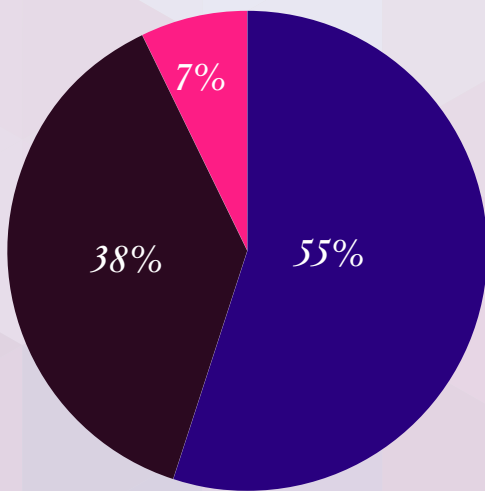
What's the most memorable one that comes to mind?

What made it memorable?

What was the key message of that presentation, in one sentence?

5. Master Your Movements

Deconstructing what it takes to project that all-important self-confidence as a leader can include basic steps like posture, eye contact, body language and even smiling. Effective body language should support the message and project a strong image.



Exercise: Are They Getting the Message?

Studies show your message comes across in three ways: your body language, tone of voice and the message (words) itself – can you select which percentage below applies to each one of these? Check the correct answers below.

55%

38%

7%

Answers: 55% body language; 38% tone of voice; 7% message itself.

Your body language, your expression and your tone of voice are just as important as the words you say.

More than half of your impact as a speaker depends upon your body language, which comprises gesture, stance, and facial expressions. Having an open posture and facing your audience shows confidence and positive body language. Constant motion such as swaying can be a distraction that can annoy your listeners and make you appear nervous.

Now let's focus on how body language and movement, as well as interacting with your audience, can help bolster your presentation.

Power Stance

How you stand in front of the room "speaks" to your audience before you even open your mouth. Your feet should point straight ahead, not quite shoulder width apart.

Harvard Business School social psychologist Amy Cuddy, whose TED talk has over 30 million views, recommends putting your hands on your hips in a "power pose" to shift your perception about yourself as well as others' perception of you. This exudes confidence even though you may be a bundle of nerves.

Amy, author of *Presence*, suggests that the pose can, in two minutes, "affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain, and might even have an impact on our chances for success ... When you pretend to be powerful, you are also more likely to feel powerful."

You can do it alone before you take the podium. Her research found that those who spent two minutes in a room alone doing power poses (such as feet on the desk with fingers laced behind the head) increased testosterone levels by about 20% and lowered the stress hormone cortisol by about 25%. "Making yourself big for just two minutes before a meeting changes the brain in ways that build courage, reduce anxiety and inspire leadership," says Amy.

While it may not be appropriate to stand like Wonder Woman with your hands on your hips in every presentation, you can do 90 seconds in the power pose before you walk into any meeting. That shift alone may give you more confidence.

She Said It:

Direct Connect Opt-In

“ Think of your talk as a shared experience between you and the audience, and aim to transmit your enthusiasm about the topic, passion or energy about the work or cause at hand – even if they can’t walk away being able to recite facts and stats from the talk, they’ll remember that feeling and sense of engagement. ”

-Jess Scully,
curator of TEDxSydney

Hand Gestures

Do use your hands to help emphasize a point, express emotion, release tension and engage your audience. Flex your elbows and gesture from the shoulder using your whole arm (otherwise, it looks like your elbows are pinned to your sides).

Face Facts

The movements of your eyes, mouth and facial muscles can build a connection with your audience, with eye focus the most important element in the process. Try to unfreeze your face right from the start. Effective presenters engage one person at a time, focusing long enough to complete a natural phrase and watch it sink in for a moment.

Eye Contact

Establish eye contact with the audience to build trust, establish rapport and show you know what you’re talking about. Look for those who are smiling, nodding or who obviously “get it.” This gives you back the energy you need to continue. Even if you don’t have time to prepare fully for a presentation and have to read from a script, looking up occasionally to make eye contact will make a huge difference.

Develop Stage Presence

Don’t think of the presentation as training or a meeting. Think of it as an experience. Engage and energize the energy in the room – it must remain high and participants must be fully engaged. Walk the room and show interest in attendees. If you don’t, learning won’t stick and attention wanders.

She Said It:

Pitch It & Forget It

“ Take pride in your accomplishment and reflect on all the things you did right. Don't worry that you could have done better. Next time you will. ”

–Judith Humphrey,
author of *Taking the Stage*

6. Compelling Closing

To leave a lasting impression with your audience, you want to have a powerful ending. So best not to “wing” the ending of your presentation. For one thing, your final words are likely to be the ones your audience will remember.

Powerful Ways to Close a Presentation

A cartoon: Consider ending your presentation with a relevant cartoon to elucidate your message. It's visual, offers humor and it's a metaphor.

Circle back around: A standard piece of advice on closing is to return to your opening. For example, refer to whatever hook you used in starting your presentation. This can be a wrap-up of a story you started or an answer to a question you posed. It can also be a reaffirmation of your presentation title or the title of the conference at which you're speaking. You can't go wrong with a book-end closure.

Have a call to action: Sometimes the audience is thinking, “What's the next step?” Make sure you provide purpose to your talk by telling them to download a PDF, go to a website or contact someone. It should be definitive and instructional.

An unusual quote: A relatively easy way to powerfully end your speech is by using a quote. For this to be effective, however, the quote needs to be one that has not been heard so often that it has become cliché. If you use a worn-out quote, consider adding a twist to it, as Heather Fleming, CEO of Catapult Design, does in her talk on designing change. She mentions Gandhi's quote: “You have to be the change that you want to see in the world” and adds this twist: “But the part that was missing for me was getting the courage to be the change that you want to see in the world. I hope that we can all engage in that concept.” This is a smart way to make it resonate with others.

Ask a provocative question: The minute you ask a question, listeners are generally drawn to ponder an answer. It's even more engaging when the question is provocative, or when it touches potentially sensitive areas of our lives. “Our old brain runs by instinct,” says Dorothy Leeds, author of *Power Speak*. “That's the part that animals have. They don't ask questions. The purpose of our ‘new brain’ is to override and challenge our old brain, and we do that by asking questions.”

Exercise: The Rule of Three

Putting it simply, if you want your message to be remembered, put it into a list of three. Dianna Cohen, co-founder of the Plastic Pollution Coalition, ends her talk with a three-pronged declaration: In using alternatives to single-use plastics, Dianna says, “We can save our oceans, save our planets, save ourselves.”

Ask yourself: “If there are only three points that I would like to leave my audience with, what would they be?”

1.

2.

3.

How Perfecting Presentation Skills Helps You Be a Better Leader

The single most important thing to remember about giving a presentation is that there is no one good way to give a talk.

The most memorable talks offer something no one has seen before. The worst ones are those that feel formulaic. So do not try to emulate every piece of advice offered here. Take the bulk of it on board, for sure. But make the talk your own. You know what's distinctive about you and your idea. Play to your strengths and give a talk that is truly authentic to you.

Keep this guide on your desktop to use as a quick refresher every time you have to give a presentation. It will help streamline the process, get you in the right mindset and inspire you to think of new ways to create a powerful presentation every time.

You can discover more ways to enhance your presentation knowledge, as well as develop other leadership skills, through Progressive Women's Leadership.

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