

A Leader's Guide to  
Making Presentations  
That Inspire, Motivate  
and Convince

Sydney  
+61 2 8296 1000

San Francisco  
+1 415 346 3700

Dubai  
+971 4 390 2356

Melbourne  
+61 3 9690 1755

Toronto  
+1 416 322 7228

Hong Kong  
+852 2865 2218

Auckland  
+64 9 909 4640

London  
+44 20 7602 9498

Singapore  
+65 6321 9102

New York  
+1 212 697 7740

Paris  
+33 1 46 33 52 67

Shanghai  
+86 21 6375 8511  
+86 21 6375 8512

[www.rogenSi.com](http://www.rogenSi.com)

© RogenSi IP Ltd.

# POCKET PRESENTER

by Neil Flett

© RogenSi IP Ltd.

# CONTENTS

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	The RogenSi Pocket Presenter	1
	What Is A Business Presentation?	3
	What Will You Need To Be A Great Presenter?	4
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	An Effective Communicator	5
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	The RogenSi Nine Steps	10
	Step 1: Audience Analysis	11
	Communication Styles	12
	Needs And Motivators	13
	Listener Analysis Checklist	15
	So Where Do You Find Out?	16
	Step 2: Set An Objective	17
	Step 3: Collect Information	17
	Features, Benefits, Evidence and Proof	18
	Tips For Clarity	22
	Step 4: Decide On A Structure	23
	Organizing Your Ideas	23
	The 3 Stages Of Communication	24
	Short Presentation Outline	25
	The RogenSi Structure	26
	Step 5: Create Visual Aids	36
	Selecting Visual Aids	37
	The Storyboard	38
	Guidelines For Wording	40
	Using Visual Aids	42
	Step 6: Read Through	44
	Step 7: Rehearse	45
	Step 8: Delivery	46
	Eye Contact	47
	Gestures	48
	Movement	49
	The Use Of Voice	52
	Pausing	53
	Using Questions Skillfully	55
	Team Presentations	55
	Overcoming Nerves	57
	Rough Times	58
	Rough Times Pointers	59
	Step 9: Review	61
	How To Ensure Continued Improvement	61
<b>Appendix:</b>	Suggested Reading	64
	About RogenSi	66
	About The Author	66
	Notes	67



# Chapter 1:

## The RogenSi Pocket Presenter

### How do you become an Exceptional Performer as a business presenter?

Exceptional performance comes from knowledge plus skill, plus process, multiplied by mindset. That's the formula developed by RogenSi to explain how exceptional performance can be created and sustained:  $(K+S+P) \times M = EP$ .

Applying the RogenSi formula to presentation skills and public speaking we can see that the knowledge required includes knowing what works and what does not; knowing the audience needs; knowing what is achievable by the end of the presentation; and knowing what constitutes the right amount of the right kind of evidence needed to convince and inspire the audience.

Skills required include the ability to use eye contact, movement, gestures, voice modulation, the pause, creativity and logic.

The processes of presenting include the RogenSi 9 Planning Steps, plus the famous RogenSi structure for deciding the order of the script.

And the mindset or attitude requires learning to use your energy; handle nerves, visualize the outcome and tap into emotion.

Once all four are applied to the appropriate Level, then exceptional performance follows.

The RogenSi Pocket Presenter has been written as an introduction to the basics of making inspiring and convincing business presentations and as a handy checklist to those who have already experienced the power of the RogenSi Presentation Program.

### Why are presentation skills still such a key part of a leader's skillset?

Well, I've yet to be inspired by an e-mail.

Regardless of the amount of information flowing into our brains from all the modern media, face-to-face business presentation skills are more important than ever.

When high stakes are involved in business, the communication is always face-to-face. No organization's culture has ever been changed by a newsletter... but a powerful leader delivering a persuasive message, with consistency and personal conviction, can deliver change.

No multi-million-dollar pitch has ever been won by email but dynamic presenters win millions of dollars of business every day.

If you believe e-mail can create change, think again...the recent global survey conducted by RogenSi and Goldhaber Research shows that 70% of all users of e-mail want important news – whether good or bad – delivered face to face.

And the majority of those surveyed believe that up to 50% of the e-mails they receive do NOT help them carry out their job.

It's as simple as this: Nothing changes in business today without the power of a persuasive communicator. Today's business presenter must motivate, inspire and persuade, and that requires planning, preparation, logic, evidence and persuasive delivery.

Every year RogenSi trains thousands of business communicators around the world and on Day One of our programs they inevitably ask the following questions:

How can I handle nerves?

How do I handle rough times?

How can I cut down the planning time?

How can I be more persuasive?

The RogenSi POCKET PRESENTER answers these questions and improves your ability to communicate persuasively, in particular, with effective business presentations.

It will assist you to plan, organize and deliver effective presentations through:

- Understanding and using new ideas and approaches to presenting
- Developing new skills
- Improving your current skills

It will provide a framework for your personal growth as a persuasive communicator. If you've received presentation skills training it will reinforce those teachings. If you've not started learning about presenting, it will answer many of the tough questions.

Whether you're an experienced presenter or not, you'll also need to practise your skills.

As a director of a consultancy that offers skill development I would obviously urge you to take some training, because, while the written word can provide some of the answers, the communication role-plays and video critique provided in a presentation skills program cannot be matched for effectiveness in helping you change behaviour.

**NEIL FLETT,**

**Director,  
RogenSi**

## What Is A Business Presentation?

Let's not get confused about speeches, talks and discussions, as communication forms. The business presentation has certain unique characteristics that make it different from other forms of oral communication. If you understand some of these characteristics you'll be able to more effectively prepare and deliver a winning business presentation.

### Look at some of the characteristics of each form of communication:

A presentation differs from a speech. In a speech, you'll usually find yourself on a stage and often behind a microphone. The listeners can number in the hundreds, sometimes in the thousands. The speech is usually scripted, and sometimes copies are distributed to the listeners. Your objective in delivering a speech is often to entertain, inspire, educate or promote goodwill. Your objective is not usually to have the listeners make an immediate, specific decision.

A business presentation also differs from an informal talk, chat or discussion. The audience here is usually a relatively small group. Informality is the key; sleeves may be rolled up and comments made off-the-record with agreement from the others. Discussions often centre on explaining decisions that have already been made, or getting and sharing different points of view.

The business presentation is unique. Your role as presenter and the role of the listeners are assigned in a presentation, although the listeners should also participate. The presentation is inevitably the result of much thought and work. Visual aids are almost always used in business presentations.

Your objective is usually to persuade the listeners to make an immediate decision and/or to commit to a course of action. This decision is often of considerable magnitude.

As a business presenter you'll always want the listeners to do something specific as a result of the presentation.

Therefore the business presentation requires closer analysis of the listeners and of each listener's role in the decision-making process.

Unlike an impromptu chat, you'll have to organize your presentation. You'll have limited time in which to present a variety of ideas and materials to make them more convincing. So organization is critical to find the optimum sequence and effectively use visual aids.

In summary, a presentation is planned, organized, uses visual aids and, most importantly, is 'tailored' for the specific listeners.

Let's now look at some of the key skills required to create and deliver a powerful presentation...

## What Will You Need To Be A Great Presenter?

An effective business presentation requires a combination of skills, of two broad types:

### 1. Planning and organizing skills

- Analysing and understanding the listeners
- Developing a clear objective(s)
- Collecting relevant data, ideas and materials to support your objective(s)
- Arranging the data and material in a sequence that is clear, commands attention and is persuasive
- Selecting and developing the most effective audio/visual aids
- Arranging the presentation room exactly to suit your needs.

These skills will define the power of your message, but now you need to deliver it powerfully...

### 2. Delivery or performance skills

- Being comfortable and confident with a variety of listeners
- Understanding and using movement, gestures and other non-verbal elements of communication to create the appropriate impact
- Handling questions and comments skillfully
- Rehearsing your presentation, and making any last minute adjustments
- Keeping the attention/interest of the listeners.

There is no such thing as a born presenter... all the above skills can be learned. RogenSi alone coaches around 20,000 business executives each year in more than 20 countries.

## Chapter 2:

### An Effective Communicator

When an organization is changing its culture, each presentation must be effective so that the organization can change more quickly. Effective presentations mean decision-making is easier and therefore faster. The options are outlined clearly for the decision makers to consider; recommendations are offered and backed with evidence.

However, effective communication does not happen by accident. You'll have to be aware of the key elements that make the difference between wasted talk – and communication that drives change. Let's look at some of the key concepts contained in the words "Effective Communication."

#### Having An Effect

If you're to be effective as a presenter then, by definition, listeners must do something as a result of your presentation – you have had an effect on them. By that I mean the decision makers in the audience must agree to buy from you, change their minds, accept your recommendations, approve the budget, think differently about a subject, allocate to you the resources you need. Listeners must want to change the way they do things as a result of what you've said and done.

