



Value Analysis & Standardization:

Systematic steps to support system-wide change

JUNE 2007

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Greetings from Carol Stone

This issue of our newsletter focuses on presentation skills. For better or for worse, presentations play a major role in your job as a Value Analysis Professional. The good news is that you can use the skills that you already possess to raise your level of presentation performance, enabling you to be even more effective in achieving your objectives.

Inside, you'll find a number of tips to help you analyze your audience, organize your thoughts, prepare your visuals, and confidently deliver your next presentation. Get ready to work; we've also included some exercises to help you "warm up" to the subject.

Continuous improvement is something we all strive for, which is why I know you will find this issue particularly useful. Please let us know. And if you know someone else who would like to receive our newsletter, let us know that too. Just email me at carol.stone@crbard.com.

Carol Stone
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PRESENTATION SKILLS:

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

As you are probably all too aware, presentations – both formal and informal – are an integral part of business life. As a Value Analysis Professional, you have most likely given many, and sat through more, some good and others not so good. The reason: Presentations are simply a form of communication. Part art and part science, each requires both preparation and practice, as well as attention to a few simple guidelines.

Persuasion

While many presentations are designed simply to inform, most involve some degree of persuasion to: adopt a new procedure, agree to the purchase of a specific product, accept and adhere to a project goal or schedule. Facts are fine, and research is essential, but people do not make decisions based on facts alone. The goal is action, and the presentation cannot be counted as a success unless that goal is achieved.

A Three-Act Play

At its most basic, a presentation can be described as a play in three acts: the *introduction* (in which you tell the audience what you are going to tell them), the *body* (in which you tell them) and the *conclusion* (in which you tell them what you have told them). However, just as a play would be boring if it were nothing more than this, so would a presentation. A presentation must build; it must have movement. It must lead the audience through logic, data, and emotion to conclusion and agreement.

The Outline

In the book *Power, Influence and Persuasion*, the authors describe a five-part outline for this that is as powerful today as it was when developed by the ancient Greeks 25 centuries ago. It, too, begins with a brief introduction, but this time it is used to set the stage – by welcoming the audience, putting

the subject in historical context, or by talking about the purpose of the meeting. Next is the narrative, the heart of the matter, best related in the form of a story (“as a little background, let me tell you about...”) that conveys your message in the way you want the audience to understand it. Then comes the argument where you present your proofs and your reasoning. Although this is undeniably the most important part of the presentation, you must keep your evidence to the necessary minimum and your arguments to three or four at most. To keep your audience from getting restless, it is even a good idea to number these, letting your listeners know up front how many they will have to consider (“there are three reasons why we need to do this...”). Next is the refutation, where you anticipate key objections by presenting and addressing them, which is especially important for controversial subjects. Last is the conclusion, which is not a summary, but an appeal for understanding and whatever action it is that you want your listeners to take.

Setting Parameters

When organizing your content, the American Management Association’s *Strategies for Developing Effective Presentation Skills* suggests a process that begins with setting your presentation parameters. This involves creating a simple list:

- ◆ *a statement of your subject matter,*
- ◆ *the purpose of your presentation,*
- ◆ *the desired outcome, and*
- ◆ *its relevance to the audience.*

Next you need an audience profile, where you note what you know about the audience both personally and professionally as well as their key motivators. Then it suggests a “brainstorming” session in which you write out your facts and key points either in a list, on cards, or a “mind map,”

juggle them into a logical sequence, and make note of gaps to be filled by additional research. This is used to structure your presentation via the three- or five-part model (above), writing it out in the form of an outline or bulleted notes for practice, practice, practice, and delivery.

Your Audience

As you write, keep in mind that the adult audience has an attention span of about 45 minutes and will absorb only about a third of what you say – a maximum of seven concepts. In addition, different audience members are likely to have different styles of learning. For example, studies show that only 20-30% (some indicate even less) of the population are auditory learners for whom words and sounds are most meaningful. Another 30-40% (some say up to 85%) are visual learners who respond best to stimuli such as pictures and graphs. The rest (30-50%) are kinesthetic learners – those who learn through movement or by doing – which is why, in a static meeting situation, it is important for the presenter to move around, mingle with the audience, and use gestures or props.

