



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



Crafting Presentations That Persuade



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Awarded Best Hybrid Learning, 2022 Working with your organization to create Communication BreakThroughs in Conflict, on Teams and in Presentations.

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Like so many things, persuasion is part art and part science. Whether you are creating a presentation to be delivered virtually or in person, the basic principles remain the same. Your goal is to open your audience to the appeal of your ideas —whether it consists of one person, dozens, or hundreds. Your adversaries are boredom and confusion; your allies are the strategies that keep your audience focused, engaged, curious, and ultimately convinced. So, whether you are Zooming or presenting in person, keep these fundamentals in mind:



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your topic deserves their immediate attention? What do they already know about your topic? What are their concerns, biases, self-interests, and fears? How can you show you understand and care about them? What do you and your listeners agree to already?

It's also important to anticipate and address potential objections to your plan or point of view (e.g. "That will cost too much," or "That will take too long"]. When you recognize and acknowledge an audience objection, you move closer to agreement.

Move into the interpersonal zone with a conversational style. Be approachable. We've long taught the value of eye contact with audience members, and if you are Zooming, remember to look at the camera. That is how your virtual participants will experience a direct connection with you. To keep your tone conversational, avoid reading or memorizing. Imagine that you're speaking to a trusted friend or colleague. The goal is to create an interpersonal, emotional connection: People don't care what you know, until they know that you care.

Discover Evidence that Influences. People listening to you will always be asking themselves this question: Why should I believe you anyway? It is your evidence that answers it: Stories and examples; Statistics; Analogy; Testimony from expert authority.

- **Examples and Stories** are mini dramas with characters and a plot. They are the most dynamic and listened to part of verbal discourse. Speakers 'come alive' when sharing an example, especially if they've personally experienced the story they're sharing. The most powerful examples are stories that suggest, "This is as good as it gets" or "We can do better than this."
- **Analogies** hit home because they compare a situation to a similar set of circumstances that your audience can picture or relate to: "Wearing masks may seem like an intrusion



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- **Statistics.** Some people need numbers in order to be persuaded. Be certain to quote the credible source that your statistics come from.
- **Expert authority.** Cite an expert who reinforces your position, and if the audience does not know the authority, share their credentials. Remember that the most compelling authority is an unexpected source.

Organize for Impact. Too many people with great minds, strong values, and important messages fail because their presentation flows together as a big blend of ideas. Here's what to do about that:

Know your action objective, and 3 main points. Begin with this question: “When I am done, I want my audience to...” Your answer to this question is your *residual message* and becomes your guiding beacon. From your initial draft to your final presentation, from your introduction to your conclusion, keep in mind *what it is you want your audience to do*. Do you want them to adopt a new behavior, share your values, become your clients, vote for you? Whatever your action objective is, weave it into your introduction, your evidence, and your conclusion.

Use Anxiety as a Motor. The vast majority of people have experienced speech anxiety. The secret sauce is to notice that excitement and exhilaration are the same physical experience as stress and anxiety. So, say to yourself “This feeling is the motor of my performance. I embrace it. I’m glad it’s with me. It’s the juice that will power me to be my best.”

Your skills at persuasion and influence determine the impact you have on the people around you, the influence you have on the issues you care most deeply about, and even the legacy you leave behind. These action moves will help you refine those skills.



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