**TIP: Before you speak in public ask yourself what you expect the listeners to do as a result of your presentation. If you can't find anything you want them to do, then you're not going to be impactful.**

#### An Exchange Of Information

While many business people think of a presentation as one person delivering information to many ie. a one-way flow from the presenter to the listeners, truly effective communication is seldom one-way. More likely it's an exchange between the listeners and the presenter.

In fact, to really understand why a business presentation should NOT be one-way, think of the worst example – the sort of presenter who speaks from behind a lectern to a darkened room, without ever seeing anyone in the audience. He or she has no idea of the reaction of the individuals or group. The listeners could leave the room but it would not affect the presenter, because he or she is focused on delivering a one-way flow of information – and has little or no awareness of how it might be being received.

One-way communication, no matter how powerful, ultimately leads to no communication – the presenter keeps talking and talking... and gradually the listener stops listening.

But as an effective presenter you'll constantly be "reading" your listeners to check their understanding and reaction. Even if you're the only person to speak during the presentation, the interaction is two-way because you'll be watching the listeners

and receiving feedback. A raised eyebrow, nodding, confusion on a listener's face, disinterest or boredom – all are being communicated, if you're looking for them.

**TIP: If you find yourself invited to speak at a conference, and the lights have been turned down so the audience is in darkness, start your presentation by requesting that the lights be turned up, until you can see your listeners. The audience will thank you for it and you'll be able to see individual reactions as you speak.**

Effective communication is a two-way process in which it's better to receive negative feedback, than none at all.

It's preferable that someone says, "I don't agree", because at that point you've engaged them. If instead, they're mentally elsewhere or asleep then there's no chance of affecting them – of causing change.

So, the first key point in understanding how to be an effective communicator is "think two-way". Even when you're presenting, you're constantly receiving information about the listeners – information that enables you to tailor or change your presentation, to recover or make it even more powerful.

### **It's Not Just The Words!**

What your listeners see, hear and feel when you present is usually far more important than what you say. In fact research shows us that the words create barely 7% of the impression. Even the most attentive listener is lucky to remember more than three key points out of the dozens you might deliver.

HOW you move, gesture, use facial expressions, modulate your voice, use eye contact and use visual aids are all more important to your audience than WHAT you say.

Research shows that the HOW of your presentation accounts for more than 50% of the impression you leave. And finally WHO you are also creates impression... By that I mean your credibility, reputation, demonstrated knowledge, "likeability" and the degree of respect your audience has for you.

**TIP: Your listeners are more likely to give you a good hearing if they have heard about you. If your audience doesn't know you, think about sending them a backgrounder giving your experience and telling why you'll be worth listening to. If you can't do that, then make sure you write your own introduction and have someone read it out before you start.**

### **If It's Not Just The Words... What Is It?**

What your listeners see, hear and feel when you present is a combination of Ideas, Energy and Actions.

By IDEAS we mean the words, the content. Your presentation should be delivering new information so the listeners learn and stay interested. But think beyond dull facts and figures – you can make it more persuasive and interesting by using analogies and telling relevant stories or relating an interesting experience that leads to your key point.

If you can paint a picture in the minds of your listeners, you'll have a greater effect than if you relate a set of facts – so ask your listeners to imagine; make them use their minds to create theatre. Keep the ideas fresh and interesting. Tell 'em something they don't know.

ENERGY is how you demonstrate your level of intention... How much you appear to want to be there in that room in front of your listeners... How much contact you have with the listeners.

Your energy reflects your attitude...how you feel about the importance of delivering a great presentation...how much you want to win. The listeners will sense in seconds if you would rather be somewhere, (anywhere, ) else. If your number one goal is to get through the presentation in the shortest time possible, the listeners will know that.

But if you want to be there; if you own the space and are comfortable with it; if your level of intention is high; then your listeners will want to listen, and they'll want you to win.

The impact of your presentation will be affected by tone and volume of voice, appropriateness of your gestures, use of movement, and the way you use eye contact. A great presenter takes time to set up the room; knows where the light switches are; is in command of the visual aids; has cleared away any distracting items from the space and has walked around the room to see what the listeners will see, how well they will hear and what they will see.

Effective Communication is more than just transferring information...how you deliver it will be remembered and will define your level of success.

**TIP: Here is an exercise we use at RogenSi. Try it yourself right now: Imagine how you could deliver the following statement: "I'm thrilled to be here". First say it softly as if you really didn't mean it. As if you didn't want to be there. Then say it again, but this time as if you really mean it: "I'm THRILLED to be here!!". Think about the impact on the listener each time you deliver the statement with a different level of energy and intention.**

The "HOW" has a much stronger impact on the listeners than we realize. But the strange thing is that when we prepare for a presentation most of us spend up to 90% of our preparation time getting the words right. You still need excellent content, but if you're to be dynamic you'll also need to spend more time on the 'how'.

### **Understanding**

Some years ago I had coached a winning team on a major pitch and after they won, the team leader visited the client for a debrief on their presentation.

"Why did we win?" he asked. The client answered: "Yours was the only presentation that I understood!"

It's hard to be effective when nobody understands what you say – and the presenter has many tools to aid understanding. Structure provides a logical flow that is more easily understood; visual aids explain and support difficult concepts; the pause places

emphasis or prepares the listener for something important; the use of examples, statistics, demonstration, testimonials, analogies, hypothetical examples; the use of gestures, voice modulation, repetition, summaries – each helps understanding, and each has a critical role to play in making you a successful presenter.

## It's Between You And Me!

The vast majority of mediocre presenters believe they're talking to groups of people. They try to include everyone in their presentation and to do so they "scan" the listeners, with their eyes roaming over the audience but never stopping to make contact.

Other poor presenters focus on their notes or the visual aid screen, occasionally flipping their eyes up to the general direction of the listeners.

The real power of a presentation comes from engaging, one at a time, each listener in the room – as if there were only two people present: you and each listener.

The objective is to deliver one complete thought to one person one at a time.

The best way to think about it is to imagine that you're holding a tennis ball. Now throw it to one person in the audience and get them to throw it back. Then change to someone else and throw it again. And keep on going until you eventually cover everyone in the room.

Now replace the tennis ball with a short sentence or a phrase and/or clause. The key idea is 'one thought – one person'. We'll talk about this more later.

**TIP: There are exercises to help you achieve a level of comfort delivering one thought one person. I find it helpful to stand in an empty room, and speak to each chair around the table as if there were a person sitting in it, make a comment to one chair and then another, and another. Gradually you'll become used to speaking in complete thoughts.**

## The Need For Awareness

The ability of the presenter to be aware of the listener and vice versa distinguishes human communication from mechanical communication: Machines are not aware – the radio continues to play even when you leave the room, because it was not aware you were there. Leave your lounge room while the television newsreader is reading the news and the newsreader just keeps on reading... because mechanical communication is one-way.

The more aware that you become of the listeners and of what else is happening around the room, the less mechanical you'll appear.

**TIP: When you're invited to speak at a conference, go an hour or two early and sit in the back listening to other speakers. Note the listeners' reaction to speakers. See what they appear to like and what they don't receive well. At coffee break, introduce yourself to people in the audience, get their names and chat with them. Now when you speak you'll feel much more comfortable.**

Only by being aware can we sense listener reactions: (puzzled looks, boredom, confusion) and make changes as a result (speed up, slow down, ask questions).

By being aware and targeting individuals we "visit" each person several times during the presentation, making eye contact, engaging them and creating two-way communication.

## Overview

So now we've learned that

- One-way presenting must be discarded and replaced with two-way
- What you say is only a fragment of the impression that you'll leave behind
- It's the combination of your ideas, energy and actions that will leave the impression
- If they don't understand you, they can't respond appropriately
- As a presenter you live with the listeners, being acutely aware of how they're reacting.

Now you're ready to learn the RogenSi Nine Steps of Presenting:

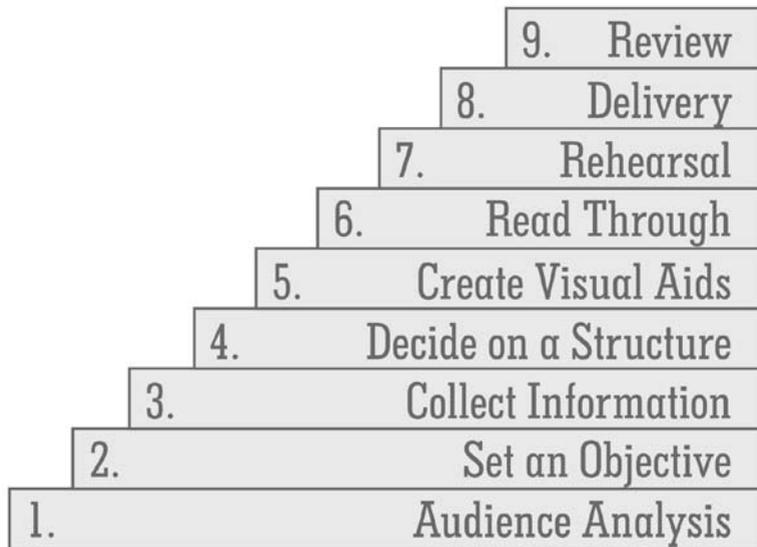
# Chapter 3:

## The RogenSi Nine Steps

We created the Nine Steps of Presenting, to help presenters plan and deliver their presentations in a logical order.

