

Great Technical Speaking

It's not rocket science

Notes to accompany the lecture

By

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1. Introduction

Developing a presentation is a case of two parts firstly putting the presentation together and secondly delivering a presentation. There is often a lot of emphasis on delivering the presentation particularly with the body language due largely to the misinterpretation of the research done by Albert Mehrabian. However of the two skills nearly always putting together the right presentation is the more important as it ensures that the information required by your audience is delivered. I've seen a variety of speakers; some with great presentation technique but shallow content which seem entertaining the first place but then fade very rapidly and others who have great content but poor delivery standard in which the audience often gets absorbed by the content and almost completely ignores the poor presentation standard. I'll go on to talk more later about being Mehrabian myth.

2. Understanding the audience needs

Before we can even consider putting a presentation together we have to consider what our audience needs. Audiences are very selfish people and often listen to a presentation like a radio channel WIIFM or What's In It For Me. That means that when they approach your presentation they will be listening from their own particular aspect and expect you to provide information that meets their needs. So before we can start building a presentation we need to consider what their needs are and what delivery style they would like. Many of you will remember my keynote speech is "How to talk to aliens". The reason I use this description is often speaking to different people is like speaking to someone from a different planet. Our first step is to try and end workout which planet they're from.

Figure 1 shows the basic Carl Jung descriptors of our population split into four characters. Each of these four types has different characteristics and therefore different communication needs. Let's look at them one at a time.

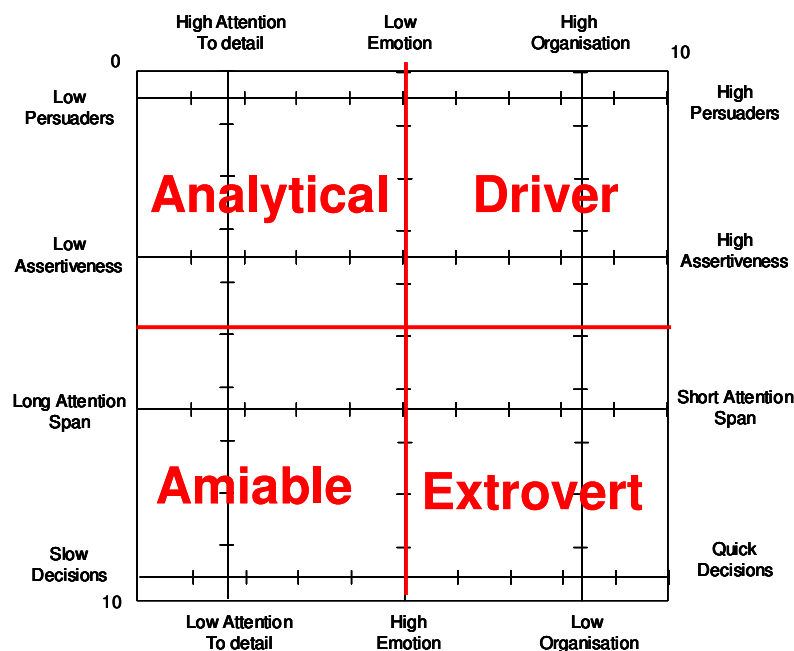


Figure 1 - Carl Jung Character Types

2.1.1 The Driver:

We all recognise the driver is the ambitious person that we're likely to find in management within the organisation. They tend to be determined fast pace and very task orientated so want to get things done quickly. They often have a big picture in their minds so that they work from a visual framework, and they are, in particular top-down people so we want to give them information that allows them to build their own big picture in their own mind. The sort of communication that will appeal to the driver are things like bullet points, executive summaries so that they can get a very quick overview of the whole problem or issue, and then they want to cascade down to the bits that are of particular interest to them. They do not want to start from the bottom and order all the minute details that it takes to understand the problem. They will only cherry pick the bits that are interested in.

So when presenting to predominantly this sort of audience, the sort of structure that works extremely well is to give a brief overview of the whole issue. Give them a short presentation of the essential facts and processes and just do a large question and answer sessions. They will ask the questions they want and you need not worry if you don't cover all information because they will be driving the presentation which is just as they like it.

2.1.2 The Analytical:

There's one thing analyticals love and that's lots and lots of information. I don't think it's possible for you to give an analytical too much information. But they are the opposite of the Drivers in that they work from the bottom up so they like to see the foundation of your argument before you come to the conclusions rather than starting from the top down. They are likely to want to see full evidence of any information that leads to your conclusions so that they can primarily make up their own minds. So when you're presenting to this group be prepared with all the information and start by laying out the basics of your argument and then build it up to a conclusion. It is almost as important for the analytical is to be able to see the process of your decision-making as to see the results.

2.1.3 The Extrovert:

The extrovert's run high on emotion and they love to be involved. Like the driver they are in the top-down group and don't like to listen to the build up of the entire story. So the best thing is to give them an overview and again get them involved. Particularly asking their opinions and what they think will make them feel like they are centre stage which is the position they love to be.

2.1.4 The Amiable:

As the name suggests the one thing amiables dislike is conflict. They are a strange group in that they don't have the characteristic strengths that some of the other groups have to bring to a team. However they are very much like the oil in an engine what they will do is smooth out the conflicts that are within an organisation or team. As the name suggests they are very fair and even handed people and so the principal thing they will look for in their communication or presentation is the fact that you have formed opinions on a fair and even handed basis. So they will want to see both sides of an argument not just the side of the information that you want to present because it supports your argument.

