



Do you know how to influence your audience? Talk to both brains!

"If you want to be a succesful presenter, appeal to both ratio and emotion" in a presentation.

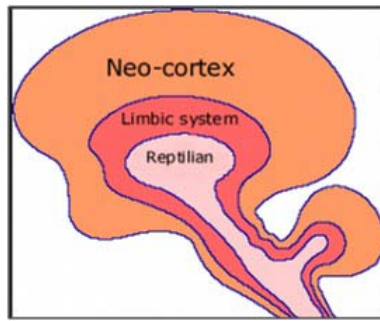
This is one of the key messages, that I attempt to convey to my trainees. As a public we not only need to hear argumentation, theory, structure, figures and models. We would like to see the previous underpinned with metaphors, examples, anecdotes and pictures.

Only then, experience learns, does the message and information really sink in and something extra will happen. The public will get inspired, convinced or will come into action.

Read in this months newsletter, why this works as it works and what you need to do in your presentation to get people on your side.

In a wonderfull TedCom presentation Simon Sinek explains, why only data and argumentation are not enough to really convince people. "There is a biological reason to it" he explains.

Our oldest part of the brain is the Reptilian brain. The newer part is the "Limbic system" and the newest part of our brain is the "Neo-cortex".



Our newest brain the Neocortex is responsible for our ratio, language and our analyzing ability. This is the part that makes it possible for us to process large quantities of data and figures.

The Limbic system is responsible for feelings like loyalty and trust. And this part of your brain does not know language. And here it comes. The Limbic system is the part of our brain that is responsible for our behaviour and our decision-making!

In short, if you really want to influence people, you also need to be able to talk to and communicate with the Limbic part of the brain of your audience! Appealing to only ratio is not enough!!

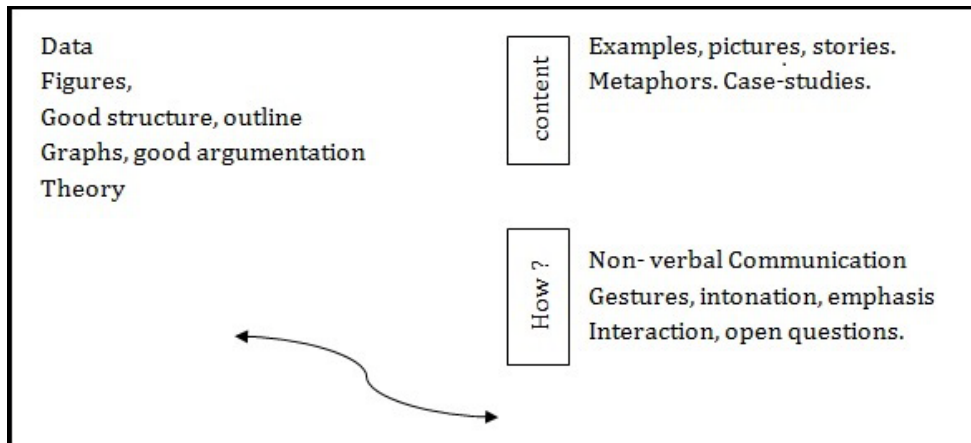
This explains why we sometimes do not buy a product, whereas all the wonderful features are summarized on the packaging. We might say, mwahhh this is all very nice, but it just does not **feel** right. We use the verb feel, because it derives from our limbic brain and again this is where our behaviour and decision-making comes from.

Knowing this. What can you do to speak to both brains of your audience ?

For instance, in your introduction, not only appeal to the ratio by only mentioning the goal, gain and structure. But, start with an anecdote, a question or showing a picture. These are the things you can do to also talk to the Limbic brain.

In the middle part of your presentation, do not only make sure that your structure, argumentation, theory, graphs and figures are up to scratch But, underpin this material with pictures, good examples, metaphors, case-studies and anecdotes.

Besides the "content" part appealing to emotion (like examples) just mentioned, also the manner in which you will bring the information across, will speak to the Limbic part of your public's brain. Like the use of your voice and your non-verbal behaviour to underpin what you say.



RATIO

+

EMOTION

In your ending part. Not only mention your conclusion. But, if you can, use as a form a message, like "I believe". A message speaks to the limbic part, because again it touches more on our feeling and is more personal. For instance, instead of: "therefore, my conclusion is that it is effective to appeal to both brains".

Use:

"**I believe**, that every presenter should talk to both brains, if he/she really wants to be effective."