Why? Because our clients were telling us that they would start planning for presentations by writing down the words, starting inevitably with "Good Morning". Others would open their PowerPoint software and start creating slides. Some would go to an old presentation and begin by choosing parts of it. And yet more would throw their hands in the air at the size of the challenge.

These Nine Steps allow you to build your presentation and deliver it in a manner that ensures it's tailored for the specific audience; uses the right amount of the right kind of evidence to convince each listener; and is delivered in the most effective manner.



**The RogenSi Presentation Planning Steps ©**

### The RogenSi Nine Steps:

- Step 1: Understand your listeners.
- Step 2: Set an attainable, inspirational objective.
- Step 3: Collect the evidence.
- Step 4: Choose the most appropriate structure.
- Step 5: Create your visual aids.
- Step 6: Read it out loud to yourself.
- Step 7: Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.
- Step 8: Deliver dynamically
- Step 9: Review your performance for next time.

Now let's see why each is so important:

### Step 1: Audience Analysis

Arguably, this is the most important step of all, yet many presenters don't do it well. Who are you talking to? What are the needs and expectations of each individual in the audience? What is their level of understanding, their communication style? What am I going to teach them that they do not already know?

If you know the needs and wants of the listeners, it's easier to 'pitch' the presentation at the right level and to know what's of interest and importance to them. You're better able to persuade.

If you don't believe me, try selling something to nobody... Try convincing an empty space... Without the listener, you can sell nothing. Listeners are the only reason for making a presentation. Take them away and you're talking to yourself. So it follows that if you're to become a dynamic presenter, then you should spend time finding out about those for whom who are going to the trouble of creating a presentation.

In a perfect world, presenting would be like talking to people who know and respect you, and who know you'll be interesting. The more you know about your listeners, the easier it will be to put together a presentation that's relevant, pitched at the right level, and addresses their needs and concerns.

Find out who will be in your audience. Get their names and find out as much as you can about each of them.

If you do that, then before you start writing you'll understand how much they know about the subject, what they need to hear and why it's important to them.

The purpose of audience analysis is to guide you to the facts, examples, style and tone that will be most convincing. When audience analysis is done well it also helps you tailor movement, gestures, voice and use of eye contact to create specific effects for specific individuals.

## Communication Styles

Every listener in your audience is different. Let's look at a just a few of the different styles you may encounter. These are styles we've seen over thousands of presentations over 30 years. And while we've given them labels, most people will demonstrate characteristics of more than one style. .they may be very direct, but they could also be analytical. Let's not put people into boxes – rather you should think about the different backgrounds and behaviours of listeners, and how you might be able to tailor your words and actions to best cater for each style. As you read about these listener types, think of people you've dealt with or know well. Try matching them to these styles.

### The direct

These listeners are often decision makers...they're busy, often impatient and therefore time is of the essence. They tend to be objective driven, results oriented.

In your audience, they're the sort of listeners who might say: "Come on, get to the point. How much will it cost? What we should do about this?"

If they ask you a question, they expect a direct answer – yes or no or a short explanation with evidence – rather than all of the detail and reasons that led to your decision. If they want more detail they'll ask for it.

If you've a recommendation, give it to them up front, then explain why.

Say things once, say them well.

Your presentation will need to be direct and to the point; focused on the outcome versus the process.

Many people often mistake the direct listener's abruptness for hostility. The natural reaction is to offer more and more explanation, but that is not the right answer.

Direct listeners just want you to get to the point. While you may consider your presentation to be the most important you've ever made...they may hear 20 a day. So make it relevant, state the facts; keep it short and use irrefutable evidence.

### The analytical

The analytical listeners are often found in occupations such as financial services, engineering, IT and research. They spend a great deal of their working life studying figures, creating processes, measuring one set of figures against another.

Because they're thorough they need to know that you've also done your homework; that your comments are factual and soundly based; that every aspect of your proposal has been thoroughly studied before recommendations are made.

They may ask questions like: "Why did you decide that? What other options are there? What is the source of your information? How will this process work?"

To look after the needs of the analytical listener, you'll add detail and show them that the analytical work has been done.

Avoid statements that might be construed as being the least bit outlandish.

Give them the context first, then the recommendations; use lots of evidence and quote sources. Charts are valuable with this listener.

The analytical listener is sometimes the decision maker and often a key influencer.

### The social

Many listeners demonstrate "social" traits. They will be interested in how what you say may affect the people, the culture. They enjoy the company of others and value relationship. They may well put people first in their decision making. The social listeners can be decision makers, but they're more likely to be influencers. They like people and dislike the clinical, hard approach.

### The diplomat

Watch out for the "diplomat" in an audience. It's a style that can cause problems for many presenters. Diplomats often sit on the fence and won't take sides in a debate until they see how others will jump. That means you may not get a direct answer when you ask a question. It's hard to involve them in your discussion if they're reluctant to offer a position. Treat them carefully and wait until others have declared their opinions before you try to gain the support of the diplomat.

### The introvert

It's very common to find the shy listener in your audience and it's harder to involve them in an open discussion if they simply don't want to participate. You'll need to work harder to coax their participation. Do it little by little. Ask an easy question first so they're comfortable answering, then lead them on to the more important issues.

### The egotist

Sometimes there will be someone who sits in an audience to argue, disagree, and expound on your subject to prove they know more about it. Thank goodness they're rare. They should be listened to, but controlled. Let them have their say and then if they continue, suggest that you'd like to hear from others.

*(See Rough Times for further tips.)*

## Needs And Motivators

Why do people buy one product or service and not another? What motivates someone to make a decision to buy?

American industrialist J. P. Morgan said: "A man has two reasons for doing something... a good reason and the REAL reason." The good reason is often the rational motivator – the real reason is often the emotional or political/cultural.

A good presenter understands what motivates people to buy and knows why a purchaser might buy from one person or organization rather than another.

If you understand the motivations of individuals in your audience, you're better able to present your offer or proposal in a persuasive and appealing way.

Let's look at some of the motivators that will guide decision makers in your audience.

As business becomes increasingly sophisticated, more decisions than ever before seem to be made based on propositions meeting rational and technical criteria first – before relationship and emotional motivators are considered. However, we do not believe this to be as common as first thought.

#### **Rational/technical motivators might include:**

The price is within the budget

It's the cheapest

It will increase our revenue. It will lift our image It fits our overall mission. The timing is right. Delivery is on schedule. The quality meets our guidelines It's technically excellent

But there are other needs and motivators just as important or even more important.

#### **Emotional motivators to be also considered:**

Ego, Ambition, Fear, Trust, Security, Liking, Greed, Love, Hatred, Dislike.

#### **Political/cultural motivators includes:**

The decision making process: Creed, Colour, Religion, Chauvinism, Ambition, Race, Internal politics, Organizational culture and values.

There's research that shows that we tend to make rational decisions 30% of the time and emotional/political decisions 70% of the time.

For example, while it could be argued that there are rational reasons to buy a Rolls Royce., perhaps quality and good engineering – there are also the emotional reasons: It's a symbol that you've arrived; it's ridiculously expensive; Rolls Royce are owned by the richest people in the world... The emotional elements play an important role in the decision.

Why do we buy top brands like Nike? Is for the rational reasons? Or is it because brand marketers use powerful imagery to tap into our emotions?

Would Moët et Chandon champagne sell as much if it were cheap?

Why does a middle-aged man buy a massively powerful cruiser?

Why does anyone buy a Ferrari when the speed limit means they might never get out of second gear?

By thinking about what motivates listeners, particularly the decision maker, you can tailor the presentation for maximum effectiveness.

Addressing the rational motivators might get you on the 'short list', however when competition is hot, the combinations of rational/technical, emotional, political and cultural motivators win the business.

