



S P E A K E R S ' C O R N E R N E W S L E T T E R



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We have only what we remember.

A knock-on effect of the Internet is that the importance of good personal recall is no longer a must-have. No need to engage the brain and dig deep into the recesses of our memories, just tap in a few words and hey presto. The smallest of things – how to spell a word, directions to a favourite place, can be sourced in seconds - so what if you can't remember historical dates or that important name - just 'Google it'.

Does this matter? We think it does.

It's not just that learning from experience is key to not repeating mistakes and that knowledge enables better decision making. It's also that if you don't exercise your memory bank, it may soon empty. Just imagine at a major presentation meeting, your client asks a key question. Your mind goes blank. You haven't saved the information in your memory bank, it's saved on your computer's hard drive!

So we'd like to suggest that instead of simply relying on Google's brain power, you take time out each day to dig deep and remember. It will help build personal confidence in meetings and may even help you win the prize at the next Pub Quiz!

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

**"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
Seneca, Roman philosopher, 1st century AD.**

"Inspiration does exist, but it must find you working" Pablo Picasso

Who dares wins.

We did a couple of workshops for NABS recently to help unemployed agency people build up their skills to perform better at interviews. The Dare agency lent us their large meeting room, hence the title.

It's said you need 3 things to succeed at an interview: "Competence, Likeability, Luck." We like to compare an interview with a new business presentation. It's not always the agency who has the best ideas who wins but the one who has the enthusiasm, desire, insights and chemistry matching the client.

Our overriding advice to the NABS audience was to develop their personal brand, work out the reasons to buy them and then put together personal stories that help prove their case and help them make a memorable connection.

We also told them they need to see areas in which they can improve their skills and a key one is to learn how to present more convincingly. There's an excellent organisation - **Toastmasters International** [www.toastmasters.org] - which has clubs across the UK and abroad. It costs very little to join and you will really learn how to speak and present. We told the story at NABS how in 1991 Barry wanted to sharpen his presentation skills and after 6 years at Toastmasters a new company was formed - Speakers Corner.

So don't delay, go on and learn a new skill. It may just open some new doors for you.

"We regret what we didn't do far more than we regret what we did". Casanova

It's all Greek to me

The art of oratory is back in fashion – Barack Obama has made it so. Obama borrows from a by-gone era using rhythms, specific construction of sentences and certain oratorical phrases in his speeches.

Oratory is the art of using language to persuade and goes back to the time of the ancient Greeks. Demosthenes is one of the earliest great orators living 384-322 BC and the lessons learnt back then are as relevant today. Here are a few:

- 1. Anaphora** – when you repeat the same set of words or phrase 3 times to create a rhythm, as Martin Luther King famously did in his “I have a dream” speech.
- 2. Praeteritio or Paralipsis** – when you negate the positive – “I’m not going to talk about the wealth of the economy. I’m not going to talk about the strength of our ideals”. By saying you’re not, you in fact do, but without blowing your own trumpet.
- 3. Captatio benevolentiae** – a device to appeal to the goodwill of an audience often by undermining yourself by showing self-conscious humbleness and humanity. “I’m not your typical President...”

Bill Clinton, who earns a fortune from speaking, felt Martin Luther King was the best he’d ever heard: “King had a perfect voice, perfect diction. He could both tell a story and make an argument and then rise to metaphorical oratorical heights.”

As Clinton says, it’s not just the words. Words paint pictures, draw on our imagination and create rhythm. But it’s your body language, tone of voice, the look in your eyes that makes the real difference. Your audience won’t remember 10% of what you said – it’s how you made them feel that will stay with them.

An ideal orator is a great performer - a great actor who holds their audience. They rehearse a lot, just like an actor, working out all the effects and moves. And vitally, they have something important to say.

“A good sketch is better than a long speech.” Napoleon

Strong openings

One of the strongest openings we’ve heard is both a quote and a question and we were told by the teller that it works very well in a new business situation. Since it’s the 200th anniversary of Darwin’s birth it seems particularly appropriate: **“It’s not the fastest or the strongest or the most intelligent who survive but those who can adapt to change. Can you?”**

We heard another one recently which had the element of humour and was particularly targeted for its audience – a government department. The presenter opened with: “Here are some of the most terrifying words in the English language: **“I’m from the government and I’m here to help you”**” a quote from Ronald Reagan.”

Strong openings pay off. Your audience won’t forget how you started on exactly the right thought to attract their attention, to get them listening and buying into you.

“You should announce your ambition in the first 5 minutes of the film.”
David Lean

Are you speaking too fast?