2.1.5 Your relationship with the audience

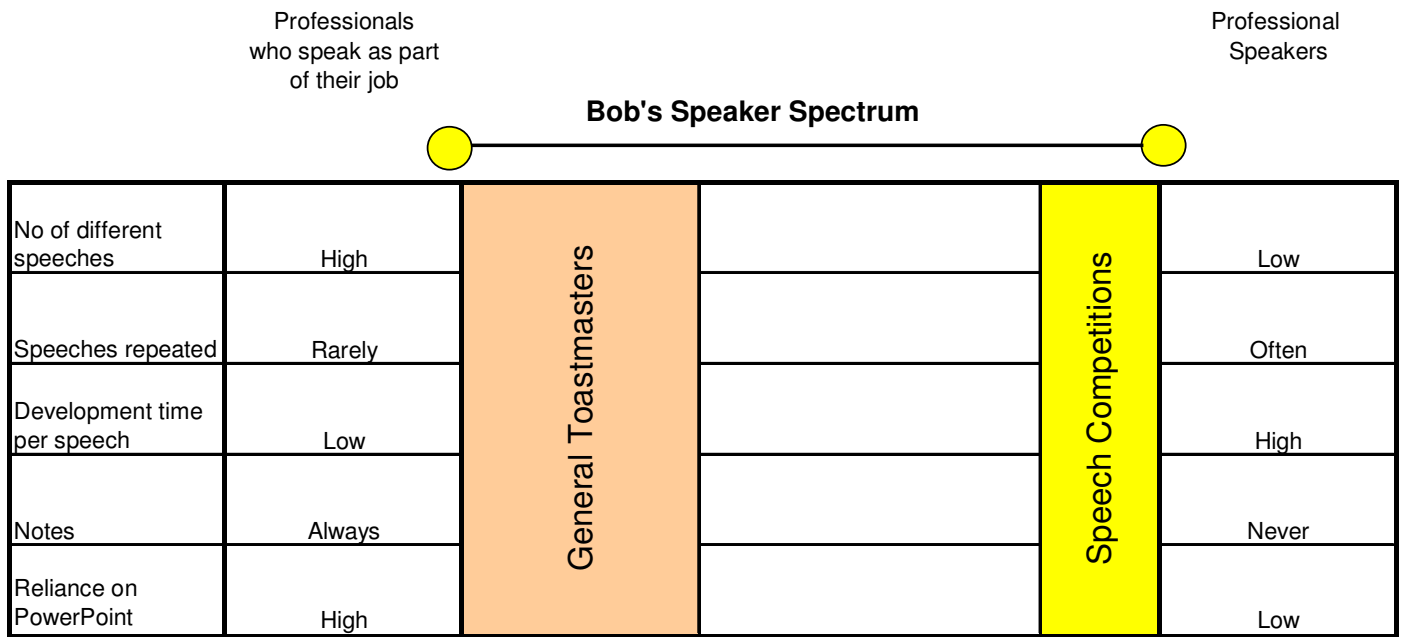
Your presentation will vary according to your relationship with the audience. There are generally three types of presentation.

1. A presentation as an expert.
Sometimes you'll be asked to present where you're clearly the expert. You will have the knowledge and you will be informing other people of your knowledge. In that case the presentation is very much about you devolving your knowledge to members of the audience and where the key aspects is to remember that they may not have the same inherent knowledge as you so you will have to adjust the level of your presentation to match their understanding.
2. Presentation to your peers.
Sometimes you'll have to present information to your peers. In this case your peers will have very similar levels of knowledge to you that's not just a question of you devolving all your knowledge, more of a question of you passing on your experiences to them and asking them to compare it with theirs. This is far more likely to be a discussion type presentation where you're going to tell them what you've seen, what it meant to you, and then ask them for their opinion.
3. Presentation to your superiors.
This presentation often makes people more nervous than any other sort as they are presenting information to people who they may feel know far more than they do. But this needn't be the case. In these conditions the best presentation to give is like that of a reporter. So you would report the facts tell what you've seen perhaps tell them what conclusions you came to and then again ask them to look at their experience and see if they can validate it for you. They're very unlikely to feel miffed about being asked to expand on their considerable knowledge!

Before I start writing a presentation I like to produce a stakeholder analysis. This is where I go through all the stakeholders that are likely to be involved in an event and that needn't be just the presenter in the audience, and see what it is that we all want from the presentation. That way we can see that we do make the presentation targeted to the needs of the audience.

3. The process of writing your presentation

There are many reasons for delivering a presentation. We are maybe having to report on technical information or results as part of our job .Some of you will be presenting at networking events to represent your business and explain to others what you do. In fact there are whole range of speeches and how you prepare and deliver your presentation will depend very much on what sort of presentation you are giving. To understand what you need I've developed the speaker spectrum which is shown below in



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Figure 2 -Speaker Spectrum

3.1 The Speakers Spectrum

There are two ends to the speaker spectrum. On the right hand end of the bar are professional speakers i.e. those who speak for their living. At the left-hand end I've put professionals who speak as part of their job in other words they are no less polished than the people at the right but instead of speaking as a career they speak as a part of their job. You will see many sorts of jobs where people have to speak at different levels. Certainly most people have to make a presentation at some time, managers are often having to present to pass information up the line, and for politicians it is one of the prime requirements to be able to speak confidently in public. But they all have different needs for the speeches. Let's have a look at some of those differences and to see how they affect our preparation.

The first row is the number of speeches. It can be quite surprising to people that professional speakers tend to have very few speeches. What they do is take one or two key speeches and polish them and polish them and deliver them to many different audiences. Therefore it is no surprise that development time of their speech is generally high because they will do many practices and trials before they're happy to take a speech at commercially. It should also be no surprise that they rarely use notes because by the time you've polished a speech lovingly several months and repeated it 20 times you'll find there is very little need for notes. They tend not to use PowerPoint although PowerPoint has its strengths, as we will see later on, and they repeat their speeches on many occasions. Their model is like the old time music hall where a comedian would develop a 20 minute set of material and then take it to every town in the country delivering it to different audiences.

At the left-hand end where people speak as a part of their job the number of different speeches they deliver are generally very high. This is because they may be asked to present on one set of material and then the next week it will be a different set of material and so on. Because the speech is not going to be repeated and because there is such a diversity of material they tend to spend very little time on the development of each speech and for that reason they often use notes. We will discuss later how to use notes but remember there is nothing wrong with it. It's being able to use notes successfully that is important not trying to do without them just because you've seen professionals do without them. This group tends to rely more on PowerPoint and sometimes that can be good because it can show valuable information and sometimes it can be bad when people try to use it as a replacement for their notes. These speeches are rarely repeated and therefore they are not worth all the time and preparation that a professional speech would demand.

3.2 Keep a log book

Depending on which end of the speaker spectrum you are will influence how you are going to prepare. If you're going to be a professional then you will want to gather plenty of information so that you can use it to develop your speeches at your leisure. Creative information is infuriatingly absent when you sit down to write and so it's important that you collect it in a suitable place. Many of you will know that I continually use a logbook and in that logbook I write down every observation that I see that will illustrate a speech. Later on I go on to transfer them into a database and then when I'm writing a speech I go back through all these observations and see if there are any suitable. If you find yourself being drawn towards being an expert on the subject then it's well worth making the effort to record your observations on how people all projects respond to your area of expertise so that when you come to deliver a presentation you have plenty of examples to call on illustrate your points.

3.3 Layout your structure

When you're writing think about how you're going to get the information out as part of the creative process. I particularly think while I pace so when I'm thinking I like to walk around and talk and scribble ideas down on paper I like to lay them out on the table and move them around until I get the sort of order and structure that I like. Some people go straight to PowerPoint and start writing. I would suggest you avoid that, as typing on a computer tends to

engage the left brain more than the right brain as I can be very hard to come up with creative ideas that you need when you're writing. To me it's far more important to get the information out in the first place then it is to worry about its order its sequence and how it fits on the page. There is plenty of time to do that later when you have the right order and the right information put together.

Once you've got all the information available for your presentation you have to start thinking about putting into a structure. The first stage of this is to do an outline of the key points. Figure 3 below shows a simple hierarchy of points that I suggest you all start with.