Visual Aids

To appeal to their cross-section of learners, presenters can choose from a wide variety of visual aids – from simple handouts to flip charts, white boards, overhead transparencies, slides, video, or computer graphics that offer a combination of media styles. The medium should match your message, your audience and your meeting room. The key is simplicity, especially for posted or projected visuals: one idea per visual, six lines per slide or page, six words per line, using key words only. Color is good, but should be kept to dark print on a light background, not too fussy, with large type and no more than three typefaces per visual. Rule of thumb is

one visual aid for every two or three minutes, with time in between for the audience to absorb, and no more than 10 visuals for a 30-minute presentation.

Handling Questions

Regardless of how well you have prepared your presentation, you should also be prepared for questions – both neutral and hostile. These can be handled as they come up – and can help maintain audience interest – but run the risk of interrupting your flow

and can lead to your losing control of the meeting. The important thing is respond succinctly while redirecting listeners back into your presentation. Another way is to let the audience know from the beginning that your presentation will be followed by a Q&A session and ask them to please hold their questions until then. Of course, if you have prepared thoroughly and followed the five-part model, you will already know your audience concerns as well as the questions they will have and, in fact,

may have already addressed them in your presentation.

As with any art or skill, presentations become easier with practice and not only can help you achieve your immediate goal but also enhance your image as a knowledgeable professional. Review your performance, with a colleague if possible, and use each event as an opportunity building your knowledge, skill, and credibility. ❖

What's Your Reality?

Continued from outside.

- *Recognize and acknowledge that change takes them out of their comfort zone and that resistance is often the product of perceived loss.*
- *Demonstrate that you have looked at all aspects up to, and including, any training that would be required as a result of implementation.*
- *Assure stakeholders that this process is not designed to usurp their roles as professionals and that cost, while a factor, is not the ultimate criteria for change; that belongs to the patient. ❖*

Fielding Questions:

- **Pause** before answering and collect your thoughts. Don't rush into a hasty response.
- **Paraphrase** the question, asking the questioner "Am I right?" This gives you time to think, helps clarify the questioner's real concerns, and, best yet, gets even the hostile questioner agreeing with you.
- **Demonstrate empathy** by acknowledging potential hardships or time investments.
- **Rephrase** loaded questions into positive language. For example, "Bob's question about availability presents another area where this new procedure will benefit."
- **Always respond to the entire audience**, not just the questioner.
- **Keep answers short** and to the point.
- **If you don't know the answer, say so** and offer to get back to them.
- **Close with a thank you and a recap** of your message.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: VISUAL AIDS

The purpose of visual aids is to help reinforce your message to the audience, not to serve as a memory prompt for you. Other than checking to see that the correct visual aid is being displayed, your focus is the audience; look at your listeners. Present the visual, give the audience a moment to absorb and resist the urge to read what is written on the visual. You may continue to move around as you make your point; just be sure not to block the view. And never turn your back on the audience.

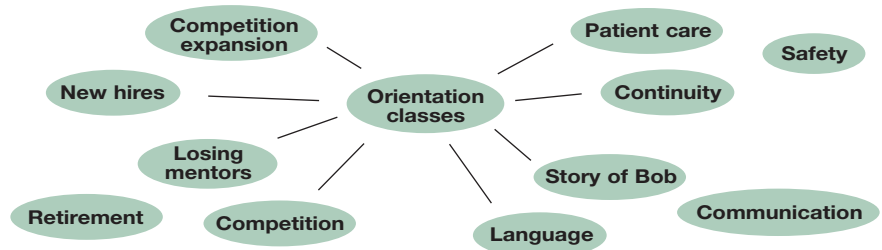
Text Guidelines:

- ◆ *Generally no more than 6 words a line*
- ◆ *Generally no more than 6 lines a slide*
- ◆ *Avoid long sentences*
- ◆ *Larger font indicates more important information*
- ◆ *Font size generally ranges from 18 to 48 point*
- ◆ *Be sure text contrasts with background*
- ◆ *Fancy fonts can be hard to read*
- ◆ *Words in all capital letters are hard to read*
- ◆ *Avoid abbreviations and acronyms*
- ◆ *Limit punctuation marks*

Clip Art and Graphics:

- ◆ *Should balance the slide*
- ◆ *Should enhance and complement the text, not overwhelm*
- ◆ *No more than two graphics per slide*

Making a MIND MAP



A mind map is a diagram in which words representing ideas, tasks, or other items are linked to, and arranged around, a central key word or idea.