#### **Listener Analysis Checklist**

There are some key questions that you might ask as part of audience analysis:

- Are the final decision-makers in the listeners?
- Are there any listeners who are not decision-makers, but are key influencers?
- Are they prepared to act now?
- What is their decision-making pattern?
- How much money are they prepared to spend?
- How much do they know?
- What do they want?
- What do they need?
- What points must they agree with in order to accept my recommendation?
- What do my listeners expect – in terms of content and presentation style?
- How much and what kind of fact and figure data will best convince the decision-makers?
- What 'turns them on'?
- What else might influence the decision?
- Are my listeners 'conservative' or 'innovative'?
- What is their attitude towards me, my subject, and my company?
- What is their work background, social background, education level?
- What are they especially proud of or loyal to?
- Whose opinion do they respect?
- Are there local customs or prejudices to be aware of?
- What ideas, feelings or experiences do we have in common?
- Are there factors affecting the timing of my presentation?
- Are there words or topics better left unsaid?
- Have I accommodated the politics that are involved?

## So Where Do You Find Out?

There are times when you'll have to present to people you've not met before, or at least, do not know well. How can you gather information about them and from what sources?

The Internet is a superb means of finding out about people and organizations. Most have web-sites packed with information about their business. Go surfing.

Talk to the person who invited you to speak. Ask them about the listeners. Talk to people you might know who also know the listeners.

Follow the Media and see what has been written or spoken about the listeners and their organization. For example, Trade Magazines are a good source of material about companies. Annual Reports provide a wealth of information about a company and its management. Read them and note the language they use. Read about their Vision and Mission and use the same language in your presentation.

Don't forget that the Who's Who contains information about important people.

Industry Associations provide the opportunity to mix with listeners and those who know them. Think about attending functions where your listeners might also be present.

Sometimes the simplest way is to ring a personal assistant or receptionist. If appropriate, explain that you'll be making a presentation to their boss and would like to make sure it's tailored...then see if they volunteer information. Just remember, the fact that you rang will most likely be communicated to the listener. But that might not be a bad thing...

We're surprised time and time again by the number of mutual friends who know people or know of people who know people.

Do you have co-workers who know members of your audience?

If you're pitching to the management team of an organization, can you talk to their customers, or suppliers?

Most organizations have newsletters. Get hold of some and read them.

Watch your client's advertisements on television or read them in newspapers.

Think how much comfort you'll gain if you know not only the professional details of your listeners, but also personal facts like age, addresses, family, hobbies; whether they have a sense of humour, what car they drive, their personal style/manner, their education. The more you know, the more comfortable you'll become. Eventually, you'll find yourself presenting to people you know, rather than perfect strangers.

The important thing to remember about audience analysis is that most presenters don't do it...and those that do, seldom do enough.

## Step 2: Set An Objective

Now that you know your listeners, what do you want them to do as a result of your presentation?

For most business presentations, you're not there to "bring them up to date" or to "let them know about" something.

Unless you actually create change things with your presentation, unless you've had an effect on the audience...then you haven't been effective.

### Setting Your Objective

Before you start structuring your presentation you must know exactly what you want to accomplish: To have the listeners make a decision or accept the course of action proposed in the presentation.

When you've decided on the objective, write it out in one sentence. It should be clear, direct and precise, without any negatives.

*Ask yourself: "What do I want this audience to do as a result of my presentation?"*

The objective should also be practical, sensible and attainable.

Keeping the specific objective in mind helps you keep your presentation relevant and to the point, and helps you limit supporting materials to those that are meaningful.

Make sure the object is achievable, but at the same time make sure it's a "stretch" objective, not one that you might achieve without any effort.

If you need an immediate decision and it calls for immediate implementation, you might have to include the method of implementation in your presentation.

However, if your objective is only to get a favourable response to a proposal, you may elect to save the discussion on implementation for another meeting.

You will by now have a bundle of information from which to draw the key messages of your presentation. Don't worry if it is incomplete because Step 3 will help you find what's missing and what's redundant.

Each item in your presentation should be there only because it helps to put your proposal across more convincingly – to the decision-makers. Keeping your objective and your decision-maker(s) in mind helps you to keep your presentation lean and purposeful.

And now you can focus on making your information persuasive.

## Step 3: Collect Information

You now move to the 3rd of the 9 steps – persuasive support.

This is where you take your raw information and add evidence create a persuasive argument.

We know “saying so doesn’t make it true” and “just telling them doesn’t make it happen”. Your listeners need to be convinced. But now that you know more about your listeners and what you want them to do as a result of the presentation, it’s much easier to select the sort of information that will help them reach the objective.

Rather than overload them with general information, you should choose specific evidence to back up each point. The more cynical the listeners, the better the evidence you’ll need.

There are really only eight main types of evidence and each listener will be convinced by a different blend.

You can apply a very simple process to create compelling reasons for your listeners to say ‘Yes’. After you have applied this process, each decision maker will be more likely to accept your proposal because each will understand the benefits to them in accepting. They’ll also find the presentation relevant, because you’ve thought about “what’s in it for them.”

Turning information into a persuasive argument is a four-step process and the first step is to look at the difference between Features and Benefits.

### **Features** (*features describe what you’ve got to offer*)

Some generic features that might apply to your company / product or service:

- Price
- Quality
- Delivery
- History
- Security
- Reputation
- Location
- Expertise
- Experience
- Size
- Design
- Technological sophistication

While these are all features of your company, they’re not necessarily persuasive because unless your listeners fully understand what each means to them as buyers, features do not affect them.

### **Benefits** (*benefits answer the question: “What do I gain from this feature?”*)

To turn features into benefits, you ask of each feature: “What does this mean to you?”

Take the first feature and repeat it out loud, eg. “We have offices in 19 countries.” Then say “What this means to you is…” The rest of the sentence will turn the feature into a benefit eg. We have offices in 19 countries… what this means to you is… you can get fast delivery in every country in which you have customers.”

Another easy way to convert a feature to a benefit is to prefix the feature with the word: “Because… then it’s almost compulsory to state the benefit eg. “BECAUSE we’ve offices in 19 countries (we can offer you faster service, etc)”.

So take every statement and check that the listeners will understand the benefits to them contained in that feature.

Now you have the beginnings of persuasive language. These statements start to become interesting because they now affect the listeners personally.

### **Evidence** (*saying so doesn’t make it true*)

The next step is to provide evidence that will convince the listeners that what you say is true.

*Our broad definition of Evidence is: “Anything which supports your case”.*

Here are some types of evidence which can be used to support a statement which you’ve made:

#### **A. Irrefutable Facts**

Coca Cola is the largest bottler of cola drinks in the world; your company has 19 offices; you’ve been in business for more that 30 years; you turn over \$50m. If the fact is irrefutable and relevant, it is evidence.

#### **B. Statistics**

Fuel consumption, number of kilojoules, growth trends… 34% of viewers watch the Channel X News – statistics are a powerful form of evidence.

**TIP: Effective presenters are those who paint rich and memorable mental pictures for their listeners. You may be extremely passionate about your topic, but this is of limited value if the listeners can’t easily visualize or understand the point you’re trying to make.**

“This year, our group set a new record in the tonnage of grapes crushed. Imagine 8,000 of the biggest freight trucks, overflowing with grapes. That’s the scale of our operations.”

**Try not to speak solely in the language of the technical manual or product brochure. Instead, paint memorable and engaging mental pictures, so the audience gets a “picture” of the evidence.**

### C. Case Studies or Examples

One of the most powerful forms of evidence is that of the case study – an example of what you achieved for another client... Tell the listeners what the situation was; the action you took; and the result, eg. “Our client X had sales of \$10m in 1998; we coached their sales force in how to build client relationships and in 2005 their sales exceeded \$32m.”

### D. Demonstration

Demonstrate your product or offer as part of the presentation... show advertisements you created; use the new software; take them for a test-drive...

**TIP: I once presented for two-and-a-half hours to win a major public relations account. We used thousands of dollars worth of PowerPoint and artwork. We addressed a strategy, creative, account handling...and we addressed them thoroughly. But we lost.**

**The next PR Company to pitch sent only their managing director. He walked into the room carrying a brown paper bag. “I’ve thought about your situation a lot,” he said, “and I know what you need.”**

**With that he up-ended the bag over the table and from it cascaded hundreds of press clippings.**

**“That is the media exposure we generated for one client in the past two months,” he said. “I can do it for you, too.”**

**Then he took questions.**

**He was given the business 30 minutes later.**

**The lesson is that demonstration can be a powerful form of evidence.**

### E. Testimonials

There are broadly four kinds of testimonials:

Expert testimonial (Heart surgeon, Racing Driver, Scientist). Present a testimonial from an acknowledged expert.

End User testimonial (A customer, patient, or product user). Get another client or customer to say how good you are.

Institutional testimonial (A well known institution, or body). Ask the industry association to provide a reference; or a university; or show awards that you have won.

Popular (A famous person... Seinfeld, Robert Morley, the Queen...). Can you get a famous name to endorse you?