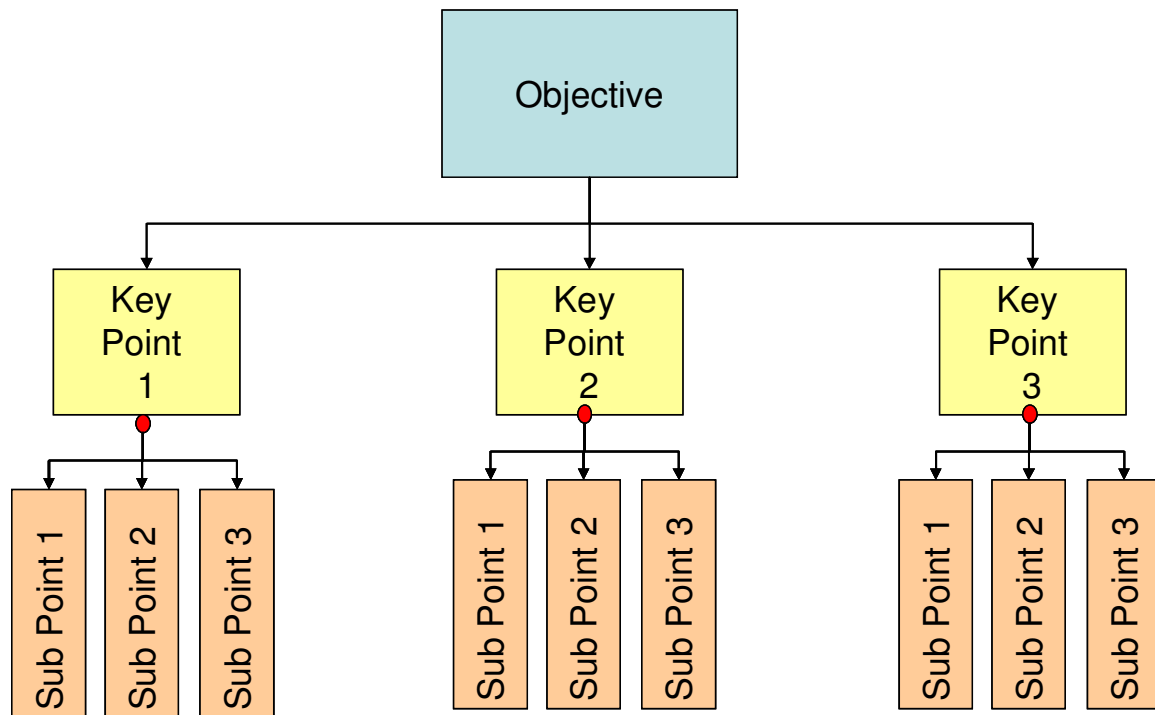


Figure 3 – Hierarchy of Points for structure

At the top is your objective for the presentation. This is the whole reason for you making the presentation.

Remember we have to begin with the end in mind. Sometimes it can be very hard to do that at the beginning so perhaps you then have to go on and breakdown the presentation into its key points so you can see exactly what you are trying to achieve. For instance the purpose of this presentation is to give you the tools to be able to put together a good technical presentation.

The two parts of that, is developing a presentation and delivering a presentation then beneath each of those are six or seven points. When you lay out your material like this it gives it a good flow and also gives you a good idea of how all the information fits together and which points impact on others.

Another benefit comes when you're trying to write your speech. Now instead of having a two-hour speech to put together on how to deliver great technical presentations there are 13 or 14 points. In two hours that only allows you somewhere around eight minutes per point. So then rather than having to be concerned with writing a speech or presentation that is two hours long you can split it up into writing 13 or 14 speeches are eight minutes long. Not only is that a lot easier but it also has big implications when you come to rehearsal. If your presentation is about persuading people that you have reached a correct decision or answering their questions on a certain subject it is likely that the second row of topics is likely to reflect Rudyard Kipling's six honest serving men.

"I have six honest serving men, they taught me all I knew. Their names were what and why and when, and how and where and who."

3.4 7 easy ways to structure a talk

Structures are important in any form of presentation for three main reasons:

1. They make it easy for you to write your presentation
When you use a structure it forms the skeleton of a presentation and all you have to do is hang the meat around each of the bones. Having a strong structure makes it very much easier for you to fill in the information and breaks it down into manageable chunks.
2. It makes it easy for you to remember your presentation.
Having a logical structure means that you will hold that skeleton in your mind when you're presenting. So rather than being concerned with try to remember what comes next on a word by word places, which will see in rehearsals can be very dangerous, you will you will just work from structure point to structure point so that your mind is free to bring back the meat on the bones which you already know in your own mind anyway.
3. It makes it easy for the audience to understand your presentation.
Having information presented in a logical fashion makes it easy for audiences to understand where the information shall be stored as it is delivered. They know just where to put it in their overall map of your speech or presentation. A good structure will also improve the chances that the audience will remember your information because they too will remember the structure and remembering each point will bring back the information. For people were at the left of the speaker spectrum i.e. those that speak as part of their job and therefore don't have a lot of time to prepare presentations, understanding structures is very powerful tool in their armoury. What they will have to do when they called on to speak is learn to structure their thoughts very rapidly. Quite often you can speak successfully from nothing more than just an outline structure of the information you want to pass on. Particularly for those who speak at work, structures are a quick and ready way to prepare yourself for an ad hoc or impromptu speech.

On the next page, Figure 4 shows seven standard speech structures. It shows the best place that you can use these structures although there are several that will fit one particular speech. Picking one that suits the way you want to present your material will just make things so much easier.

There is another benefit of understanding these structures in that they will help you with your impromptu speaking. Impromptu speaking is very important part of presentations. It is the sort of speaking that you will use when you're answering questions at the end of the presentation. If you develop the habit of always thinking of the structure that you're going to use to answer a question then you will find very quickly you're able to give a coherent structure and logical answer which always looks very impressive and is bound to boost your workplace credentials.

Structure	Key Points	Purpose
General Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start/middle/end • Intro/body/conclusion • Must have a hook in the intro to answer the question – What's in it for me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lets Audience know where they are • Gets the audience interested in the first few seconds.
PREP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position/Proposition • Reason • Example • Position/Proposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuading • Committed to cause • Selling • Q/A & Interviews
Past/Present/Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we got to where we are • Where we're going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronological • Visionary statement
Problem/Cause/Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the problem • How did it come about • What is the solution (Actual or proposed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business or technical reporting • Problem solution records • Selling (not strong)
AIDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab Attention • Build Interest • Generate Desire (Benefits – what good will come if I do this) • Action – how to get it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales • Call to action • In desire sell "I want that"
Tell/Tell/Tell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell em what's coming in intro • Tell them in detail • Summarise data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational • Training • Business and technical factual reports
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have no summary • Must hold attention because no skeleton – done by each bit must force the question "What happened next" • Leave open loops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surprisingly – stories • More entertaining than factual. • Can be used to portray complex information to un-qualified audience - "Christmas lectures"

Figure 4 – Speech Structures

3.5 For what captures and holds the audience's interest.

A speaker called Andy Bounds who wrote a book on communication called “The jelly effect“ produced a curve of audience’s interest Vs speaking information that looked like this.

