

Speaking to Grow Your Business Part II: Create a Presentation That Sells

Speaking is one of the top ways to get new clients/customers. People get to know you and you instantly start building a trusted relationship. Now that's the way to grow a business quickly! I made the following 3 mistakes when I first started putting together presentations. I don't want you to do the same, so here we go!

Mistake #1: Didn't Have a Presentation Template: Duh. Each time I put together a talk, I started from scratch staring at a blank page in Word. Now I have a system I use every time. While I don't use Microsoft Powerpoint to give the presentation, I do use it to create my presentations. I can print out the "slides" to use as my notes. I like this system because it allows me to keep just one point per page and is large print for my over 40 eyes.

1. Create Your Title. Be sure it's clear and enticing. Tell yourself in one sentence, what you want the audience to leave with at the end of the presentation –this is for your eyes only. It helps you have a clear intention for the presentation which will keep you focused on the end goal.

2. Get their attention right away. Have an opening that is powerful and tells them what they will leave with. I'll use my upcoming teleseminar on "How to Create an Information Product That Sells" as an example. I'll open with this "By the end of our time together today, you will be able to create your first information product in a week or less."

3. Give them a roadmap of where you will take them. For example, "in the next hour, I will give you 3 powerful strategies that will tell you exactly how to complete your information product in a week or less." The 3 strategies are: #1 choosing your topic, #2 choosing the format of your product and #3 resources to use to get it done.

4. Be real. I am authentic when I present. Yes, I position myself as an expert, but I'm an expert who learned from experience and I am there to help them shortcut many of the mistakes I made. While I rarely have jokes prepared, I do naturally weave in humor and warmth into my presentations. Be yourself. This will build relationship with ideal clients who want to work with YOU.

5. Have a strong close. Don't say "In summary." People tend to shut you off when you do. At the end of my talks, I give the audience a "call to action." I ask a few participants to tell us what they plan to do as a result of the talk they just heard. And then I close with a final, powerful point.

Mistake #2: Didn't Use Stories: I thought I had to give a presentation chock full of facts to show folks I knew what I was talking about. Boring! The next time you are in the audience, count how many stories the presenter tells. If she is good, when she feels the audience's attention wander, she'll pull out a story. A story captivates us. I now know the power of weaving in success stories of clients I've worked with. This not only gets the attention of the audience, it also reinforces that when they work with me, they too can have similar successes.

If you are just starting out and don't have many of your client's stories to tell, you can share stories from your own experiences and the stories of others. The Chicken Soup

for the Soul book series is one place to collect stories. Keep your eye out when reading magazines and newspaper articles in your topic area and collect stories to use in future talks.

Mistake #3: Didn't Collect Testimonials: Testimonials are another great marketing tool that don't cost a dime! Have you ever purchased a service or product after you read some great testimonials? You can place a testimonial form in each person's handout packet or on their seat. At the beginning of your presentation you can say that "if you feel you've benefited by this presentation, I'd appreciate it if you'd jot down a few specific things you received and what you will now do as a result of being here today."

Or, if people come up to you during a break, or after your presentation, and say glowing things to you, jot down what they've said and ask if you can use their statements as a testimonial. Get correct spelling of their name and ask permission to use their city/state. Ask if they'd like free publicity by adding their website to the testimonial or their email address if they don't have a website. Getting their photos is a powerful tool to add to the testimonials. And now, for those of you with websites, video testimonials are the newest thing. You can purchase an inexpensive video camera like the Flip Video Camcorder to do this.

The third and last part of this article will be out next week and will focus on how to market your presentations without spending a fortune.

About the Author:

Ann Ronan, Ph.D. is an author, speaker, certified career coach and self employment expert, and vision generator.

Ann delivers smart, simple ways for people to acknowledge what they love to do and do more of it. Her articles, products, and books have motivated and inspired readers in numerous print and online publications. She regularly leads coaching programs, tele-seminars and live retreats, bringing the message to audiences internationally that living a passion-based life will bring prosperity and success.

She was recently selected from a nationwide search to be featured in Discover Your Inner Strength. The book features best-selling authors Stephen R. Covey (Seven Habits of Highly Effective People), Brian Tracy (Million Dollar Habits), and Ken Blanchard (One Minute Manager).