My message to you is: also talk to the Limbic system (including emotion) of your audience in a presentation. It will move your public, both in a literal way as in a figurative sense. Cause only then something extra will happen: The public will get inspired, convinced or will come into action.

Good luck with it!



Do you know the secret of truly great speakers? Presentation Zen!

"Many great speakers and entertainers" do this. These were the words of Johan Simons. One of the quests in the popular Dutch television programme "Zomergasten". Johan Simons has been a Dutch theatre director for over 25 years. Nowadays he works for the Municher Kammerspiele, an authoritative theatre company.

I was cheering on my couch, cause this famous director was explaining what many people do not realize or aren't conscious about. It was as if Simons and I were speaking the same "secret" language. Read down below what it is and become more conscious of this magical ingredient. An ingredient that makes you do the things you do automatically, effortlessly and at the same time is highly effective.

After showing a film fragment of Toon Hermans (Dutch entertainer/stand-up comedian), Simons remarks: "What he does is going into himself and then going out again to the public". "Many great speakers do this". As an example he mentions Obama. "This is also a speaker that has a lot of contact with himself".

What is Simons talking about? He is talking about attention and focus. The attention and focus of great speakers and entertainers is not only aimed at the public, but also on themselves!!!

Simons continues: "It means that I speak to you, but at the same time I also have attention for myself. To verify, does this still work, what shall I do next? Great speakers and entertainers are continuously checking up within themselves. He (Obama) goes completely inside, reflects and then goes outside again. This is the characteristic of a great speaker and entertainer".

The above description might give you the impression that this is a very complex process that might take ages. But, this process can be done in split-seconds and yet makes all the difference. It has nothing to do with working hard (although it is a continuous process). It is a matter of being able to broaden or change focus, be it inside, outside or broadening it and having focus on yourself and the public at the same time.

To make it more concrete for you, I will explain to you how I first learned about changing focus and its magical effect. The story of my first massaging lesson. While massaging my fellow participant, I was truly not having a clue of what I was doing. I looked around, trying to look at what others were doing.

Then the teacher paid me a visit. Before you start, she said, first make contact with yourself. Meaning, feel yourself, focus, have attention for your hands and fingers. Starting from there, go into contact with the person who you are massaging.

All of a sudden it went automatically and effortlessly! Like great speakers and entertainers. It worked like magic. So simple, yet so effective.

Using a baseball metaphor. It is about touching base first. Or actually, never really leaving it and keep on touching it and at the same time remain open to what is happening outside of you.

Now this seems very simple and it is. However, for many people it is difficult to apply. Simply, because we are so focussed on the outside world all the time, that it has become more difficult to keep in contact with our base. Yet regaining this connection, is what is needed to be truly effective as a speaker. Mind you, not only while speaking, but also for massaging and many, many other things (think mindfulness).

This exact phenomenon is something I teach and that I label as "Presentation Zen". If students adapt this (there are a few tools to attain this) they tend to slow down while speaking, since they all of a sudden become far more conscious of what they say. They in general find it easier to let pauses or silences play a part in their presentations and they tend to become more themselves while speaking. In short they become a truly great speaker in their own right!



Do you know how to convince people? Be a sailingboat!

Often people have fantastic ideas, and often these ideas end up in the lowest drawer of their desk. Because we all have been there. It is not easy to get people all fired up about your new idea. After the third failed attempt to convince your manager of your ingenious idea, you slink off with your tail between your legs. Your inspiration and motivation reaching rock bottom.

Nancy Duarte's mission is for people to go out into the world and communicate their ideas successfully. So that they get adopted and will resonate with the public. *Cause according to Nancy: "ideas are the most powerful tools people have."*

How then to do this, making people resonate with your idea when presenting it? Read in this month's newsletter, how you can throw your ideas successfully into the world, so that next time you can gloriously convince your manager, board of directors or committee.

Nancy Duarte explains, after have researched this for years, on TEDCOM what it is that makes people resonate with your idea in a presentation. And the answer is nothing less than spectacular! It seems that the law of nature and shape are the answers to this persistent question. The answer is both simple and ingenious.

In her search to find the answer to this key question," how to make people resonate with your idea when presenting it", Nancy Duarte went on a queste for several years. She started with rhetorics by studying Aristotle, then she went on and studied cinema and literature. In her queste she eventually stumbeld upon the shapes that graphically show the structure behind good stories and for example classical music.