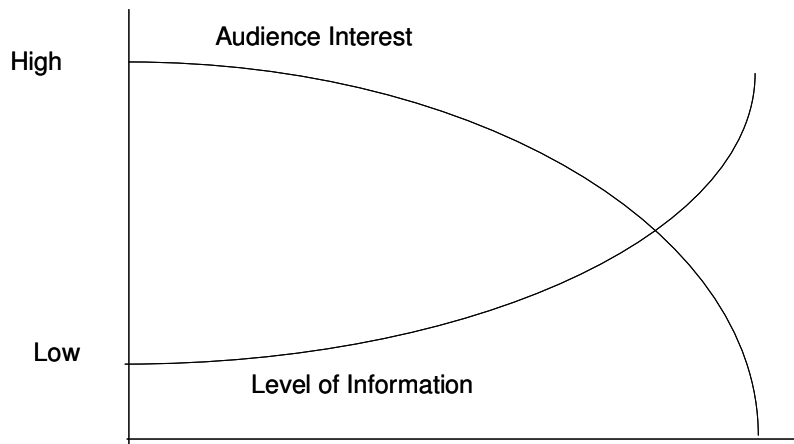


Figure 5 – Interest Vs Importance of information

The curve that starts at the top and drops down is the audiences interest. It starts high at the beginning but as the talk goes on their mind tends to wander. The curve that starts from the bottom and rises up is generally the level of interest the audience have in the information. How many times have we seen a presentation where somebody has started telling you the history of their company or their people, their qualifications, where there premises are, all the things that don't really interest their audiences. Then eventually they get to the bit that's a really interest unfortunately by the time they get there the audience's interest has dropped off. This actually suggest two things to us one we should make sure that our material at the beginning of the presentation is captivating and immediately hits the audiences interest. Secondly we need to structure our talk in such a way that the audiences interest doesn't drop off as Andy's curve.

I'll go on to deal with how to grab an audience's attention right at the beginning of your presentation in the section on opening and closing a speech, but part of the work that we've done in our stakeholder analysis, is deciding what the audience wants. In other words, knowing what need is their WIIFM need, should tell us which information to put right at the beginning so it immediately engages the audience and they understand that this talk is focussed on them. So in this section I want to focus on how we structure our talk to maintain the audience's interest right the way through.

Figure 6 shows to curves of interest that you're generally see from an audience.

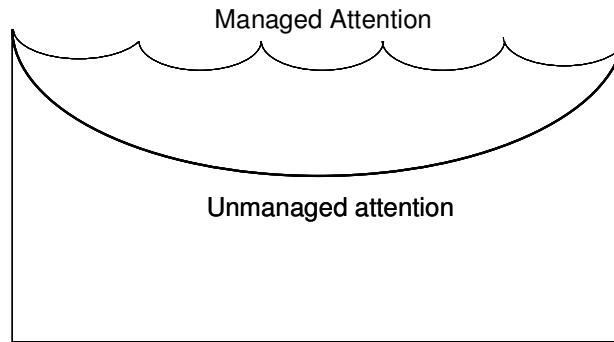


Figure 6 – Attention Span of Audience

The lower line (Unmanaged attention) shows the audience's interest high in the beginning sagging towards the middle and then rising again at the end very similar to Andy's curve. The ability for the audience to recover their attention as a presentation comes towards its end is quite uncanny. It is either triggered by a sense of self-preservation that we don't want to be left daydreaming when everyone gets up at the end of the presentation, or by the word coffee. Now that we've got all our information split up into perhaps 13 or 14 short piece we don't want to join them together so that they appear seamless, as some presenters would have you believe. In fact we want to make as distinct a break between different parts as possible. If we do that what happens to the audiences attention is reflected by the top line (Managed attention). When we start off with the first subject there is a small start of the drift of attention as it moves on but very quickly gets to the conclusion which brings back their focus when we change subject. So a distinct change of subject is a real advantage. If you want evidence of this look no further than the James Bond films. If you've ever been to a James Bond film and come out two and a half hours later and can't believe your watch as to how long you been watching the film, it is because they've been so successful in maintaining your interest you've never had the time to be bored. The way they do this is by showing you a great action sequence for 10 minutes or so, then a bit of story to fill you in on the characters for another 10 minutes or so, and then back to the action so that all the time they're changing the scene to maintain your interest in a very high level. Now that you have your basic information for the presentation there is often an advantage to writing it out. After all if you haven't written it out, it is very difficult to edit it. Now I appreciate that for those of you who are going to speak on rapidly changing subjects this is a stage you don't want to go through, but I'll explain the advantages of it and then you can use your own judgement as to when it's necessary if your speech.

3.6 Why to write your speech?

shows the creativity curve that occurs when we do almost anything creative.

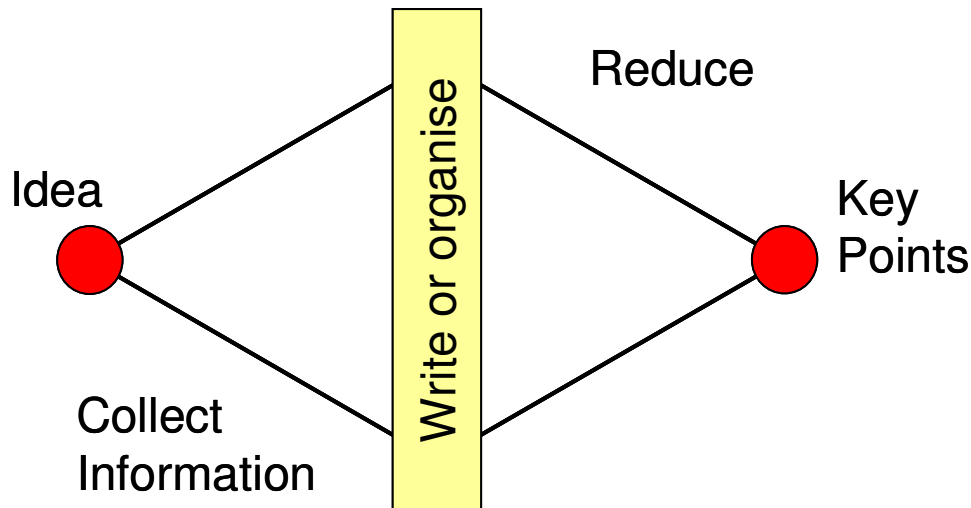


Figure 7 – Creativity Diagram

You'll see that the left-hand side is a divergent path so we start off with a small seed of an idea or our objectives and then our creative thought opens it up so that we generate more information as we break it down into smaller chunks. There comes a point when we should have reached the end of that creative focus. For a good talk that means that we have to then start to close down the information on the other side to a logical conclusion. The bit in the middle is where we have gathered all the maximum creative input and we now begin structuring it down to its logical conclusion. This is where I suggest we start writing. When I write out a speech I like to write it out in the middle third of the page of a A4 so that there are two healthy margins on either side. The reason is that this is where I want to add information into the sides that will help me deliver the speech well. And a number of other things come out of the process of writing your talk.