There are many levels of testimonial. In ascending order of persuasive value and sophistication, we’ve:

- The client list
- A tailored client list
- Client referees, with contacts and numbers
- Client quotes to highlight key points
- A case study with client quote or comment
- Client testimonial letters (tailored to the pitch)
- Video testimonials
- A client appearance in the presentation

All are evidence and all are valuable.

**TIP: While video testimonials can be extremely powerful, use them sparingly and ensure the referee you’re using is one who will be respected by the customer.**

Check that the message delivered throughout the testimonial is specific to the key messages you need to reinforce in your pitch. In the right circumstances, well prepared, concise and relevant video inserts can deliver interest, demonstrate integrity and value, and ensure your presentation is as persuasive as possible.

### F. Hypothetical Example

If you haven’t actually worked with this prospect before or lack experience in the field, sometimes you can use a hypothetical example, eg.” Here is how we would see it working...”

Financial: (“If you had invested \$2,000 in 1995, by 2005 it would have grown to...”, “If you boosted advertising by 10%, we would spend the extra on TV and the result would be...”, “If you upgraded your machines in the factory, you could produce 15% more...”

### G. Strong Visual Aids

(Show dramatic lifts in profit on graph; show a photograph of the results of your last construction project; use before-and-after photographs; product shots; revenue/profit/cost graphs.

**TIP: The unfortunate tendency is for presenters to use too many charts, each with a series of wordy bullet points. While it can be appropriate to use this style for formal, conservative situations, or where there is complex information to convey, it isn’t always the most effective means of supporting your delivery.**

Use impactful and relevant pictures instead of bullet points to back up your verbal messages. It will give you more flexibility and control as a presenter; make your presentation stand out; and help your listeners remember the key points.

By breaking the usual mould, your presentation will be more likely to be remembered.

## H. Analogy

(“A jumbo jet uses the same amount of fuel in one takeoff as it takes to run an average sized car for a whole year”; “Enough fruit and vegetables to fill a large sporting stadium”; “Participating in a presentation skills workshop is like learning to ride a bicycle... On day one you need the coach’s hand on the seat...by day two you are riding unassisted... by day three you’ve got your hands off the handlebars and are shouting “Look at me, dad!!!”)

**TIP: A recent Wall Street Journal article stated, “As it turns out, analogies are more applicable to the real world than ever. Simple analogies, which compare several properties of two unlike things, may be the best way to help ordinary people understand such complex and invisible systems as the Internet and the human genome, not to mention killer viruses and black holes. Employers and educators in fields ranging from psychology to business agree that the ability to analogise well can distinguish the perspicacious from everyone else”.**

A good analogy can bring a story to life and may be the one thing listeners will remember.

## Proof

The RogenSi definition of proof is: “The right amount of the right kind of evidence needed to convince the decision maker.”

The final judge of proof will be the person making the decision. Different blends of evidence will be needed for different people. Some people will make a decision based on one testimonial...another listener may well want to see statistics, charts and a demonstration.

Understanding the people therefore is the key to winning the decision.

## Tips For Clarity

Complex subjects pose problems for presenters and sometimes it is necessary for you to use a number of techniques to provide clarity and understanding.

- If the listeners are not “getting it” after your first run, try using contrasts/ opposites. “What I don’t mean is...what I do mean is...”
- Tell them about a brief, personal experience
- Compare what you are saying with something more familiar to the audience: “You will be aware how easy it was to introduce the new dealer policy...well this policy will be just as easy”
- Use a visual aid to show what you mean
- Organize your thoughts in a particular sequence so the listeners are exposed to one concept at a time instead of getting everything at once

- Use gestures as visual aids and “draw” the size and shape of what you are describing
- Raise your voice to highlight a key point
- Pause for effect to highlight the previous or next point
- Start with what the listeners know, then bridge to the unknown
- Give examples
- Give specifics/more details
- Use listener experience/ask questions
- Demonstrate the product

Remember, proof is the RIGHT amount of the RIGHT kind of evidence needed to convince a decision maker. Once you understand your listeners, you will be better able to select the right amount of the right kind to achieve your objective.

Now you’ve got the evidence to convince your listeners to do something. It’s time to choose the most appropriate structure or flow for your presentation.

## Step 4: Decide On A Structure

How often have you finished a presentation, then afterwards remembered a vital piece of information that you forgot to include? How often have you run out of time, and had to cut important information? A sound structure guards against that happening.

When you open your mouth to speak...what will you say first, second, third and last? Having the right structure will aid the acceptance, understanding and retention of the information you give. It will also provide a “roadmap” to help you and your listeners stay on track.

Ahead you’ll read some very simple ways to give your presentation a solid structure.

## Organising Your Ideas

I’m sure you’ve sat in many presentations and wondered “what’s the point?”, or “why are you telling me this?” Ineffective presenters will often launch into their presentation with little or no structure to guide the listener as to what they want them to do, think or remember. Objectives are often unclear and wordy, agendas simply not used, presentations end abruptly without succinct summaries and conclusions.

Well-organized content helps you command attention and interest, and inspires the confidence of your listeners. With good organization, your ideas will be easy to follow and understand. They will flow naturally and logically, and will build to a persuasive climax.

A well-run and well-organized presentation further conveys to your listeners the thought that if your proposal or recommended course of action is accepted, you'll execute it in a similar, well-organized and effective way. If you are to gain and maintain the attention of your listeners, you'll need to give them a reason to listen, a sense of what to expect as the presentation unfolds. Hence the need for structure.

### The 3 Stages Of Communication

Every effective communication has a beginning, middle and end. Whether you are talking to children or clients, here is how it works:

#### Beginning

Make sure the listeners are ready to receive your message. That means clearing their minds of distractions, and ensuring you've got their attention.

#### Middle

Communicate your messages.

#### End

Once you've delivered the main points you need to make sure they've received and understood the message. You do that by summarizing and concluding.

That is the simplest communication structure. The next level of structured communication is probably the world's best known presentation structure:

#### Tell 'em outline

There will be times when you've very little time to prepare for those unexpected or very quick presentations. For example, being asked to give an update on a project during a meeting or being asked to say a few words at a function.

#### Beginning:

Tell 'em what you're going to Tell 'em. (Give an agenda, eg. I want to cover two points: The budget and how we've spent it.

#### Middle:

Tell 'em. (Cover each area): eg. This year's budget was...; and we spent it on..."

#### End:

Tell 'em what you told 'em. (Summarize the key points..." So the budget was less than last year...and we achieved everything we needed to achieve with it.")

This structure is used everywhere and is always found in radio and TV News bulletins:

BEGINNING: The announcer tells the audience what the main stories are... MIDDLE: The announcer reports on each story in detail... END: The announcer recaps the main points at the end of the bulletin.

Here's an example of how you might use it to leave a project update on your boss' voice mail:

BEGINNING: "Jim, just to update you on where we've fallen behind on the project, the resources required, and the impact to the budget..."

MIDDLE: "The implementation of the finance system is on track but staff training is four weeks behind schedule. So we require two more consultants working full time and this will increase the budget by \$25,000.

END: "So, everything is on track except for the staff training... we're a month behind, but with the \$25,000, we can get back on track".

Remember, make sure the listeners are ready to receive your communication, communicate and make sure they've received and understood the communication.

### Short Presentation Outline

A slightly more advanced structure is the RogenSi Short Presentation Outline. This structure is quite suitable for many situations where you've been given little warning. This structure will allow you to quickly plan an ordered, logical and professional sounding presentation.

Subject: State the Subject  
Agenda: State the areas you'll cover  
Body: Cover each area  
Summary: State a key point or points from each area  
Conclusion: State the main idea, purpose, next steps

(It's important to point out that there should be no new information delivered in the summary. Nor is the summary restating the agenda...instead it's where you deliver the 'so what' from each part of the body.)

Subject: "Today I am asking you to approve an extra \$75,000 for the market research."  
Agenda: "I will take you through how the budget was spent it: why we need the new funding and how it will be used."  
Body: "The market research budget of \$125,000 was spent in qualitative research covering groups in three States etc.:"

"However, during the time the research was being concluded the company created three new products which were not included at the time of budgeting.

"We believe that the sum of \$75,000 will allow us to also include the new products in the research so we can have a comprehensive coverage of all of our products."

Summary: "So the original budget has been spent as allocated; we have added three new products since we did the original budget; and we believe that by spending an extra \$75,000 we will be able to do a much better job."

Conclusion: "In closing I ask you to approve the extra \$75,000, so we can ensure we have an accurate result."

