

Seven things to do if when speaking publicly, to promote interest in your services ...

About

This article was distributed in September 2007 as part of Newsletter # 24. It has relevance for both external and internal consultants, and to anyone in the fee based professions.

These articles are a marketing communication technique used by Ian Benjamin at Consultant Training Australia to build and maintain profile in its target market.

Please feel free to forward this article to those who may be interested.

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As providers of services, we do this a lot.

We do it when delivering the results of our work; when laying out the directions for teams to follow and when demonstrating our expertise to potential clients and stakeholders so that they will be keen to engage us to provide services in the future.

Here are some strong recommendations based on observations of presentations that fee charging professionals deliver. Failure to pick up and act upon these recommendations is more likely to lead to de-marketing than the intended benefit.

1. Never read your address. Know your subject and use prompts – either from projected images or other devices. It is very boring to hear a speech read to you, it turns audiences off and it diminishes your credibility. It's insulting. It doesn't sell. It will lack passion.
2. If you use PowerPoint or similar, always pause to let your audience read the projected images. Only read aloud if the audience comprises people with a visual impairment. It infuriates many of the audience if you read out aloud what they can already read themselves.
3. Be inclusive. Instead of saying 'Today I'm going to talk about ...', say, 'Today we will look at ...', OR 'Let's consider now the options we face in ...'
4. Move about. The dynamic is more interesting than the static. Forty minutes behind the lectern requires more interesting content than forty minutes of movement.
5. 'Tack at twenty' – vary your presentation every 15 to 20 minutes, involve the audience, change the mode of delivery, increase participation, create more interest. Let the audience process what you have told them – in pairs or threes.
6. Pictures can tell a thousand words and diagrams make relationships and the complex understandable. Fee charging professionals – take note.
7. Do follow the 1 / 6 / 6 Rule if you use PowerPoint or similar program. Not more than 1 message per slide, no more than 6 dot points and not more than 6 words per dot point. It's easy to implement this. Simply cut, cut, and cut. Give detail in printed handout. Use diagrams, pictures and small group discussion.

Each year I spend from 20 - 30 days running workshops in presentation skills in-house for clients, using video recording of participants with presenter and peer feedback.

If you don't know how to present without reading, I can teach you.