Her question then became; what would be the shape of a good presentation?Based

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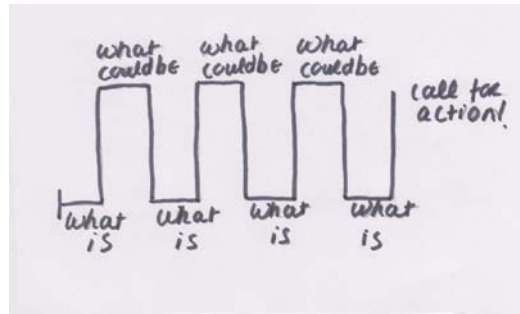
on all her knowledge, she designed a shape and placed this shape on a few of the most iconic presentations namely, the Steve Jobs "2007 I-phone launch" presentation and the "I have a dream" presentation of Martin Luther King". And it worked! Her shape fitted these presentations seamlessly.

The Answer? The shape could be compared with sailing against the wind. When sailing against the wind you have to go back and forth, back and forth. (picture). So you have to actually capture the resistance coming against you, when you sail, to move ahead. In other words like the wind, your audience is going to resist your idea. That is why you have to go back and forth, back and forth, to move ahead, like a sailingboat.

Nancy Duarte even comments "Interesting, if you capture the wind just right, your ship will actually sail faster than the wind itself. It is a physics phenomenon".



What does this mean for you in practise to get people behind your idea? It means that you have to start with what the situation is now, and how unappealing this is. Then you tell the audience how different it will be, once your idea is adopted. Making the gap between the status quo, what is and your idea, what could be as big as possible. And this you will repeat, going back and forth, back and forth, just like the sailing boat. After having mentioned all the problems and subproblems that your idea is going to solve, you will finally end your presentation with a call for action. Stating the new bliss/situation and how we (the public and presenter) must join together to solve this problem.



To make it more concrete. Let's say I want to convince you of how important it is to have a firm presentation foundation before you start making your presentation. Because the firmer your foundation is the more convincing you will be as a presenter. I will start with telling you that 65% of all presentation are not successful, because presenters will overwhelm their audience. Leaving them apathetic, and wanting to go home as fast as possible. Having a clear presentation plan will solve this problem, cause it will force you to make choices from the start in what you will tell and what you want to achieve. Making you a far more successful and effective presenter.

In this next part of my presentation I will mention that another big problem is that people often spend too much time on preparing their presentation in the wrong manner and therefore are not effective at all. I will paint the situation of spending hours and hours, getting more complicated and more detailistic and giving the presenter a lot of stress and gulping up a lot of his/her time slaving away for this presentation.

When the time is there to present, the result will often be a disaster. Having spent lots of time and not even delivering a good end result. A good presentation plan will fix this, since it will force you to work effectively. Working from endresult backwards, you will delete all the unnecessary preparation work. Being focussed, you will, in a relaxed and very effective manner, get the audience enthusiastic about your presentation.

So, in the above I will get back and forth, back and forth between the status quo, not using a presentation foundation and once you have used this idea. Obviously, I will need to be ingenious in really painting the picture of how unglorious, the situation is without this plan, and how glorious it will be with it. After having for instance clearly stated three big sub problems that will be solved with my idea, I can end my presentation with a call for action! For instance: If you want to be convincing as a presenter, use this presentation plan/foundation, before starting to make your presentation!"

Obviously, you genuinely have to believe in your idea and not make things up. It is merely getting people into the story (which is necessary to convince them) and in order to do this you need them to really picture both situations and juxtapose them in a clear

manner.

So, my message to you is: get a piece of paper. Write down how the situation is before your idea, and how your idea is going to change this. Write as many issues down that your idea will change and improve. Describing how ineffective, expensive or time consuming the situation is now and show clearly how your idea is going to change that once it is adopted. Just as important, dedicate time to make it as unappealing and appealing as possible, make it tangible by using examples, images and make it so that people can clearly picture the differences between both situations.

My slogan for this month:

"Go back and forth, back and forth, be a sailingboat!"



The Power of Power-Posing!

Can "power-posing" help YOU, when presenting at a large conference or during an important job interview? Can, our bodies really change our minds?

Amy Cuddy, professor and researcher at Harvard business school even goes further by claiming:

"Don't fake it until you make it, fake it until you become it"

Read down below how Amy Cuddy is a living example of "fake it until you become it", how exactly our bodies do change our minds and what you can do with little effort to positively influence important events, such as a job interview or an important presentation.

Amy Cuddy herself is a living example of her message "fake it until you become it". Early in her college career, Cuddy suffered a severe head injury in a car accident. From being intellectually perceived as being gifted, doctors told her, that she would not regain her mental capacity nor would she even be able to finish her undergraduate degree.