Firstly we can start to check the audience's ability to understand it. If we put in too much jargon we put in complex words that can make it difficult for our audience to understand what we're saying. There are some tools in the Microsoft Word word processor that will help us. There is a facility on word called 'word count' and that gives us the statistics we need to know for our presentation.

Firstly we need to consider the timing, and word count will give us the number of words that is in our typing. Most people speak somewhere around 120 to 140 words per minute so if you divide the total number of words in your document by 120 and 140 you'll get the slowest and the fastest time of your delivery. This of course is not a complete time because if you have humour or audience interaction you have to allow for it in full but it will certainly show you where the you've written too much for the time that is available. One of the things that nearly always happens when you get amateur speakers, who don't prepare properly, is that they overshoot their time slot because they underestimate the amount of time it will take to deliver their presentation. It is generally the mark of a professional to finish on time.

But more than that, in word count you will find it gives you the total number of characters (without spaces). If you divide the total number of characters by the number of words in your document you get the average number of characters per word. A value of four gives you about a reading age of 13 or 14. A value of six is around postgraduate level. I always aim for my presentations to hit somewhere just under five. That generally means that my presentation will be understood by the majority of individuals. In any presentation I understand that if you're speaking on an especially complex subject, for instance chemistry, where there are lots of long words, these guidelines will be reasonably meaningless but nevertheless they're a good guide to how complex the words are in your subject.

It can be incredibly difficult for us as experts in our subject to imagine what it's like to be somebody who knows nothing about the subject. In fact the more expertise you get you will be amazed when you speak to audiences as to how little they know about your subject and the things that you quite often take for granted. So the next test you need to make is for relevancy. As you go through your presentation look at figures and statistics that you have quoted and make sure they would be understandable by people who are not experts in your field. For instance I often talked about tons force and not many people are capable of appreciating what a ton force is because it's quite an abstract concept. However at the time a mini motor car weighed about a ton so when I talk to people about holding up a mini they got some feeling that how heavy a ton was. Another useful tip for helping described things to non-expert is to think in an analogy. Is there a difficult concept that you can describe to people by picking out something similar in life that they will be able to readily understand? If so it will make your presentation far more understandable.

3.7 How to add appropriate humour in serious talks

It doesn't matter how serious your talk is it can almost always be eased along with a little bit of humour. The key is the humour has to be appropriate. Appropriate to the audience, appropriate to the situation and appropriate to the presentation. This means there are always two key forms of humour that we can add that are very low risk.

Firstly observational humour. People will always laugh at things that they know to be true. Things that we can see from observing general human nature or human behaviour. Any time you refer to something in this area, people will see the obvious humour of it and laugh with you. Secondly, self-deprecating humour. It's always an easy target to poke humour at yourself and provided it's done the right way it will add to the enjoyment of the presentation. If you poke a little bit of fun at your characteristics or your behaviour then that's fine. Just be aware not to overdo it is so that you erode your authority on the platform.

Whatever you do avoid jokes like the plague. Telling jokes is a very serious business and people who tell jokes for a career spend hours and hours practising so that delivery is just right. Most of us don't have those abilities nor do we put in the practice so if we put a joke in and it falls flat then it's likely to detract from the presentation rather than add anything to it. Whatever you do I suggest you never start your presentation with a joke because if the audience don't get it and it falls flat then you're left with a rather awkward audience in an awkward silence at the beginning of your presentation.

Of all the skills in writing humour is one of the hardest. John Cleese used to say that it took him a week to write a six minute comedy sketch, so don't think that this is something that can be done easily. However having written your speech down the centre of your page of A4 so that you have two margins, I generally go down one margin and mark in the margin where I see the opportunity to add humour ; where there's something that we all know and share that I can poke a little bit of fun at. So when I come to deliver the speech my jokes are not ad-libs even if they seem like it. They're already scripted in.

An American Olympic athlete is now a professional speaker was quoted as saying that he always puts his most serious points on the back of humour because that's the time when the audience is most attentive they're laughing, their receptive, and it's a great time to hit them with the main point of your speech or presentation. Never underestimate the power of adding humour to a normally dry subject.

3.8 The power of the story

From the structures section I said I come back to the power of the story because stories are so influential that it's worth taking a bit of time to consider them in their own right. Stories are a great asset to any presentation or speech. They do a number of things for us.

1. They are easy for us to remember.

Whenever we are presenting we have to remember the material we're delivering however when retelling the story will be tend to do is rerun the video of that story in

our mind and so it makes it easy for us to remember because all we do is tell the audience what we see in the video replay.

2. Stories nearly always involve emotion and so an audience gets involved in the story and that makes it far more memorable speech is what we want to do is get the audience to remember what we say so hanging the information in the story is a great way to get the audience to build adding.
3. Not only will they remember it lets you tell the story that starts wide characters from their own life into your story so that by the time you're finished it's actually their story and that's why they'll remember it.
4. There is something special about a story that gets an audience to buy into it very much faster than facts and information. So in that sense it acts as a natural hook to pull your audience in and get their attention. Stories at the beginning of the presentation are particularly good because the audience will feel that they are involved right from the start. Stories can also illustrate points incredibly well so by illustrating the points you create what's called "an aha moment" which is where the audience suddenly realised the point that you're trying to make without you having to tell them or explain it implicitly. This is a far more powerful way of learning than just giving out the facts to people.
5. There is also a theory that says will make about facts it normally engages the left-hand side of the brain predominantly because that's the way we store facts in a logical fashion however when you tell a story the story engages the right-hand side of the brain so by delivering your facts in the story you end up engaging both sides of the brain and giving the point over far more effectively.

If we don't use stories then we need to consider the key aspects of the story that help make it such an effective deliverer of material. Firstly there should be no summary at the beginning because that gives away what's going to come and the key to making the story interesting is to build suspense into it. The way you do this is by never-ending the action on the paragraph end, but by giving a slight preview of what's to come. If you watch the soaps there are adept at this when they get to the end of an episode they never finish with a natural end of an action they always leave it hanging in midair so that you as an audience ask the question "What's coming next. I've got to know" and that's what maintains the audience's interest. Another useful feature stories can be open loops. That's where you start off a subject but don't bring it to its natural conclusion in other words leave it hanging. Then when you get to the end of your talk you bringing the conclusion and all the time the audience will be aware that there is something left hanging . Not closing it will heighten their interest as they look for the natural end to the open loop. If you watch some professional speaker's, notably Billy Connolly, he will have five or six loops open at the same time not draw them to a close until the conclusion of his act. If this is not done well it can be confusing to the audience but if it's done well it's a brilliant way to keep the audience's interest alive.

