

# Magical Minutes and Memorable Moments.

15 Tips to turn your next presentation into a memorable moment.

Thank you for taking the time to read my 15 tips.

I've been working with actors for the past 15 years. And there is no doubt in my mind that working with our team has changed my approach to standing up and speaking out and I have learnt lots (not least how to enjoy myself!)

Below are what I now consider to be 15 critical tips to becoming more memorable as a speaker for all the right reasons.

I hope you find them useful and do let me know if you agree or if you would add something else.

You never know, I may bring out my top 20 tips next time!

*Sally x*

## **15 Tips to turn your next presentation into a memorable moment.**

1. Stand well.
2. Breathe.
3. Prepare.
4. Have a point.
5. Take care of your voice.
6. Avoid comfort food!
7. Use PowerPoint sparingly.
8. Bring your own essentials.
9. Vocal variety.
10. Affirmations.
11. Mistakes.
12. You are not the centre of their world.
13. Look them in the eye.
14. Smile!
15. Passion, enthusiasm, interest.

## **1. Stand well.**

If you stand straight you look more capable!

It's that simple.

We make snap decisions about others based on the way that they stand and others are making them about you.

Pull your shoulders back a little, look ahead (but don't lift your chin high) and stand tall.

If you have something to say, you need to look as though others should listen.



## 2. Breathe.

When you are tense or doing something hard and concentrating, you can forget to breathe! Not breathing well will mean you're not speaking well.



It's key to understand how to breathe properly and the importance of using your lungs as fully as possible.

One of our free downloads on our website is "How to have a voice that others want to listen to", and Annie explains more about breathing there but the crucial factor is to breathe deeply to get more oxygen into your lungs.

### **3. Prepare.**

This is the face of a man who didn't prepare.

Nearly 30 years ago my husband's best man tried to speak without preparation and he still has nightmares about it! If you don't want to end up him then don't try to wing it.

Others may tell you that they do; they are probably liars and definitely not as good as they could be.



If you have a great presentation that you are going to deliver often, then each time you deliver it, you can prepare less than before... but there will always be a need for some preparation.

## 4. Have a point.

Know why you are standing up and talking.



It sounds so obvious but we often sit through presentations that go on for an hour or more and when the speaker sits down we've no idea what they want us to do and what the point of the presentation was.

Do you want to educate? Motivate? Berate? Do you want your audience to take action, buy from you or be inspired and sign up to something?

If you know why you are speaking it makes it much easier to prepare and to ask the audience to take action.

## 5. Take care of your voice.

Keep hydrated. Drink lots of water (sips not gulps) and always bring your own small bottle of water in case there isn't any provided.

Avoid milky drinks beforehand as this will make your mouth "claggy". A mint or fruit tea is preferable if you want a hot drink.

Warm up your voice before you start talking. If you were going out for a run you would warm up your muscles, wouldn't you? Well your throat, tongue



and mouth are all muscles. If you don't warm up you may well harm them and find you lose your voice.



## 6. Avoid comfort food!

Carbs at lunch will make you and your audience sleepy! Avoid them if you can.

Fish & Chips on a wet Wednesday may seem like a good idea but it is really hard to show your passion if you are fighting off the urge to doze!



And even more off putting if your audience appear to be dozing off in front of you (see Tip 12).

## 7. Use PowerPoint sparingly.

Power Point slides add context, variety and impact to your presentation but not if you just read the bullet points on your slides to your audience!

Your slides shouldn't be the same as your handouts and your notes!

Your notes are to help you to remember the key topics or points that you want to cover. Your handouts should contain detail you want to refer to (references/diagrams etc.), an overview of the content of your presentation, your details and a call to action if appropriate.

Use "Ctrl B" or "Ctrl W" to blank out your screen while you draw the attention back to you.



## **8. Bring your own essentials.**

Create a bag or pocket in your briefcase of essentials.

For me it contains a bottle of water, spare tights, memory stick containing the presentation, wireless presentation "clicker", deodorant and a piece of fruit!



Work out what will throw your presentation if something isn't there or doesn't work and make sure you have spares or an alternative.

## 9. Vocal variety.

Our actors teach a raft of techniques in our workshops and you can download or buy a CD of many of these on our website.



However, when nervous your face and mouth muscles tense and this can mean that your voice becomes monotone, which in turn makes for a dull presentation! You may not notice as the speaker, but a speech on one note (whatever the note) isn't interesting to listen to.

Make the effort to build in variety in your speech. Speed up. Slow down, build in pauses and try to change your pitch on purpose occasionally.

## 10. Affirmations.

Our internal chatter is often negative and using affirmations can stop the effect of such negativity.

An affirmation, at its simplest, is a positive statement such as “I am a good presenter”.



Whatever you do, make sure it is positive, in the present and believable so that the chatter in your head doesn't disagree.

If you find it's adding something like, “Oh no you're not!” to the end, then tone it down to something it can't argue with so “I am a good presenter” becomes “I am an improving presenter”.

## 11. Mistakes.

We all make them! And truth be told the audience won't be phased by your mistake but by the way you handle it!

Become flustered and start allowing it to affect your performance and they will assume this is a reflection of your wider skills.

If only you know you've made a mistake then suck it up, smile and carry on. If the audience knows (for example you've fallen over) then suck it up, apologise for the interruption, smile and carry on!



## **12. You are not the centre of their world.**

If you notice someone in the audience checking their watch or closing their eyes, is your first thought... "Oh no! I'm boring them!"?



**STOP!** Look at the others in the audience and if they all look interested then it's not you! You aren't the centre of everyone else's world.

It could just be those fish and chips for lunch. The man with the watch – maybe his Mother or Partner is having an operation right now. The one dozing in the corner? Maybe he has an ill child who has kept him up all night.

Learn to assume that it's them not you until proven otherwise.

### 13. Look them in the eye.

When presenting, whether 1-1 or to a large group, eye contact is essential.



If your audience can't see your eyes they won't hear you, so make sure

you look at all of the room.

Be careful to include those on the edges to your left and right.

And as tempting as it is, don't bear down on the one person nodding in agreement! You'll lose the rest of the audience and will totally terrify the person nodding!

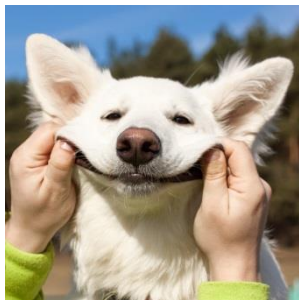


## 14. Smile!

When you are nervous the muscles in your face and around your mouth tense and it's harder to smile.

Smiling will warm the audience to you but only if it's a real smile. (A fake smile looks as close to a snarling animal as you can get!)

Think of someone or something that makes you happy as you stand to speak and you will loosen those facial muscles, warm the audience to you and your presentation will be the better for it.



## **15. Passion, enthusiasm, interest.**

If you don't care and can't muster up the enthusiasm to come across as interested then it doesn't really matter about the last 14 tips!



Whatever the point of your presentation be it to sell, motivate or deliver bad news you need to care! You need to look as though you want to talk to your audience or they won't want to listen to you.

Passion is a much overused word at the moment but you must have it. If you can't get enthused by your topic then think about something that matters to you. Use the passion you have for that to change the way you look and how you speak throughout your presentation.

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