Needless to say, Amy proved her doctors wrong. Currently working as a Harvard professor and researcher. The advice she got "fake it until you make it" was key to her full recovery. And now this is her message to the world.

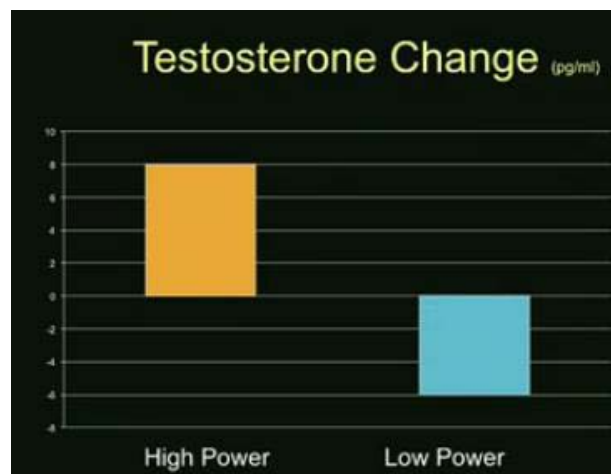
Her life story probably being the ingredient for her curiosity of how the body (our non-verbals) has an effect not only on the outside world, but especially on how they affect our own minds! So, for instance, can standing strongly and talking more

loud and powerful (acting counter intuitive), while being nervous, have an effect on our own minds eventually? Will our minds eventually catch up, with how we behave? Can we fake it, until we make it and eventually, become it?

Amy researched the following hormones; testosterone , responsible for dominance and cortisol, responsible for how we deal with stress. Powerful leaders show high testosterone and low cortisol. You do not want a leader, that gets nervous and jumpy, at the least little thing? Do you? So, a low level of cortisol is needed.

Then there were two groups of people, and they all got a saliva swaps before the test. Then one group did two minutes of power-posing, while the other group did low power-posing postures. Then they got a saliva swab again and the following was the outcome.

The power-posing group had a 20% testosterone increase and the low-power posing group had a 10% testosterone drop compared to their test base levels. Concerning cortisol the power posing group had a 25% decrease, while the low power- posing group had a 15% increase.



Then, Amy took her research one step further. Since, she wanted to know it this power-posing could also change our lives in meaningful ways. Like, for a job interview, a pitch or an important presentation. Some of the people used in the following research, got to do power-posing exercises, the others the opposite, before they were being job interviewed. These interviews were being taped and then shown to people who would select the candidates. Guess what? All the previous power-posers were selected!

Amy hereafter concludes:

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"It is not about the content of the speech, it is about the presence that they are bringing to the speech".

People are bringing their true selves, when they do a presentation or are being interviewed. It is their presence, like confidence, authenticity, passion, enthusiasm, being comfortable or having a captivating presence that seem to really influence people.

So, what can you do for your next presentation? Are you nervous, do you have to speak at a conference for a hundred people, do you have an important job interview ahead of you?

1) Go the toilet and do some power-posing exercises. Make yourself big. Instead of waiting on a chair, all curled up. Let your testosterone rise and your cortisol decline ;-).

2) While, being on stage. Stand firm, have a bit louder than normal voice (not screaming) but put power and energy into it. Take up room and dare to take pauses.

"Fake it until YOU make it and become it",
your mind will eventually catch up with it!!!

Good luck!!!

See, the full interesting presentation of Amy Cuddy on

Ted:[http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are.h
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What can you learn from the Lemur monkey?

As often as I can I make my way to the Artis Zoo in Amsterdam. Cause, I just love watching animals and just love Artis full stop. With its beautiful flowers, plants, sculptures and history. I also often find that nature and animals can teach us a lot. As I discovered only a few weeks ago exploring Artis and learning interesting stuff about this peculiar Lemur monkey.

Learn in this newsletter what you can learn from the Lemur monkey and how you can make the most out of your new working period ahead of you!

The Lemur monkey can teach us that ever so often it is important to scratch and rub ourselves consciously. Instead of only sunbathing for hours on a comfy bed of foliage. So, what has been the case with this cuddling and cute creature? The Lemur monkey did not evolve themselves like the other monkey's did. Other monkey's like for instance the Chimpanzees have a shorter tail, no moustache hairs and have a stumper nose.

While other monkey's evolved themselves in these manners, the Lemur monkey just remained were they were. The reason for this is that they live on the island of Madagascar, where they hardly experience any natural enemies. Therefore, there was no need for change and improvement.

They could lead and still lead a pretty easy non treating life. Sounds, very appealing! The down-side however is that they did not develop themselves and pretty much stayed on the same evolutionary scale.

