Effective Communications and More Powerful Presentations

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Purpose of Presentations
➲ Persuade the audience to take a particular course of action
➲ Convey something you want the audience to know
➲ Provide a forum for discussion of controversial or challenging ideas
➲ Gain commitment and alignment
➲ Engage people in generating solutions to problems

A View on Persuasion
➲ The days of executive command-and-control have disappeared.
➲ Young people now enter the workforce questioning authority.
➲ Ideas and people are flowing more freely than ever within and across organizations.
➲ Result
  ⇨ Credibility
  ⇨ Common ground
  ⇨ Supporting information
  ⇨ A deep understanding of emotion

What outcome do you want?
➲ What do you want your audience to do as a result of your presentation?
➲ Examine your purpose. Do you want to inform, persuade, or sell?
➲ Do you want the audience to understand, learn, or take action?
➲ When do you want your audience to take action and how?

Tailoring Your Presentation
➲ Things to consider:
  ⇨ Size of the audience (large, medium, small)
  ⇨ Formality of the situation
  ⇨ Regularity of the meeting (one-time, occasional, frequent)
  ⇨ Time of the day and other particulars of the occasion
  ⇨ Check the room and equipment up front

Make an Impact Right from the Start
➲ Make it personal
➲ Throw out a quirky fact
➲ Put them on the edge of their seats
➲ Draw a hypothetical scenario
➲ Create a series of linked stories
➲ Use a pertinent quote

Balance is Critical
- Content and visual Impact
- Without proper balance, both suffer

Keep the Message Simple
- Use concrete language that is clear and to the point. "Sales dropped 10% this year" rather than "Sales numbers were up, then they were down, causing an overall negative impact on numbers."
- Avoid technical jargon. Jargon also has a tendency to confuse.
- Make every word count. "Our company has been very successful and profitable this year."
- Draw conclusions. Don't make your audience members guess your message.

Using Pictures
- Do
    - Use personalized pictures
    - Use visuals in the foreground and background
    - Video clips can be embedded and easily draw the audience in
- Do Not
    - Overwhelm the presentation
    - Build the entire presentation around pictures
    - Use sub-par pics…as good as it may have been, a bad picture is a bad picture

Using Charts
- Do
    - Focus on a single message
    - Try to make a chart self-explanatory
    - Find ways to turn numbers into charts/visuals
- Do Not
    - Try to do too much on one chart
    - Use too many colors
    - Show chart after chart
    - Believe that a chart is self-explanatory

Final Thoughts
- Time spent in preparation is just as important as delivery
- Identify the goal up front and design the presentation around it
- Practice