

Making a promise adds power

October 3rd, 2010 | Author: Thomas Moss

A good way to get and keep your audience's attention when you're doing a public presentation is to make a promise. When you commit to what you'll deliver at the beginning of your presentation you can grab attention right away. Your promise can sound something like this: "Over the next hour or so, I'm going to share with you the four best ways to _____".

Create curiosity

Tell your listeners exactly what to expect. If you know your audience, aim your promises directly at what matters to them and use words and phrases that are meaningful to them, you'll create curiosity and interest in your presentation. You'll also enhance your credibility as an expert in your subject area.

Training yourself to use this approach

Training yourself to use this approach when you're public speaking can help you to hold your audience. They'll know what's coming and be waiting for the information you've promised. One public speaker I know here in Toronto likes to use a slight variation on this technique. He likes to follow each promise with a question: "Would that have value for you?" In addition to being a public speaker he's also a sales trainer and he uses each question as a trial closing. He's testing the audience members to see if they want to buy what he has to offer. But he's also building suspense. He knows the audience will want the information he's providing, but by asking the questions he increases their anticipation of its value.

Deliver what you've promised

As long as there is audience anticipation there is attention. But of course, anticipation by itself is not enough; you must follow through and deliver the value you've promised. That's simply part of the bargain. And it's important that you do that in a logical order and build on each previous point, then sum up at the end and do a brief review of each of the points.

Deepen understanding and acceptance

By reviewing at the end you will deepen your audience's understanding and acceptance of what you're telling them. Repetition drives your message home. That's why we keep seeing the same commercials over and over again on TV. I've talked about repetition here before <http://www.sayitwithpower.ca/public-speaking/repetition-adds-power> and I'm repeating it for one good reason: repetition adds power. Obviously, you don't want to overdo it but if your presentation is focused and balanced, using devices like promising value and following through on delivery will strengthen your message and help your audience to retain it.

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If your group needs a skilled guest speaker or workshop leader, I'd like to help you. I provide a range of communications key note presentations and workshops. Please visit the presentations and workshops pages of this website and contact me to discuss how I can help you.

Need a presentation coach?

Would you like help dealing with public speaking training and other communications issues? If so, please contact me to discuss my public speaking training programs. I provide one-on-one presentation training and group public speaking training sessions that provide tools to develop your public speaking skills. Contact me today!

About Thomas Moss

Thomas Moss is a public speaker, writer and public speaking coach who provides public speaking training and other business communications services, primarily in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), including Toronto, Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax, Pickering, Markham, Richmond Hill, Newmarket, Vaughan, Brampton and Mississauga. Service is also available outside of the GTA. Read his blog at www.sayitwithpower.ca/blog or call him at 416-762-8488 or 905-655-0119.

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