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The same goes for evolving yourself personally. If there is no need, the majority of people like to keep things as they are and remain comfortable like the Lemur monkey.

However, according to my colleague Lianne Ebbinkhuijsen "successful people challenge themselves structurally. They are stars in being uncomfortable."

"Every day they do something which feels uneasy. They are getting used to doing exciting and unpredictable stuff on a structural basis. They also say that only then they feel they live up to their full potential!"

In short they have created the habit of taking new thresholds on a structural basis. Being uncomfortable often means we are growing and evolving. Or, to put it differently, if we do not rub and scratch ourselves ever so often, we will stay where we are and remain on the same tray of our personal evolution scale. Not living up to our full potential!

So, are you ready for the next tray on your personal evolution scale? Is it time for you to learn how to make your message heard to a large public? Is it time to face your presentation fear? Is it time to learn other skills that can take you a step further coming working period! Then take action and evolve yourself!



How to become memorable? Start sharing!

Last month I described using metaphors in your presentation to become memorable. I compared it with putting a juicy red cherry on a cake.

This month I describe the third and final way to become memorable while presenting. And this powerful tool has existed ever since human kind began to speak. Read more about it, down below.

Why is becoming memorable these days so important? Since, we are increasingly being drowned in information on a daily basis. To stand out, and get your message across these days, it becomes increasingly important to go that extra mile, and find a way to nestle your message in the minds of your audience.

The last couple of years for instance I have heard hundreds of presentations. And most of them I have to say, have been forgotten. Especially the ones that used probs, clear metaphors and stories in their presentation have stuck in my mind.

So, I am talking about using the powerful tool of sharing stories (read also anecdotes, experiences) in your presentation!

In this article I will describe:

- 1) Why you should share stories.
- 2) An example of a story.
- 3) How you should use them, so they inspire your audience and work!

1 Why should we share stories?

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1. **People do not solely want to be informed these days, cause information can be found anywhere.** Besides being informed, people want to be inspired! So, not only providing content, but also telling the audience what you have experienced and what you have learnt.
2. **If you want to keep the attention of your audience, you need to use the "law of movement".** Or in other word, use variation! Besides explaining your research, content, arguments, share a story or experience to underpin it.
3. **People will remember your presentation much better.** Why? Because, by sharing a good story, you'll trigger peoples senses. For instance, you will create images in the minds of your audience and they will think off/remember and feel like experiences. Thereby, they will remember you much easier! This is simply how the mind works.
4. **By sharing a story, people will start to identify with you.** They will automatically think of like experiences, they cannot help it. By identifying with you, they will much easier trust you. People want to work, listen to and deal with people they feel they can trust.

(Maybe needless to say, but your story should of course be authentic. Also your starting point should not be gaining the trust of the audience, but it should be your intention to share an experience and help your audience with it. However, if you tell an authentic story and share your experience, trust will often be a natural result of it).

2 An example of sharing a story:

In 2002, 10 years ago I found myself in Helsinki and learnt one of the most important lessons about presenting in my life. *(the facts)* I found myself in one of the most luxurious hotels in Helsinki. Carpet 5 inches tick. An antique cabinet with christel glasses and a view over the city to kill for. I was sitting on a crisp with couch and although I should have been on top of the word, I felt horrible. *(appeal to the senses and tell the audience how you felt)*

The reason being that the big boss from the US was going to be present. And he had a reputation for not being easily satisfied and sacking people for minor mistakes. The whole evening I saw images of what could get wrong the next day. I would have a black-out, I would stutter, the technique would fail. And after having created all these thoughts and images for some hours, I was in the end convinced this presentation would result in my resignation. *(the situation)*

All of a sudden, at the bottom of despair, I had a thought. What if I would twist things 180 degrees around and create images and thoughts of how I would want this presentation to go. And all of a sudden I saw myself giving a great presentation. I felt

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much better. *(the situation)*

Next day, I woke up and still felt nervous, but at the same time I felt a deep trust. Being prepared and feeling the trust I gave away a very good presentation. What I have learnt is that you have a choice. You can either feed your fear, or feed your confidence. *(the effect)* So, what this means for you is that I am going to teach you how you can do this. *(Why am I telling you this.)* So, that next time you have to present and you are very nervous, you will know how to *(intention/result).*

3 When does a story work? There are a few steps that need to be taken, in order for the story to work.

1. The facts. Year, ages, place. Situation, (as concise as possible). Engage the senses to draw the audience into your story.
2. How you felt. "What did this do to you".
3. The effect. "What I have learned" or "Now I know".
4. The point you want to make. "Why I am telling you this".
5. The intention/result. "How is this going to help you".