PRESENTATION SKILLS:

PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVE

Do you speak

body language?

As you know, we all are able of communicating powerful messages without saying a word – by the way we walk, stand, sit, gesture, smile, frown, even the way we comb our hair or select what clothes we wear. Knowing the nuances of body language can help you be a more powerful presenter and help you read your audience so you can know how your presentation is being received.

Best Foot Forward

Tips for Presenters

Appearance: Choose appropriate attire for your audience, paying attention to details such as hair, shoes, jackets, etc.

Positive posture: Body facing front and open shows confidence. Direct gaze and friendly smile show friendly attention while relaxed arms show lack of tension.

Genuine gestures: Hand gestures can be used to make a point or redirect interest. Practice simple, open-handed gestures with one or both hands until they feel natural. (*Don't overuse.*)

Welcome: Greet participants by name as they enter along with a smile, handshake, or wave.

Eye contact: Especially as they enter the room, make eye contact with members of the audience and continue to make eye contact throughout your presentation.

Facial cues: Smile as you greet attendees. Use pleasant-but-serious expression for your presentation.

Arms alert: Crossing your arms creates a barrier and indicates disapproval. Arms akimbo (*hands on the hips*) is a gesture of power. Use carefully.

Audit Your Audience

Alert and interested: Look for open expressions, upright posture, leaning forward, and/or a slight smile that indicate interest and/or approval.

Losing it: Hunched, closed posture with downcast eyes – along with rustling papers, window gazing and/or watch-checking – should be a warning to change your pace.

Hand action: Held loosely – whether clasped, on table or lap, lightly touching face or (*when seeking to ask a question*) raised with fingers pointing upward – indicates neutrality or agreement.

Leg action: This can be tricky. Combined with crossed arms, crossed legs can indicate negativity. However, when combined with a hand to the chin, the action is neutral, one of concentration and contemplation. Parallel legs usually indicate agreement.

Overtly negative: Tense upper body, leaning forward, with a clenched jaw or jabbing finger indicates confrontation. Lowered head combined with an aggressive glare and/or clenched fists signals outright anger. Time to defuse.

Seeking Feedback

Listen With Your Eyes

Approval: Demonstrated by slight tilt of the head, friendly eye contact, hand to chin.

Uncertain: Pen biting shows fear or a lack of confidence.

Uneasy: One hand around the neck and the other around the waist indicate a need for comfort or reassurance.

Conflicted: Knitted brows with closed eyes and/or nose pinching demonstrate inner confusion and conflict. ❖

WARMING UP

Even if you are an old hand at presentations, warm-up is essential to an effective performance, as any seasoned actor will tell you.

Below are a few exercises that can help you relax, speak more clearly, and present more confidently.

Vocal Exercises

- **Deep breathing:** Standing in a balanced position with your hand on your diaphragm, inhale through your nose until you feel your rib cage expand to its fullest. Exhale through your mouth, pushing all the air out of your lungs. Pause briefly, then repeat.
- **Sound breathing:** Still standing, inhale through your nose deep into your belly, exhaling on the sound of “AHHHHH.” Hold the note as long as it is strong and lively but don't let yourself run out of breath.

Body Exercises

- **Hand squeeze:** Holding a small rubber ball, squeeze and release a number of times in each hand.
- **Neck push:** Join your hands at the base of your skull, elbows back. Push your head back into your hands, holding for about 10 seconds. Release and repeat.
- **Seated stretch:** Sitting upright in a chair, pull your right knee toward your chest, drawing it close with both hands joined across the shin, and bending your head to meet it. Hold for 10 seconds then repeat several times with each leg.
- **Spine stretch:** Still seated, reach behind you to hold the back of the seat with your right hand, then twist your torso so that you can hold the right side of the chair with your left hand. Now keeping your hips, legs, and feet facing forward, look over your left shoulder. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat on the other side. ❖

From *Strategies for Developing Effective Presentation Skills*, American Management Association; and *DK Essential Manager's Manual*, Robert Heller and Tim Hindle.