4. Presenting Your Speech

4.1 Developing the right skills

If we go back to the speaker spectrum then we can see that there are a variety of skills that we need as a speaker I'm going to show you some that cover all situations you will have to decide what's appropriate to your presentation and when to use them. But the first thing is to decide roughly where you are on the speaker spectrum because that will let you know what set of skills you're going to need. If you're going to be at the right-hand end, at the professional end, then clearly rehearsal skills and learning your speech will be key because you end up using a minimum of notes.

4.2 Using Notes

If you're going to be at the left-hand side of the spectrum then you're clearly only use notes frequently. As I said before there is no problem with using notes. People often get hung about whether we should use notes or not use notes but that to me that's the wrong argument. What we should be saying is do we use notes well or poorly.

In 1914 Winston Churchill stood in the House of Commons delivering a speech and he forgot his words in mid-flow. He tried several times to regain his position but ultimately he couldn't and he sat down. The newspaper said Churchill was humiliated and he would never speak again in public. And we of course know that that was not true and he went on to be a fine speaker but he never spoke again without his notes available to them. I would reckon if it's good enough Churchill then it's good enough us so I always in some form have notes around the stage.

Ultimately what the client is paying for is your knowledge in your delivery and the information that you passed your audience not whether you can remember two hours of material without having to look at the piece of paper. Look through the professional world where people tend not to use notes and you will still find they always have them available just in case they want to memory jogger.

This contrasts with the left-hand side of the speaker spectrum where people often use notes and there are a number of ways that you can use notes that will help you. I can tell you that at the resignation speech of Michael Martin, the last speaker of the House of Commons, the speeches were by Michael Martin, Gordon Brown and David Cameron. All three of them use notes but in very different ways. Michael Martin read his word for word with a sheet in front of him. As each sheet was finished he passed it to somebody who was at the side of him to take the sheet the way. He had very little eye contact with the house except to look up from time to time at the end of the paragraph. By contrast both Gordon Brown and David Cameron came to the dispatch box with a sheaf of notes. The notes gave more background information and probably the structure of the talk they were going to give for Martin, but although both of them had the notes it rarely seemed like they looked at them. What they did was talk to the house with good eye contact and good gestures, and every now and then looked down at their notes. This is an almost ideal way of using notes. The information and the structure was readily to hand if they needed it but they were able to engage fully with the audience so I repeat the key to effective speaking is not whether or not to use notes but to make sure you can use them effectively if you have to here are some other ways that you can use notes that might help you.

1. 6x4 cards or 5 x 3 cards.
Write the key point is to your presentation on May 5 x 3 or 6 x 4 card in fact if you find that your hand will not accommodate 5 x 3 card just cut them down to a size that you find comfortable in the palm of your hand. The easy choices are the white index cards that you can find in my station is that I tend to buy pink ones because when you've got white card in your hand and you hand gesture then the card white card will flash where is if you use a pink one it blends in with the colour of your hand better and the audience will hardly notice it get into the habit of looking at your notes picking up the next block of information and then delivering straight to the audience with a little bit of practice this use becomes almost seamless and the audience won't notice that you're glancing at the cards in your hand.
2. Mind maps.
Mind maps are the trademarked method of learning information developed by Tony Buzan. It consists of a almost picture like set of notes that feature colours shapes and keywords in a way that makes it particularly easy for you to remember. In the original iMac form all the key points sprout off a central cloud but I personally find it difficult to work on the left-hand side of the page where the information is almost running backwards and so I use a derivative of mind maps which I call speech maps. In a speech map the information runs down the page in the same logical sequence as you develop it however it still uses the elements of colour and shape to make them memorable.

3. PowerPoint. I know I said you shouldn't use PowerPoint as your form of notes however on the latest editions of PowerPoint there is something called the presenter view and the presenter view allows you to look at your notes at the side of the screen without the audience seeing them this is a good aide memoir and it also lets you see where you are in your slides.

Whichever form of notes you decide to take, practice with them regularly because the more you practice with them the more natural you will become with them and the more natural your presentation will look irrespective of the fact that you're using notes. If I want to put notes on a stage where I can see them rather than use the built-in lecterns which tend to be stuck in the corner I carry around a music stand on the music stand and sit in the middle or just where I want it in the stage. By lowering the stand to a position the eye can see, but is somewhere lower than your waist it means I can still fully see the notes and yet the audience don't feel it is a barrier to our interaction.

4.3 Confident presenting

For me there's only one real way to be a confident presenter and that's to get stage time. Stage time is where you're presenting in front of an audience and the more that you do the more confident you will become. I know it's not the message some of you will want to hear because you have an apprehension of speaking in public anyway, but believe me once you get to grips with it you wonder what all the fuss was about.

The best way to get stage time and get in front of an audience is to go to Toastmasters International. In the UK Toastmasters is a bit of a misleading name because it has nothing to do with the red coated emcees who look after events. What is this is the world's biggest public speaking and leadership organisation that helps train people to be confident in leadership positions and to speak in front of any audience. One of the best bits about it is that it's all run on the same basis not-for-profit so no one is taking any big fees and it therefore forms probably the most cost-effective form of training you can ever get. All you ever pay to Toastmasters club is the cost of the consumables and the biggest one is normally the rent of a room. I personally pay around £100 for a whole year that is 23 meetings so it's a pretty cost-effective way of building your skill.

There are clubs all over the country and find out where they are if you go to the UK and Ireland website which is at www.d71.org you will find a list of every club and who to contact. If you want to know where all the clubs are in the world or to see the benefits of Toastmasters from the world headquarters website then go to www.toastmasters.org and you'll see all the free downloads that it has to offer. For those of you not ready to go to Toastmasters just yet (although I would suggest that everyone is ready to Toastmasters) then here are some tips on how to succeed at public speaking which originated from Toastmasters and I've added my own slant on some of them.

10 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC SPEAKING

Feeling some nervousness before giving a speech is natural and healthy. It shows you care about doing well. But too much nervousness can be detrimental. Here's how you can control your nervousness and make effective, memorable presentations:

1. Know the room. Be familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.
2. Know the audience. Greet some of the audience as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to a group of strangers.
3. Know your material. If you're not familiar with your material or are uncomfortable with it, your nervousness will increase. Practice your speech and revise it if necessary.
4. Relax. Ease tension by doing exercises.
5. Visualize yourself giving your speech. Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and assured. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful.
6. Realize that people want you to succeed. Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They don't want you to fail.
7. Don't apologize. If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you have with your speech, you may be calling the audience's attention to something they hadn't noticed. Keep silent.
8. Concentrate on the message - not the medium. Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and outwardly toward your message and your audience. Your nervousness will dissipate.
9. Turn nervousness into positive energy. Harness your nervous energy and transform it into vitality and enthusiasm.
10. Gain experience. Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking. A Toastmasters club can provide the experience you need.