The story will not work, if you leave out step 4 and 5. It is crucial that you make the link to your audience. *How is YOUR story going to make THEM better is key!!!*

So my message to you is; be bold, dare to be inspirational and show a piece of yourself, by sharing a story! If you follow the above-mentioned steps, you cannot miss, but become memorable in a inspirational manner! And who would not like to be just that!



How to become memorable? Put a cherry on the cake!

Last month I described one way to become memorable. The use of a concrete item (prob) to underline the message of your presentation. Like one of my trainees started off her presentation by holding up a cookie in the air, while saying "do you know what is in this cookie? Starting off her presentation on consumer rights to know what is in our food. Ever since, this image is engraved in my memory. This was a very powerful tool, combining a question with a prob!

This month I'll describe another way to become memorable while presenting. I am very excited about this subject and like a prob it can be extremely powerful. It often has the effect of putting a juicy red cherry on the cake! Read down below more about this subject.

The last couple of years I have heard hundreds of presentations. And most of them I have to say have been forgotten. Especially the ones that used probs and/or clear metaphors in their presentation have stuck in my mind!!! So, I am talking about using the powerful tool of metaphors in your presentation!

In this article I will describe clear examples of metaphors, explain how they work and their effect. I will end with an easy 3-way approach for you to make it easier to use them. So, you can take the first step in becoming memorable by using metaphors next time you'll present!

Metaphors are always effective, but especially when you present a complicated subject to a layman audience. One of my trainees was a Phd. Student, studying diabetics. I had never quite understood the disease. This trainee used a metaphor for explaining the disease by comparing a room with cells that need insulin. The lock in the door to the room as the insulin receptor. Then he said, what happens if the key (insulin) that needs to go to the cells (room), does not fit in the lock? In three sentences he explained the basic problem in a crystal clear way. I have never forgotten about it, ever

since.

By using this metaphor he achieved 3 things. 1) He explained a complicated subject in a concise and clear manner. 2) The presentation became memorable. It would not have stuck, if he only had used abstract and professional medical language to explain the disease. 3) It appeals to the imagination of the public. It is creative and connects two things that at first side have nothing to do with each other (diabetes and a room, door and lock). This gives the subject more depth, feeling and understanding.

Other examples of metaphors:

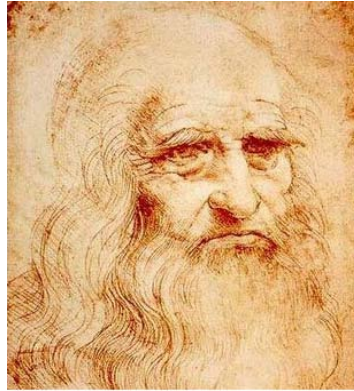
- Comparing the United Nations to a crèche of children.
- Comparing the outcome of mergers with the predictability of an Icelandic volcano.

In my work as a trainer I use metaphors all the time. For instance referring to the introduction of a presentation as being a slide. The audience should easily and automatically slide to the main part of the presentation. I notice that using metaphors helps my trainees to easily remember the subjects, have a deeper understanding of it and make what I would like to convey crystal clear.

So, what can you do to make use of metaphors next time you'll present?

- 1) Take an extra five minutes and ask yourself what is the main idea you would like to convey?
- 2) To what could you compare it? (think of (characteristics, processes) of animals, nature, well-known (historical) figures, the body, countries, food, everyday life etcetera).
- 3) Test the metaphor on someone, to make sure the parallel is clear and that it works.

So, be bold and dare to put this juicy red cherry on the cake and become memorable! You will win your audience over, cause you'll give them the chance to get a deeper understanding of your subject, to understand it more easily, and to remember it much better!



How can you present like a genius?

Leonardo da Vinci was a true genius in many fields. To name a few: painter, sculptor, architect, inventor, scientist, mathematician and writer. At the root of his genius was amongst others a specific approach he always used to study things. And this approach made him very successful.

What did Leonardo do? But most importantly, what can we, as humble workers, learn from Leonardo's approach in the presenting world? So, that his genius rubs off on us and we become appealing to everybody? Read the article below and find out!

When Leonardo got an assignment to draw for instance a masonry. Leonardo would ask himself firstly, what would be important for himself as an artist in this assignment. How could he challenge himself, and create for instance a great perspective or pay special attention to the light in the painting. Now, most people would stop here, but not Leonardo.