## The RogenSi Structure



### Presentation Planning Sheet

1. Audience Analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

2. My General Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

STEP 6  
(OPENING)

STEP 7  
(CREATIVE)

STEP 1  
(SUBJECT)

STEP 3 (AGENDA)




STEP 4 (BODY)




STEP 5 (SUMMARY)




STEP 2  
(CONCLUSION)

© RogenSi IP Limited



The classic RogenSi structure, created by Peter Rogen in 1968 and made copyright in Washington in 1969, is a further extension of the short presentation outline and has now been used by hundreds of thousands of presenters around the world – and copied by quite a few training companies.

Before we show you how to map out your presentation, here are the key elements of the structure, with some ideas about each:

### Opening remarks

The very first objective of your presentation is to ensure that your listeners are ready to receive the communication. That often means clearing their minds of questions that might otherwise distract them while you talk. For example, they may well be thinking: "I wonder how long this will take? Who are those people on stage behind the presenter? Should I take notes? Will there be breaks? Can I ask questions during the presentation or should I hold them until the end?"

So begin your presentation by making sure there are no distractions:

- Acknowledge that everyone is present and indicate the start of the meeting.
- Welcome and introduce the people present.
- Indicate the time schedule, including breaks and meals.
- Advise whether you'll take questions throughout the presentation, and/or at the end.
- Mention any pertinent procedural details eg. please address all questions through the chairman.
- Tell them if you intend giving them notes or a copy of the presentation as a 'leave-behind'.
- Check that everyone can see the visual aids.

Now there should be no distractions and your next task will be to grab the listeners' attention in a way that wakes them up and ensures they are listening.

### Creative openings

We call this stage the Creative Opening and there is one rule about choosing from the list of ideas below: Your creative opening **MUST** be relevant to your subject. If you tell a joke, it must lead naturally to the subject, or you have just created a major distraction. The test of relevancy is the "Bridge Test". If you can't bridge from your creative opening to your subject by following it with the words: "With that in mind..." or "That brings me to my subject..." – then your creative opening is not relevant.

**TIP: Leave thinking up your creative opening until you've mapped out every part of the presentation, because by that time you will have a very clear idea of the "theme"...and from that theme will flow your creative opening.**

So here are some creative openings:

### A relevant anecdote

Find a topic that's in the news, on the television, or something relevant that you once experienced or read about... A famous battle, a corporate takeover, a trial, a natural disaster, a great scientific discovery. Describe what happened, then bridge from it to the subject of the day.

### A strong quote

There are endless numbers of books of famous quotes so it's more than likely that there will be a relevant quote about your subject. The web is also filled with quotes, easy to access via most search engines.

Use a quote to grab attention, then bridge to your subject.

### An analogy or example

Tell an interesting story that is an analogy for your subject eg. "I remember when I learned to ride a bicycle... all that first day I was so glad to have Dad's hand on the saddle...but by day two I was riding alone – pretty wobbly – but alone. And by day three I was hurtling down the hill, waving my arms in the air and shouting: "Hey, Dad, look at me!" My point is that changing behaviours and learning new skills takes time... and I am going to talk to you today about a three-day training program that will not only change behaviour, but will also leave your people feeling confident and creative..."

### Get the listeners to do something

Listener involvement is a great way to make sure everybody is awake and aware.

I once advised a major bank which had an internal communication problem. Our client's Managing Director put on a soldier's helmet and gave a similar helmet to the CEO of the Bank, sitting on the other side of the table. He then whispered an instruction in the ear of the person seated next to him. That person whispered to the next and so on, until the last client executive whispered into the ear of the bank's CEO. Said our MD: "The message I sent was: 'Send reinforcements, we're going to advance. 'What message did you receive?'" Replied the bank CEO: "I heard, Send three and four pence, we're going to a dance!"

Our MD: That's what we believe is happening with your bank's internal communication...the message that leaves the top of the bank, is being muddled en route to the front line. But, we believe we can solve that problem for you. Let me tell you how..."

### Ask the listeners a question

Provided you can handle the answer, asking a question will involve the listeners. Eg. "What is the single biggest challenge facing this industry in the next five years?" (Take some answers, then say). "Our research says the biggest challenge is XYZ and that's what we want to talk to you about today."

### Use an imaginary situation

"I'd like you to imagine a situation in five years time. Your industry has undergone some major changes. Business is done on the Internet; your sales force has been halved..."

Project the client into the future and create awareness of the need for change.

### A real, dramatic or humorous situation

Tell a relevant story, with or without humour. But some words of warning about using a stock joke: Make it appropriate for your audience; make sure it is a new joke; keep it short; tell it well. The use of the joke is the most dangerous creative opening, because a joke told badly can ruin what might have been or otherwise strong presentation.

### Refer to a topical or current event

You might hold up a copy of today's newspaper and read a relevant story to the audience. Then tell the audience why the story brings you to your subject.

### A controversial opening

This is another dangerous, but powerful creative opening. Say something that will alarm the audience, or cause immediate controversy...then quickly clarify it and bridge to your subject.

**TIP: It seems odd to us at RogenSi that music features so seldom in presentations.**

**It's an opportunity that's being overlooked, and yet it shouldn't be, because logic says it has so much to offer in a presentation situation. Music has the ability to tap into emotions. It can prepare listeners by affecting mood. It can inspire and motivate. It can wake listeners up or calm them down. So why isn't it used more often? Why can't the client arrive to music, rather than walking into a business-like foyer? If you want to be perceived as dynamic, play something modern. If you want to be seen as conservative, go back to the classics. Music is one creative offering that's under used.**

### Video

A powerful video can be a wonderful means of gaining audience attention.

### Guest appearance

Having a surprise guest make an appearance at the start of your presentation can provide a convincing piece of evidence and an entertaining beginning.

It might be a testimonial or an excerpt from a film, but the combination of voice, colour, movement and picture is pretty compelling.

Each of these can be an effective means of getting your audience's attention.

### Sample agenda

Break your presentation up into 3 or 4 broad areas. There are many possible sequences for delivering your information. Here are a few of the more traditional flows for information.

**TIP: By telling the audience the agenda ie. the areas you intend to cover, you will provide comfort to those who might be concerned that you would not be covering a specific issue. They will be less likely to interrupt.**

Sample Agenda:

Problem, Alternatives, Solution Situation

Analysis, Recommendation Most Important

Next Most, Least Important Past, Present

Future Where we are now, Where we want to be, How we will get there Strategy

Execution, Budget Before, During

After Objectives, Strategy, Planning steps Purpose

Program, Implementation Situation analysis

Factors, Recommendation Needs analysis, Product/service

Features/benefits Design, Installation, Costs

Results, Analysis Background, Challenges, Options, Recommendation.

Using any of the above agenda (and any of many others) will produce a logical approach to your presentation, suitable for the style of communication you need to deliver, and the results you need to achieve.

Here are some more proven agenda:

#### ***Analytical***

The problem is/was... The options are... The solution is...

#### ***Priorities***

Most significant is... then comes...and last...

#### ***Phases***

Step one was... Step two was... Step three was...

Or

First we thought... then we asked...then we did...

#### ***Chronology***

In 1995, the picture was... in 2000, it changed to... Today we see...

#### ***Subject***

First we'll look at how it affects top management...then middle management... then our sales force.

#### ***Geographical***

Starting in the Eastern Region...now moving over to the North West...

#### ***Problem solving***

Here is more detailed way to organize your ideas along a 3-part Problem-Alternatives-Recommendation agenda:

(This approach may be especially useful if you think that your listeners will react negatively to your proposal.)

#### **Part 1: Problem**

- State the problem
- State the causes
- Substantiate the causes
- Give any other background data needed to understand the problem
- Indicate short/medium/long range consequences of the problem and the degree of urgency to act

#### **Part 2: Alternatives**

- Give criteria for solution (eg. budget, personnel and time constraints)
- Give alternatives that meet criteria
- Eliminate alternatives, starting with easiest to eliminate (do not eliminate the one you'll recommend)

#### **Part 3: Recommendation**

- Present final alternative as your recommendation
- Support it (evidence, benefits, etc.)
- Give disadvantages, if any, of your recommendation and minimize them
- Give details of implementation of your idea
- State how you'll know if your recommendation is successful or not
- State how you'll follow-up
- Summarize (re-state benefits)

#### **Sample Linking Phrases**

A presentation that flows will take the listeners from one section to the next in a logical manner. Without transitions, your presentations can seem disjointed.

The examples below show how one part of the presentation can be linked to the next by using a few words. There are, of course, many possibilities:

### Creative opening to subject/recommendation

...which brings me to...

...with this/that theme in mind, I would like to discuss/recommend...

... and in keeping with this...

...in response to that, I would like to...

...and this will serve to introduce our subject ...

...like Mr. Jones, I also feel that (recommendation)...

...that situation...is very similar to/reminds me of...

### Subject/recommendation to agenda

I'm going to support...from 3 main aspects...