One of the keys to appearing relaxed is to get control of your breathing because it's a major driver in how we come over to audiences. If you're breathing rapidly and shallow you'll come across nervous and you will feel nervous inside. As a few slow breaths down but not too deep then you'll come over calm and collected.

4.4 Body Language

Body language has a big impact on how we appear on the stage. As well as the general body language of appearing confident there are other ways we want to use body language to make a good impression with the audience and to make sure they get the message we want to deliver.

Start with a positive body language alert, up right, relaxed and able to walk around the stage confidently. But as well as just walking round the stage to make sure you make contact with all the individual parts of the audience you can use the stage to define timelines so if you were to start from the left-hand side of the stage when you were a child and tell the audience about you growing up and walk across the stage as you did it they would learn to associate certain parts of the stage with the age that you were.

Gestures are another important part of body language. One of the main things we need to do is make sure that our gestures reinforce the message and we don't just end up waving our arms around wildly because we can't think of anything better to do with them. Going back to the part where I suggested you write your speech down the middle of a sheet of A4 one side was to put humour in, and now the other side is where I suggest you choreograph your speech. If you can add the gestures and facial expressions that you want in the margin, when you come to rehearse them you're always gesturing at the right time in the speech and that way the gestures will start to become natural.

I mentioned facial expressions there because most of the audience will work from a visual reference which means that anything you do that has visual impact will go to them very quickly.

So making expressions with your face, smiling at them to build rapport, or adding emotive expression at particular parts in your speech will have a big impact because the audience can see it. Just remember that if you want to facial expression to carry its full value then it's best to pause while you make the gesture in the first place so the audience can see it and then it doesn't get trampled on by your mouth moving while you speak.

The final part of body language is a eye contact. It is important to keep a confident eye contact with the audience all the time. There are many speakers who while they think tend to look down at the stage and it can be very distracting for an audience so try and hold your eye contact all the time. One of the best ways of doing that is to imagine that you're going to draw a giant Z across the audience. You can start at the back left-hand corner and what your eyes and a slow pace across the back row of the room. When you get to the back right-hand corner then start on a diagonal that leads you over to the front left-hand corner picking up all the people who are sitting very close that I ignore as you go with your eye contact. Then you run across the front of the room until you reach the front right-hand corner and finally backed down the other diagonal to where you started in the back left-hand corner. You'll find that no matter what size the audience if you stick to that pattern you're pretty much pick up everyone in the audience. And remember you don't have to make individual eye contact with everyone when you've got a big audience if you look at a group all of them will think that you made eye contact with them so you don't have to think about everyone individually.

4.5 How to grab and keep the audience's attention

I already mentioned in the section on structuring your talk, that you had to make your talks break down into several sections so that every time you change section it keeps your audience's attention. But the first part of speaking is to grab the audience's attention in the first few seconds and to do that we probably need a hook. To hook the audience in what we need is a really good opening so here are some tips on openings.

What is the purpose of your opening?

Your opening has to fulfil a number of objectives if it is going to be successful. I think these are :

- To hook the audience into your speech which can be done several ways
 - Give feeling of suspense of what's to come, maybe by adding drama.
 - Create a compelling interest
 - To intrigue the audience
 - To get them thinking
- To sow the seeds of the theme of your talk.
- To connect with them mentally and emotionally
- They are offer four functions of an opening to which I would offer the following thoughts:
- Get *attention* - yes *but it's far more than that*
- Introduce the topic - yes in training structures like Tell *Em, Tell 'Em, Tell 'Em but in a

normal talk, tag it on after you've achieved the three objectives above.

- Establish Rapport - yes in the sense of connecting emotionally but you should only be friendly and smiling when it's appropriate to the speech.
- It should only be 5-10% of speech

So what form can they take?

- Story - They're powerful and get the audience involved. Just make it personal
- A question - *can* be combined with a quote
- Give them time to answer
- Questions can engage emotions/memories by saying "can you remember" rather than "have you ever"
- Past or Future as a comparison. Again evoke people's memories or engage their dreams. Can you remember, or imagine a future.
- A fact or statistic with high impact .Make it real by involving the audience business people going bust
- Analogy/Metaphor great see article
- Saying or quotation - Make sure its relevant
- Reference occasion - perhaps look up history talk about thing
- Is humour appropriate in an opening ? Absolutely but not a joke

4.6 Using visual aids and props

Remember that we all take in information visually so that using props is a great way to anchor your presentation in the audience in mind. I've been to many speech contests where there might have been eight or nine speakers in a row but without exception the speech that people remember is always the one with a vivid prop and if you are trying to build a reputation then using one prop consistently will mean that people remember you as the person who uses that prop just think of Charlie Chaplin and his bowler hat and cane.

Some of the props that I demonstrated on the evening were my moneymaking box for which I'm quite famous round Hertfordshire, my stick (STIC) which I use for communication talk: show ,tell, inform and commit.

I may have shown you the block of foam that are used in the talk about the Columbia space shuttle and I definitely didn't show you a bowl of blancmange because I didn't bring it in this presentation when I use my bowl of blancmange in a networking group people were talking about me for months afterwards as the man with the blancmange. So be creative with your props and if you pick a good ones stick with it because it will help raise your profile and help people remember you no end.

I'm going to talk in the next section about using PowerPoint, but let's not forget the humble flipchart. I know sometimes thought of as not fashionable to use a flipchart when we got wonderful graphics on computers and we can make slides as we wish. But the flipchart is still useful for allowing us to collect information from an audience during a presentation. This means that you can ask the audience's question get their feedback and use it later on in your presentation by referring back to it effectively, but it also means that the audience will feel involved because when you're asking them questions and putting up the answers on the flipchart they will see that you're responding to what they say.

4.7 PowerPoint, Saint or sinner

There's always a lot of talk about whether PowerPoint is a positive or negative influence on a presentation. Many say that PowerPoint kill' presentations and then it's not a good vehicle to use when you're doing a talk. However it is almost neutral (not quite, almost) what kills presentations is poor presenters not PowerPoint. PowerPoint used well is a very effective way of delivering some aspects of a presentation to your audience. There is a slight negative tendency to PowerPoint in that it forces is to build everything into a hierarchy that is not always natural in our presentation, providing you're not obsessed with delivering bullet points then you'll find PowerPoint are very useful ally.