In our July 2008 newsletter we told you that the ideal delivery speed according to research was 164 words a minute with a ½ second pause at the end of each sentence. A comparison of speaking speed made of Gordon Brown and Barack Obama at the London G20 summit was that Brown spoke at 250 words a minute and Obama at 145.

Now Obama pauses more than most. Smiles at his audience, and waits for them to be ready to take on his next idea.

There’s no contest who the audience would prefer to hear.

“ The buyer buys the seller not the salt” Anon

Good can come from Recessions

It might seem counterintuitive to start a new business when the economy is in the dumps, but a Recession can be the ideal time for launching a company. Here are a few good examples:

GE (General Electric Co.) was established in 1876 by Thomas Edison. In the middle of the panic of 1873, a 6 year recession, Edison created one of the best-known inventions of all time - the light bulb. In terms of market capitalisation, GE is now the third largest company in the world and has evolved from a manufacturing-strong business to one earning more than 50% of its revenue from financial services.

Leo Burnett in the middle of the 1930's Depression started his own agency. He gave all his visitors an apple. His friends thought he'd be more successful selling them rather than advertising. His agency has grown to one of the largest and still offers an apple to its visitors.

CNN might be a news giant now, but in Recession-plagued 1980, it was a little-known station called The Cable Network News. It revolutionised how people received information when it launched as the first 24-hour all-news channel and now 1.5 billion people worldwide watch CNN.

Wikipedia Foundation Inc. was born during the post-9/11 Recession. Established in January 2001, the online encyclopedia had more than 100,000 entries by 2003. Today it is home to more than 2.5 million articles and continues to grow.

It seems the secret to winning in a Recession is innovation and self-belief.

"A kite rises against the wind." Anon

Ideas we've heard recently

1. Edit your selling message until everyone understands it. A French mathematician once said: "A theory is not a theory until you can explain it to the first person you meet on the street." Your

presentation message should pass the same test.

2. Stand out by developing a unique profession. There's an American speaker, Dale Irwin who is the world's only "professional summariser". Why is he the only one, because he trademarked the phrase. It reminds us of a receptionist who called herself 'Director of 1st impressions.' She certainly was.

3. Use your voice to sell yourself. Get a high quality audio recorder so you can playback your presentations. You'll soon spot where it doesn't sound right and can make changes. Your voice is one of your most valuable assets – don't waste it.

"When the world zigs, zag."
Sir John Hegarty, BBH

Worth a visit

"The Sound and the Fury: The Power of Public Speaking". A new exhibition has just begun at the British Library and their vast newspaper and sound archive collections are now open to the public.

The ICA in London SW1 has a similar exhibition called **"Talk Show"** from May 6 - 31. The ICA's mini-season of events is dedicated to the art of speech. Linguists and other speech specialists will rub shoulders with artists and performers.

Finally, it's the 8th anniversary of our newsletter – we started it in April 2001. So pay us a visit www.speakersco.co.uk – newsletters. There are 33 to read and 4 volumes of quotes – some of the best advice and source of quotes you'll find.

Good luck!

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

Speakers' Corner
'Helping people deliver their best'

28 Gloucester Road Richmond Surrey TW9 3BU
Tel: ++44 [0] 20 8 605 3782
e-mail: info@speakersco.co.uk website: www.speakersco.co.uk
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Speakers' Corner - Summary of principal workshops and coaching on offer

1. Maximising Business Presentations – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates the difference between 'simply having the confidence to stand up and talk' and 'communicating to convince and influence'.

2. Advanced Presentation Skills – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates that as with any skill, it's good to have some presentation skills coaching from time to time so you're always at your best.

3. Conference Speaking – 1 day workshop

This programme asks the delegates: "Don't think what you have to do for the conference but rather what the conference can for you?"

4. Selling Creative Work / Your Ideas – 1 day workshop

This programme shows the delegates how to help others 'to see and believe in' their ideas.

5. One to one training

Key people value this extra coaching to help them maximise their impact in front of an audience – of one or 500. We work with individuals on specific needs, eg on a major industry presentation, helping to build greater self belief and much more.

6. Pitch Presentation training

We can run workshops with a group who regularly deliver new business pitches or work with a team on a specific pitch. We help them put together their strongest message and each member of the team to maximise their contribution so that on pitch day they're performing to their peak.

7. Train the Trainer - 2 day workshop

We train managers to deliver one of our training programmes showing them how to engage the delegate to maximise workshop outcomes.

8. Consultancy

We work with a group of managers for example on a new business pitch or a credentials presentation