SHARE *Your* VIEW

In this issue we meet Mary R., a Value Analysis Professional who has worked some 10 years in the same hospital system, first as an R.N. and, for the last five, in materials management. Mary has given many presentations but in a recent evaluation, a new supervisor told her that her presentations needed improvement, that they were weighted in detail and basically lacked punch. Mary was taken aback; she had taken a speech course in college and felt as though she was doing a good job. In fact, she always prided herself on her preparation and her knowledge of the subject and the needs of her stakeholders.

What should Mary do to improve her presentation skills so that her supervisor can see her for the qualified professional that she is?

SCENARIO 1

If budget resources permit, Mary should look for a course on presentation skills such as those offered by a community college, the American Management Association, or other professional organizations.

SCENARIO 2

Mary should approach a friend who has attended one of her recent presentations and ask that person how it could have been better.

SCENARIO 3

Mary should embark on a “do-it-yourself” improvement course by reading books on making effective presentations, then trying to implement their suggestions at the next opportunity. ❖

Email your thoughts on this case to wendy.lemke@crbard.com. A sample of responses will be published in the next issue.

The 5 Parts of a Powerful Presentation

Introduction:

to set the stage by welcoming the audience, putting the subject in historical context or talking about the purpose of the meeting

Narrative:

in the form of a story, to convey your message in the way you want the audience to understand it

Argument:

in which you present proofs and reasoning

Refutation:

where you present key objections and address them

Conclusion:

in which you appeal for understanding and action

What's Your Reality?

Suggestions for dealing with daily issues...

Many times, committees such as those focused on product acquisitions are confronted with issues that cut across professional or departmental lines within a hospital or healthcare system. In cases such as these, the Value Analysis Professional is called upon to facilitate consensus among a variety of stakeholders. Often, for example, this seems to pit the needs of the nursing staff against those of the doctors.

Part of the problem, in the words of one Value Analysis Professional, is that “everyone wants a voice.” Your job is to help them have that voice, while being open to the needs of the group as a whole.

Here are some suggestions that might get you there:

- *Drill down through the cost center to discover the top players, those who use the item most.*
- *Know your audience, their issues and concerns and what is going on in their world. This is essential not only for the success of your project/presentation but could affect when you schedule your meeting.*
- *Greet participants by name as they enter.*
- *Provide stakeholders with easy tools for evaluation, such as a one-page sheet that requires only a circle or a check and a space for brief comments.*
- *Get people to actively participate in meetings. This may require active recruiting as well as direct questions to attendees during your presentation.*
- *Have supply chain data at hand to support your argument and make sure to proof it carefully for inaccuracies in both style and content.*
- *Familiarize yourself with how the product is used and talk to stakeholders about their issues, preferences, and their reasons for these.*

Continued on inside.

SHARE YOUR VIEW...

Last issue we met **Sam M.**, a new Value Analysis Professional who is having trouble in his new position despite his business expertise. In his previous position, the boss was his father. However, he no longer can rely on positional power to get things done and, being new to the organization, hasn't yet built relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.

We offered three scenarios for Sam to help build his power and authority within the organization.

SCENARIO 1

Sam should move more slowly but continue to show everyone how good he is at business analysis.

"This is a good approach but doesn't go far enough. Nobody likes a show-off. Sam needs to engage his colleagues by asking their opinions and recognizing their expertise. It also may be helpful for him to reach out to other VAPs either locally or through professional associations such as the Association of Healthcare Value Analysis Professionals, website www.abvap.org, Association for Healthcare Resource & Materials Management, website www.abrmm.org, or the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses, website www.aorn.org."

SCENARIO 2

He should casually get to know others and let them get to know him, figuring that once people know and like him it will be easier to work together.

"Of course this will help but it doesn't really address the problem. Sam has to show his colleagues that he values their contributions, maybe even asking for their help. He may also try spending some time on the hospital floor talking with clinicians or even attending some of their meetings. It's important to listen to the needs of his internal customers."

SCENARIO 3

Sam should get the CFO on his side so the CFO will direct others to follow Sam's suggestions.

"While it's always good to have the CFO on your side, making him or her the heavy should be Sam's last resort as it can alienate colleagues even more. This can damage his ability to build relationships with others. He needs to work on developing his own personal power. He can, however, use his relationship with the CFO to remove obstacles at the administrative level, by introducing Sam or having him present to the CFO's peers." ❖

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Sources used for this issue include:

1. American Management Association, Seminar. *Strategies for Developing Effective Presentation Skills*, New York, NY, 2001.
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