Then he would ask himself, what would the masonry himself think would be important. Being able to use his imagination and identify himself with the masonry, he knew it would be important that the masonry would want himself to be depicted with the right utensils and holding them in the right manner.

Finally, Leonardo would ask himself what the mother or wife of the masonry would like to see. They would think it important that the character of the masonry would be recognizable in the face. Adding a physiological perspective to it. The true master, would then incorporate all these perspectives. Giving, the painting depth and width, at the same time.

So, what can we learn from this? We need to learn to appeal to all the different type of people in our audience! Chances are that we only appeal to people that are like ourselves. *The question is what do we do to appeal to the others?*

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So not only satisfying ourselves, but taking those extra steps that Leonardo's took. So that we greatly improve the chances that our presentation, painting, idea, product etcetera will be convincing, approved, accepted and bought!

Find 4 basic types (metaphors) down below that you will find in any audience. And see what you can do to appeal to them.

The Manager: searches for productivity. The manager wants to know; why am I here, what is the goal, what is the gain? The manager wants to know it now, wants to do it now. Wants to know the bottom line. Good content, interested in the outline.

The Accountant: looks for structure. Wants a tight schedule, structure, statistics, numbers and slides. What are we going to do, how long will it take? Where are we in the story?

The Socializer: looks for recognition. Wants to be entertained. You need to give more than just dry content and numbers. Likes pleasure, interaction, stories and inspiration (lessons, best practices, what did the presenter experience, metaphors, quotes).

The Relater: wants safety and acceptance. Goes for the personal relationship. Searches for connection, safety, recognition and personal stories. Not connecting with the audience, would certainly make the relaters tune out. Likes to be reassured. Also likes stories, quotes, anecdotes and metaphors, since he can relate to that and feels connected by it.

Example introduction, incorporating all the types.

"Logic brings you from A to B, imagination brings you everywhere".(quote by Einstein. (**Socializer, Relater**)). In the coming half hour I am going to prove that everybody in this room is creative and is equipped with a healthy portion of imagination. (**Socializer**). Besides this I am going to explain to you the 3 basic skills that you need to be creative and we will practice with each of them (**Director, Accountant**), so that once you leave this room, it will be easier for you to detect opportunities and smell the chances that lay around you everywhere (**Director**). You may raise your questions any time during this presentation(**Accountant**). But before we continue I want you to smell this lovely bottle of perfume and tell me what comes up in your mind once you smell this.....(**socialer, relater**)

My message to you is: learn from Leonardo and appeal to all the basic types in your public, not only the one that appeals to you. So that your presentation will be `bought` by the whole audience and you become irresistible for everybody ;-). Be like Leonardo and go that extra mile. It did not harm Leonardo after all!



How to tame your presentation fear? 7 spells!

Do you know that presenting is one of the biggest fears? A lot of people experience a lot of nerves, they blush, forget their text, transpire excessively, or lie awake in bed days or even weeks before the big day. Of course there is no beating around the bush with presenting. If we want to reach more in our working life, we will need to learn to look our biggest fear in the eyes.

Just like Ron Wemel in the third Harry Potter Movie where he needs to learn to face his biggest fear. In his case a giant big Spider with hairy legs and huge clapping jaws that slowly but surely advances towards him. As soon as Ron cries the spell RIDICULUS, the spider ends up with roller skates on all his hairy legs. The magic here being, once you see face up to your fears, they shrink or turn out to be rather silly.

[U-tube film Ron with big spider](#) (29 seconds)

This is the same way with presenting. How could you `ridiculize` your presenting fear and tame your nerves, so your nerves become manageable and the big hairy spider becomes a smaller far more cuter version? Therefore, find 7 spells down below that will shrink down your big, hairy spider to a small, friendly almost cuddling creature with each step.

- 1) **Preparatus! Prepare your presentation well.** The better your presentation plan is, the more confident you feel and the more convinced you will be while presenting.
- 2) **Practicatus! Once your presentation is prepared, do it for friends and family!**(or in front of the mirror ;-)) As soon as you have done it a few times, your brain has already laid the track, figuratively speaking. It will not be that new to you, so less fearful. The big spider will become much smaller this way.
- 3) **Visulatus! Take 15 minutes to relax and visualize how you want the**

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presentation to go. Hear yourself speaking with a firm voice, see the faces of the audience, feel how you bring your message successfully across.

A lot of people unconsciously spent a lot of time with images, thoughts of what could go wrong. Feed your confidence instead of your fear! Research has been done in this respect in the sports world. If you think as a skater I will fall on that spot, the chances will be higher that indeed you will fall on that particular spot. While if you ingrain a film of how you want your presentation to go, the chances are much higher it will happen that way.