I'm going to discuss...from 3 fundamental points of view...

Let's cover...with 3 essential elements in mind...

Here is how I propose covering the subject...

### Agenda to first body section

So, Let's look at... Initially, let's inspect...

To begin with, we see... To start with, we've...

### First body section to second body section

Moving to our next area of concern...

Next, we come to...

Now let's examine...

To continue the sequence, we've...

Our next important element is...

### Second body section to last body section

Finally and most importantly, we've...

Last, but certainly not least, we come to...

Finally, then, let's examine...

Lastly, we've...

### Mini summary (to conclude extra long sections)

So much for...

That covers...

There we've...

So, as you can see...

### Last section to summary

So, we've seen that... then... and finally ...

In a nutshell then...

Looking back, we see...

On balance, we discussed...

So, we discovered that...

So, let's now take an overview...

Reviewing then, we covered...and saw that...

### Summary to conclusion/recommendation

Therefore...

Consequently...

It follows conclusively then, that...

Having shown...I recommend that we immediately...

The thought I am going to leave with you...

What I want you to take away from this...

Overall, you'd agree that...

I strongly recommend...

I strongly urge...

I suggest without hesitation that...

**TIP: If you cannot find a suitable transition from one part of your presentation to the next, it's often a sign that your flow is out of sequence. Change the order until the transitions work.**

### Closing remarks

Once you've concluded and nominated the next steps, it's time to wrap up the meeting. Here are some suggested closing remarks:

Briefly summarize what took place. Summarize any key conclusions and agreements reached, when possible with responsibilities and deadlines.

State the follow-up: Where the next meeting is to be, its purpose, what must be done in the interim and by whom, what the next step is.

Thank the participants for their time and attention and for any particular contribution that they might have made.

Acknowledge that the meeting is over. If the meeting was successful, acknowledge that too.

Those are the key elements of your presentation. But what is the best way to map it out? Here is the RogenSi method proven over many thousands of effective presentations:

Take a RogenSi Organisational Flow Chart or draw the boxes on a clean sheet of paper.



## Presentation Planning Sheet

1. Audience Analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

2. My General Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

STEP 6  
(OPENING)

STEP 7  
(CREATIVE)

STEP 1  
(SUBJECT)

STEP 3 (AGENDA)




STEP 4 (BODY)




STEP 5 (SUMMARY)




STEP 2  
(CONCLUSION)

© RogenSi IP Limited



## Planning your flow

### Before you begin:

Find out about your audience, including what they currently know about your subject... what they want to know and need to know.

### Then:

Write down your objective: What you want them to do as a result of your presentation.

### Step 1: Subject

Write down your subject (ie. what you will tell the listeners your presentation is about).

### Step 2: Conclusion

Write down your conclusion (ie. what you intend saying last...including next steps). By doing this now, you will be better able to create a presentation that reaches that conclusion.

### Step 3: Agenda

Break your presentation into the three or four agenda items which will cover your subject.

### Step 4: Body

Write down your key points under each agenda item.

### Step 5: Summary

Write a summary under each list of key points. (What is the key point or points from this body area?)

### Step 6: Opening

Now go back to the top of your presentation and think about your introductory remarks.

### Step 7: Creative opening

Choose an appropriate creative opening.

### Step 8: Transitions

Now pick the transitions that will lead from one section to the next.

Now you've planned an effective presentation, you may wish to write it out in full or you may prefer to use the planner as reader's notes.

**TIP: Resist providing your document to be read by the audience during your presentation. It's a guaranteed way to lose control. The accountant goes straight to the price...the marketer goes to the advertising...everyone has their favourite part of your document – and you're trying to keep their attention on your flow.**

Instead, say up-front that you'll be handing out a document at the end of the presentation. Then deliver the presentation according to your planned flow.

## Step 5: Create Visual Aids

There isn't a business presentation that could not be better with the use of visual aids. They create impact and add another visual dimension. People learn and understand more quickly if they can see something, as well as hear it.

The old Chinese proverb: "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand" is true of presentations. But visual aids – and especially PowerPoint – can be overdone. The medium becomes the message – and the real messages are overshadowed by the electronic showmanship.

If you put some thought and time into selecting the most appropriate visual aids, they'll support you and your presentation rather than dominating it.

The type of visual aids you use to support your presentation can in itself create an impression with your listeners. This is perhaps more relevant these days, given the wide spread access to PowerPoint. But PowerPoint does not have to be the only form of visual aid.

At the end of this section, you'll be able to make more informed decisions about the type of visuals to use; you'll be able to plan them more quickly and feel more comfortable when interacting with the various types.

### The role of visual aids

Just how does the use of visual aids help you as a presenter? One study from the Wharton Business School said when words alone were used, 20% of what was said was remembered. When visuals were added to the words 40% of what was said was remembered. With words, visuals and audience interaction as much as 80% was remembered.

Visual aids should assist the presenter by highlighting, illustrating and emphasising key messages without detracting from the presence of the presenter or the overall purpose of the communication.

They give the presenter an excuse to move and they provide interest by adding colour and involving the listeners.

"A picture paints a thousand words" – imagine how long it would take to explain a complex organization structure or a piece of sophisticated equipment without the assistance of visuals. Presenters will often point to, underline, or leave on display, the key points they wish to reinforce.

Visual Aids can help you stay on track by enabling you to check your progress and prompt your thoughts along the way.

They'll also help listeners stay on track. For example, you may put your agenda on a flip chart, and leave it on display for the whole presentation. That way, when you move from one area of the presentation to the next, the listeners can clearly see where you're up to; when you've moved onto the next section; and where you're heading.

**Tip: If the PowerPoint image has been on the screen for some time, and you want to make a key point, press the B key on the computer to black out the image and then move forward to make sure listener focus and attention is on you.**

Having strong visuals, will give you confidence in knowing that the order of the visuals is also the order of your presentation.

Finally by using cartoons and video as visual aids you can add a light-hearted dimension to your meeting.

### Selecting visual aids

Should you use PowerPoint, or a flip chart for your next presentation? Visual aids will form a significant part of the impression you create as a presenter. You need to consider the presenting environment, your listeners and the complexity of the message before you choose the most appropriate type. This RogenSi chart shows how visual aids affect where listener's place their visual attention.

Type Of Aid	Focus On Presenter	Style	Audience Size
Video	0-10%	Moderate Dynamic	All
Holding or passing around	Products or Samples	0-20% Dynamic	Small
35mm Slides	10-20%	Conservative	Large
PowerPoint	30-70%	Moderate-Dynamic	
Overhead Projection / Acetates	40-80%	Moderate	Medium-Large
Flip Chart / Easel	50-90%	Dynamic	Small-Medium
Picture / Display Boards	60-90%	Dynamic	Small-Medium
Table Top Presenters	70-90%	Moderate	Small
Presenter ONLY	100%	All	All

#### Factors to consider:

Is it a small, medium or large room?

How many listeners will be in the audience?

How far away will they be?

What flexibility is there in the lighting?

What is their business style?

How much do they know of your subject?

How used are they to this type of visual aid?

What is the mood of presentation...formal or informal?

Is the message simple or complex/less?

Do you need to give lots of detail?

How long is the presentation?

Do you intend moving around?

Will you be encouraging the audience to interact and participate?

**TIP: Please don't put your company logo prominently on the top of each visual. (That's where you put the client's logo. Yours can go right down the bottom in a corner.)**

The advent of multi-media technology for visual aids has given the business presenter a multitude of fascinating tools to enhance the presentation. The benefits are huge: Building images; introducing video clips; the ability to make changes at the last minute... At RogenSi we recommend them all. But don't make the error of letting the visual aids dominate the presentation. The client wants to hire you; they don't want to hire your computer whiz or the computer itself. People hire people, so make sure the visuals add to your presentation, rather than subtract from it.

**TIP: Be careful of the "build" technique of adding one line at a time to your screen image. Use it when you need to talk about a point for a minute or two, but avoid it if you're only making one quick point about each line. It draws too much attention to the mechanics of the visual aid rather than the message you want to convey.**

Now that you've made the decision as to which type of visuals will help to achieve the best result, you can look at some things to consider when preparing them.

### Where and when to use visual aids

A question that is often asked ... "At what stages in my presentation should I include a slide?"

A fast and easy way to 'map out' your visuals is to use the 'story board'.