With this set of notes you should be able to download the slides that I used in the presentation and I hope they help you remember the key points I was making at the time. Just remember that when PowerPoint is on and you are delivering an impersonal factual message went PowerPoint is off then you are delivering a personal message that will build rapport with the audience and that's exactly what we want.

4.8 Effective rehearsal techniques

Once again he will have to refer to your speaker spectrum to see which rehearsal techniques are appropriate for you. If this is a speech that you want to repeat time and time again because it has value for your business then it's very well worth spending the time rehearsing. If this is a speech where you're delivering it is a one off just to update people on progress and then you're going to move on straight away you obviously don't want to spend the time on rehearsal. I'm going to share with you some great rehearsal techniques and then you will have to decide which is appropriate to your level of presentation.

4.8.1 5x3 cards

If you are using 5x3 cards and you want to rehearse your speech then the best way to do it is start sometime before the presentation, going through, getting used to looking at the card, seeing the keyword on there and then just speaking without further reference to the card. What that will do is get used to seeing the heading on the keywords and speaking straight away. When you get close to the presentation time I suggest that you take all your cards number them so that if they fall on the floor you do know what order to put them back in and spread them out on the bed or wherever you rehearse. Then shake them up in a random order. Then pull one card out and just start speaking from what you see is the keywords in the headings. Very quickly you'll get used to the fact that your mind is triggered by what's on the card not the sequence in which you wrote them so if you happen to be speaking and in the middle of a section you can't remember some of the stuff you wanted to say then just move on to the next card and a new heading will bring back the next set of information.

4.8.2 Speech maps

Remember I said I use speech maps which is a modified form of Tony Buzan's mind maps. They are a colourful way of remembering your information but the best part about them is as you write them down it fixes them in your mind as a visual pattern and so it makes it a lot easier for you to remember what's coming up on your speech. This form of visual representation is so useful and if you learn to do it quickly is exactly the sort of technique that you can use when you're put on the spot and you have to speak at very short notice. Anything that you can out in terms of diagrams or pictures or images will again strengthen your memory.

You may have noticed that we are focusing on the structure and the blocks of the structure of your talk rather than thinking about it as one long chain of information. Learning to speak your presentation is one long chain is not helpful because if you forget where you are it's very hard to mend the link in the chain where as if yours think of your talk is a series of blocks it doesn't matter where you forget your words you can always move onto the next block.

Recording

I know that buying a voice recorder is not in everyone's budget but it really is the best way to do a number of things. Firstly I always record everything I do that way I'm able to listen back to it later in the comfort of my own house and see exactly what I've done. Also if I got the choice I will video

my presentations because the world's biggest critic of you will be you and any time you get to see your own presentation back it gives you great information. But voice recorders are also really handy when it comes to preparing for speech because what you can do is record you practising your speech and then put it on a CD which you drop in your car on your MP3 player or whatever you listen to your music on, unless you drive around you will take in your talk as a osmosis process so you will just naturally absorb it. This is a really good way to learn and it's the way they often teach children to learn things because while you're listening your brain is also thinking so you going to think of it like you're a member of the audience and additional thoughts are reinforcing the message that you're delivering verbally. One other great use of video recorders is to look at your own body language and see what you're doing while you're on the stage. I know some people advise that you can do that by looking in the mirror I personally think that's very hard for a speaker to do because while you're looking in the mirror and thinking about your body language is very hard to think that the words are meant to be saying so I would prefer to practice my speech video recorded and then watch back to see what happens.

4.9 Dealing with question and answer sessions

It is important to learn the skill of dealing with questions and answer sessions. If you give an informative talk is almost certain that people will have questions and they want to ask you at the end, and if you're giving a presentation to the driver type audience as I said before you're better off to do just a short overview and then let them ask questions and deal with the questions. So here are some tips that will help you when you're thinking about answering questions in front of an audience.

1. Listen for the main point from the question.
This requires focus and attention on the question so make sure you give them your full attention while they're asking the question and answer the clarification or even perhaps an example if you're still not sure.
2. Ask for clarification if necessary.
Don't be concerned if you don't understand the first time I asked the question rather than try and answer the wrong question go back and ask them for clarification or even perhaps *an* example.
3. Be informal in the Q&A session it will help people feel relaxed about addressing the speaker.
This is not a trial by fire is nearly always a genuine attempt for the audience to understand more. Surely there are times when you'll get someone who wants to show their own cleverness or just wants to be argumentative however therein the rare minority. Most people will just want to understand more about the information you've given them.
4. Watch the questioners body language when you're answering .
See if they are comfortable or not - if they look uncomfortable ask them whether you're addressing their point properly.
5. If you don't know the answer say so otherwise you'll get egg on your face
There's nothing worse than trying to answer a question that you don't know the answer to. They will lower your credibility in the eyes of the audience and you will feel full list at the end of it. I would suggest if you don't know that you say to people how sorry I can't answer that right at the moment but I'll look into it and if you give me your e-mail address I'll send you an e-mail with my answer. At least that way you take it off-line.
6. Stay on target with your answer.
Don't let it drift into something irrelevant. Answers to questions should be relatively short and targeted. Don't use them as an excuse to add extra material in order to drift off target so that the audience lose interest. If they recognise that you are not answering the question they will switch off.

7. Use a structure as the basis of your answer
 - a. Build ability to answer succinctly
 - b. Use a standard structure - such as :
 - i. Beginning/middle/end
 - ii. Past/present/future
 - iii. Problem/cause/ solution
 - iv. PREP - Position/Reason/example/position

8. Don't feel obliged to give a full answer.

Remember you are there trying to help the audience member but if they're leading the topic in an area you're either not sure of all you don't feel is relevant to the presentation don't feel obliged to try give the answer. Again if it's a long subject perhaps invite the questioner to discuss it afterwards.
Remember - You don't have to answer

9. Don't be afraid of any question.

Once you're confident that you've got techniques that will help you put aside questions that you don't have to answer there is no reason why you should be afraid of any question. But if you should want to build extra confidence and your presentation ask someone who knows the subject you're presenting on to listen to your presentation and ask you that six toughest questions they can think up. Everything yourself can you think of any tougher questions. Once you've got a series of tough questions write down your model answers for them so that if someone in the audience comes up with that then you've got some preparation ready to dish out and all you have to avoid is the smug look on your face because you predicted the tough questions that were coming.

10. Don't counter punch.

Counterpunching can sometimes be very tempting if you get someone who comes up with an insulting remark or impugns your integrity. However you should avoid it at all costs. It is possible for it to escalate conflict between you and an audience member very quickly and once that happens the whole audience will start to slide with the other audience member because none of them want to be treated like that even if they came up with an awkward question that started in the first place. So when you get an awkward position like that then have your own defensive phrase such as I'm sorry you feel like that and move on to another audience member. The audience I have far more sympathy knowing that you're trying not to let the situation escalate and if you try to counterpunch.