4) **Foculatus! Manage your focus while presenting.** Focus on what you want to say and your audience. Do not pay attention to thoughts like: oh this guy is looking very bored, and they probably think it is stupid. All, this bla, bla, bla is keeping you from doing the job! I have seen it a lot of times, as soon as the presenter is getting side-tracked and gets sucked in into his inner dialogue the connection between the audience and presenter is completely gone. It will happen you can be sure of that. This is not a problem, just slowly but surely correct yourself and get back on track each time it happens.

5) **Scripticatus! Prepare a safety net, if you are afraid of a black-out.** Keep a card with the script of your presentation nearby. Do not make a problem of not knowing something at a particular moment during your presentation. Just, take the time and check your script and slowly but surely pick up where you left off. If you do not make a problem of it and remain easy going about it, the public will be as well.

6) **Movelatus! Use your body to relax.** The state of your body translates itself to your performance. Not breathing leads to a high, fast-paced or not audible voice. Standing fixed as a statue the whole time, can lead to a very cramped and inward state of mind. When feeling the nerves, keep breathing and move your body, it will help you to return in the here and now and become more relaxed.

7) **Mentilatus! Try adjusting your mindset.** Instead of seeing a big hairy spider, see if you can look at it from a different point of view. See a spider with roller skates metaphorically speaking. Change your "It has to be faultless or it will be a catastrophe" to "I am well prepared and I am going to have fun with it". The first mindset often makes presenters very nervous, cramped and ineffective. While the latter makes them, lively, fun to view and thereby very effective. I will assure you that your creepy presentation spider will be much smaller after having tried and adapted all of the above 7 spells. Good luck with it!



How to present engaging and as sharp as a Samurai warrior?

Last December I videotaped Phd VU students that voluntarily joined a mini course Presentation Skills during the breaks of a conference. The best person presenting their research would win 50 Euro's. When Elaine took up the challenge, I was amazed. Without any preparation she managed to give away a presentation that was both engaging and clear!

I am always curious to know more about these natural talents. What do they tell themselves just before a presentation (mindset)? What is their secret that makes them perform so well under pressure? (being video-taped, people watching, no preparation). Read down below what I discovered about Elaine's secret to success and what a samurai warrior's focus has got to do with this.

I learned two interesting things from Elaine that, to my view, were responsible for her excellent performance.

1 When I asked Elaine what was going through her mind just before her presentation. She said that she thought to herself that it was a performance. This is extremely important! It made Elaine push a button within herself to go that extra mile and make her presentation engaging to look at and listen to. She thereby linked up with her enthusiasm for the subject and let this energy come through.

2 The second thing I learned from Elaine was extremely fascinating. While talking, she explained about the focus she chose while presenting. This was a focus she was already practicing for years now, as an laido practioner! (laido is a Japanese fighting sport/art that originates from the old Samurai tradition). This focus helped Elaine to seemingly effortlessly deliver a clear and focused presentation right on the spot.

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I was even more amazed when I asked Elaine if she could tell me more about this "special" focus, called Zahsin. I discovered that this focus was exactly the same as what I had just learned in a training that I followed myself! However, they termed it as "relational presence". Besides this it could also be compared to what I was being taught in my improvisation theatre class, where they call it "being in the here and now"!

According to me it is the ability to be aware of yourself (body, feelings) but being aware and available at all times for what happens outside you at the same time.(being able to harmonize this). It creates a broad perspective, wherein your antennas (senses) are highly sensitive (being sharp). You are not busy what comes next, nor what just happened, but completely focused on the here and the now. It is a state of consciousness that you can polish and practice your whole life!

What can you do to practice this state of consciousness and become as sharp as a knife? Besides becoming a fervent Iaido practitioner, join your local improvisation theater group (great fun!) or read the announcement down below? The first micro step you can do is the following exercise. While talking or listening this week either be it a presentation or a conversation be aware of your body (breathing other sensations) while at the same time being available at all times for the person, audience in front of you and see what happens!

Elaine's secret of success was her ability to be engaging as well as clear and focused at the same time, which is quite special to attain period, let alone without preparation. She attained this wonderful combination by pushing herself to make it entertaining and by using her Zahsin Samurai focus.

My message to you: do you need to become clearer while presenting, polish your Samurai focus and become as sharp as a knife! Do you need to become more engaging, push your performance button and trigger your enthusiasm and let this energy come through!