

Presentation intensifiers: magical moments fascinate and convince

PowerPoint is the indispensable basis for presentations, but neither professional slides nor animation effects are any longer enough to make your presentation stand out. Only one thing can help: take a short break and add a presentation intensifier. Tell a relevant story, create something on the flipchart or grab an object and use this to anchor a message. There's no question that this is riskier than simply running a PowerPoint show, but it is exactly "magical moments" like this that attract attention and make your presentation memorable – assuming of course that these moments are right for you and the situation. And that you are well prepared.



More spontaneous and striking than ever: flipcharts WORK!

106 In times of (multi-media) Power-Point presentations, everything else looks simply old hat – but it is exactly this contrast that gives the flipchart its appeal!

Top executives with a feeling for what works not only have a perfect slide show but also integrate apparently spontaneous flips into their presentations to make an impression that even the most spectacular effects offered by PowerPoint can't match. This is how:

- **Only simple symbols** and very primitive drawings – no perspectives, no details – it's NOT about creating "wonderful" and "realistic" images!
- **Thick lines!** The less drawing talent you have, the thicker the lines should be. And use a second color for contrast.
- **Piece by piece** – draw an element (in silence) and explain it, then draw the next. Keep eye contact with the audience: "These instructions ..." – and a simple rectangle becomes a handbook!

The HPS trainer team puts this recommendation into practice in every HPS seminar. Flipchart exercises are included in the classic Effective Business Presentations seminar.

It might all appear spontaneous, but such explanatory flips should always be well prepared. For this reason, practice drawing the flips a few times – first on a sheet of paper (but do it in color), then on a flipchart.



Managers tell stories – but not fairy tales!

107 Top executives and experts practice telling stories: examples, past experiences and parallels – mini stories that win over hearts and minds.

An interesting contrast to PowerPoint: an anecdote as a living intensifier – even, and particularly, in otherwise fact-based business presentations.

- **Analyses of the situation provide the perfect occasion** for examples, personal experiences, reports from colleagues, clients and partners.
- **Proposals and new ideas profit from analogies and comparisons:** "It works just like a ..."
- **Add details, make the story vivid:** "Yesterday, around 10:00, in front of the "X" supermarket on the corner of "Y" road ..." adding (essentially superfluous) details: "a dark-haired sales assistant in his mid 30s ..."
- **Use the present tense to add tension:** "I open the letter and read ..."

Lively mini-stories supported by gestures are practiced by the participants in the HPS Powertalk seminar.

Let yourself really relive the story: that will add life to your movements and gestures. As you know: if you want to move others to act, **you** have to move!



Introducing and explaining objects during presentations

Show and tell, a trick that kids learn at English schools: bring in an object and talk about it.

Of course, doing this brings back memories of magic shows: suddenly producing an object and holding it up for everyone to see – a newspaper, a pair of scissors or a banknote. These are supposed to be magical moments, but beware:

- **Objects** (just as with all intensifiers) should **only be used** for those contents that you **really want to anchor as key messages** – never just as a gag to entertain!
- **From to known to the unknown:** The first step is to clarify what it is (particularly if the object is small and unusual): “This is a ...”
- **Ensure the transfer:** “The new safety system will identify errors just as this magnet attracts needles.”

Working with objects (and stories) is a skill practiced by participants in the HPS Powertalk seminar.

Every object-based sequence must be practiced. Ask yourself: “Is this right for me and the situation?”



“Embarrassing fiascos instead of magical moments”

If you want to come across as a show-off, full of hot air, then this is your chance!

Intensifiers, as the name suggests, intensify whatever they are used in conjunction with. That also applies to negative aspects!



- The audience just want to be entertained, don't they? So give them less content and more entertainment!
- Start with a story or, even better, a joke which has nothing to do with the topic and is simply at the expense of the audience.
- Choose an object which is microscopic which you hold up but, originally, don't explain. You just talk about it and then put it away again.
- Write your name on the flipchart in large letters with a thin marker pen. That way everyone knows who is making a fool of themselves.

When introducing unusual elements, HPS trainers always use the feedback session to specifically check whether it worked.

With all intensifiers, simply assume that everything will work perfectly and that everyone will immediately understand everything just the way you intend.

Questions, Ideas & Tips

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