

MDRT MINUTE



Secret Strategies for Persuasive Presentations

Presentation coach **David Gustafson** described four pillars of powerful, persuasive presenting with members attending the 2003 MDRT Annual Meeting.

Purpose

To clarify the purpose for your presentation, ask yourself two questions. First, “What is your dream, and how does this presentation move you closer to that dream?” Second, “What do I want my audience to know, feel and do when I am finished with this presentation?”

Position

Position is where your body is in relationship to the audience, your visuals, your message and how you use your body in the space you occupy. Anchor your position as a presenter on the left side of the room from the audience’s perspective. Remember never to block your audience’s view of your visuals.

Why not present from the center? First, it is nearly impossible to avoid blocking your visuals. Second, if you spend your entire presentation at “stage front,” how are you going to signal the audience that this is the climax? Like a theatrical performance, the time to move to “stage front” is when you have everyone’s attention, when you are ready to share your most important point.

Presence

Presence is getting your audience to like and trust you. Presence is action oriented and includes some simple tools that will increase your presentation power dramatically. Smiling, making eye contact, gesturing and using self-deprecating humor helps the audience feel you are real and made of the same stuff they are.

Picture

All presenting is visual presenting. The Pillar of Picture has to do with the psychology of presentation visuals. That is, the *meaning* people derive from what we show them that helps us organize, demonstrate, or clarify our message.

Psychologists have spent more time studying the impact of color on people than any other area of psychology. Blue suggests contentment, security and tradition. Blue reduces blood pressure and pulse-rate. Red is for passion, impulse, and impact of the will; it increases blood pressure and pulse rate.

Regarding bullet lists, my goal is to limit them to four bullets per slide, and four words per bullet list. Text used in bullet lists should be at least 24 points. Headlines should start at 48 points and then go larger.

David Gustafson routinely works with corporate leaders to prepare presentations for Fortune 500 companies and venture capital firms. He’s an award-winning advertising copywriter and graphic designer who left the world of advertising and design to carry his “gospel of marketing design” to desktop publishers and marketing departments nationwide. His entire presentation by the same name is available from the MDRT Power Center (www.mdrtpowercenter.org).