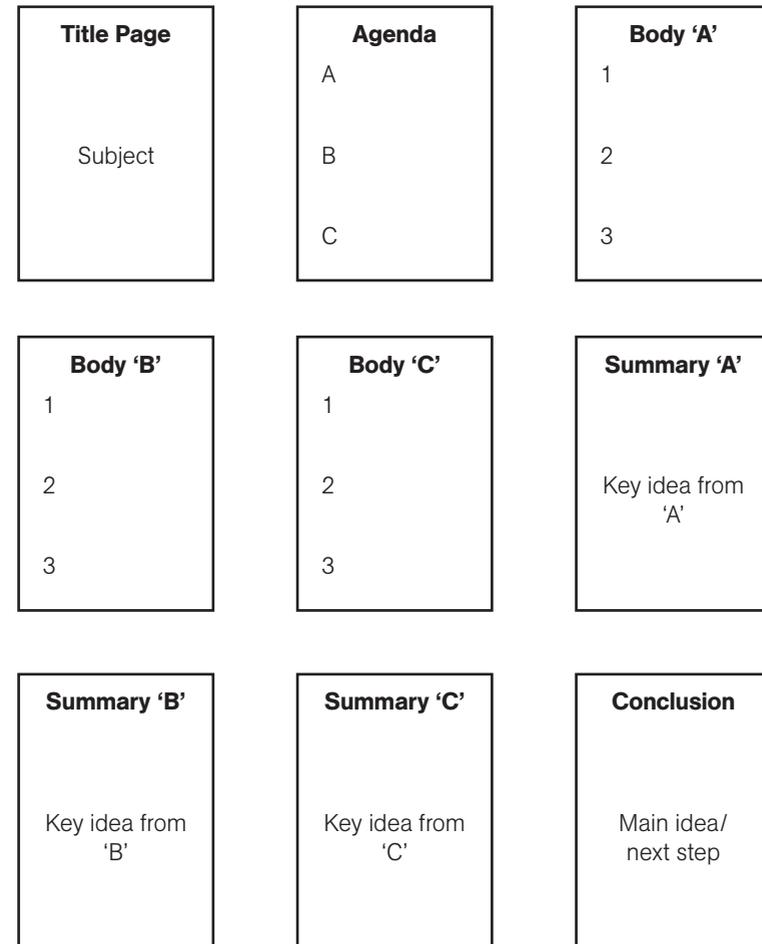
### The storyboard

Storyboards are used in the advertising industry to demonstrate to clients how a new television advertisement might work. They give people a sense of how the story unfolds before production begins.

This process can also be used to quickly map out the visual aids for your presentation. An added benefit is that you can see the 'big picture' of your presentation, to ensure that it flows well and has the right balance of material.

Use your speaker notes as a guide. As a starting point, build your title slide, then one for the agenda. Sketch out the basic slide/s for each of the agenda items, followed by the summary and conclusion slide. Mark to one side of each box any effects such as builds that are required, and the type of medium you want to use for that particular slide or screen.

Storyboard example:



### Layout. Some guidelines.

Where ever possible have just one theme or key point per frame.

Use a font and size of type (min 18 point) that can be read easily.

Limit the number of lines per page to five (but the less words the better).

Use around 50% of the space available on the slide.

Capital letters for headings, but use lowercase for ease of reading (tests confirm that lower case with a serif is easier to read).

Use bold/underline/italic to emphasize.

Keep “half sentences” to one line if possible. (A half sentence is a normal sentence minus any less important words, eg. “Sales up 50%” instead of:

“Our sales for June increased by 50%, compared to same time last year.”

Use a consistent template for all slides.

Ensure that the ‘legends’ on graphs can be easily read.

Label/number the axes on graphs.

### **Guidelines for wording on slides if you use complete sentences**

- Focus will be on the visual aid
- Allow more time for listeners to digest the extra words
- You'll have less flexibility
- It will appear more formal/conservative
- You'll not have to elaborate as much.

### **If you use only key words**

- More focus will be on you
- More explanation will be required
- You'll have more flexibility
- It will appear informal
- It may appear “lightweight”.

### **If you use “half sentences”**

- Focus will be split between you and the visual aid
- You will have more flexibility
- It will appear less formal
- You can keep important thoughts.

### **Colours**

When selecting colours:

- You might choose to use a colour theme that changes from one section to the next, to clearly separate the sections
- Keep headings in a consistent colour throughout the presentation so they're easily distinguished

- Test your visuals in a room that has similar lighting levels to the room in which you'll present – colours can get washed out.
- For maximum clarity, use contrasting colours adjacent to each other
- Watch out for too many colours –as a guideline try and use no more than four.

### **The build**

‘Building’ the on-screen text as you go, rather than having all the information displayed from the start will enable listeners to take in points one at a time. This can be used effectively when you need to keep listener attention on one point and prevent listeners reading ahead.

### **Blank screen**

Blank screens can be used to bring the focus and attention back on to you; giving the listeners a break; allowing you to move to the other side of the room, or to demonstrate good listening. Press the B Key to create a blank screen.

### **Notes**

Visual aids and notes have quite separate roles. PowerPoint allows you to create separate speakers notes as part of the slide show. The process of creating slides will also help you determine what should be on the screen for the listeners’ benefit, and what needs to be on your speaker notes.

To minimize your need to look at the screen it's helpful to have a duplicate set of visuals to be used as your notes, with the appropriate transitions and mini conclusions written on them. Write the words (NEW SLIDE) to remind you when to go to the next slide.

### **Interacting with visual aids**

#### **1. Know the equipment**

Get familiar with the technology and its operation.

Be aware of the position of the screen and projector in room.

#### **2. Preparation**

Rehearse.

Put yourself in the position of the listeners and note what they will see.

Think about your planned movement so you do not block the screen.

#### **3. Maintain contact with listeners**

Deliver complete thoughts to individuals.

Do not talk to the screen.

Allow listeners time to digest information, before moving to the next slide.

#### 4. Ensure the listeners can see the visuals

Be aware of your position in the room relative to the screen.

Ensure the text is large enough to read.

Check the angle of screens/flip charts.

Check lighting levels/glare & reflections.

### Using Visual Aids

Visual aids, by their sheer size, colour and impact can have a significant effect on how you and our organization are perceived. But the choice of visual needs to be considered carefully.

Whether you choose PowerPoint, boards, or even old-fashioned overheads will depend on the room; size of the audience; how conservative or dynamic you want to be; the complexity of the message; and what the audience likes.

Be aware that different listeners will want to see and hear things differently. You can increase the receptiveness of your listeners by considering what type of visuals they are most used to, and laying them out in a way that's clear and easy to follow.

Through planning and rehearsal, you'll minimize distractions, and maintain a professional and competent image during the presentation.

### General. Flip Charts / Whiteboards

- Print large enough so that each person in the audience can easily read the text.
- Title every page/slide/chart/overhead and underline headings in a colour different to the text.
- Use a combination of key words, half or full sentences.
- Use at least 2 colours.
- Use spoken transitions to create a sense of continuity.
- Visualize as much as possible using graphs, diagrams and pictures.
- Use a variety of visual aids when appropriate.
- Keep primary eye contact on the listeners, not the visual aid.
- Remember to move – don't stay 'glued' to one spot.
- Involve the listeners – you and the listeners are the best visual aids.
- Keep a clean presentation space.
- Plan ahead – rehearse.

### PowerPoint

- Ensure all aspects of the technology are compatible.
- Use 'black' slides to control the focus of the attention of the listeners on you.
- Have consistent transitions between slides.
- Make sure the projected image is large enough for all of the listeners to read.
- Check that colours are effective in the lighting conditions in which you'll be presenting.
- Use a remote mouse if possible.
- Have a back-up set of visuals.
- If possible, have access to a minimum of 4 colours – black, blue, red, green.
- Write on every third page if the paper is thin to prevent 'showthrough'.
- Fold or staple corners of multiple corners so you can locate the next page easily.
- Consider having charts professionally drawn.
- You can write 'notes' in pencil, so you can read them, but the audience cannot.
- Can use 'reveals'.
- Be careful when moving the easel – they can collapse!
- Flip charts allow a lot of interaction.

**TIP: We've all been there... watching a presenter laboriously read out loud the words on the screen, as the listeners drift off into another world.**

It shouldn't be a difficult thing to get right but that doesn't stop presenters making the same mistakes over and over again.

The tendency is to fill the screen with words, and then read those same words out loud to the listeners. Think about it: If everyone in the room can read the screen themselves, then why do need to do it for them?

It becomes even more bizarre when you consider that we read faster than a person speaks, so while the presenter plods on, reading aloud to the listeners, the listeners have finished that slide and then have to wait for the presenter to catch up.

**TIP: There's a simple rule: If it's on the screen, don't read it. Paraphrase it, make an additional comment about it, but don't read it out. Put a short statement on the screen then talk about it.**

**TIP: Use verbs and action statements in headings instead of groups of words which lack personality, for example:**

Instead of: "SALES FORECAST 1998"

Try: "SALES WILL BOOM IN 98."

Instead of: "MARKET RESEARCH RESULTS..."

Try: "THEY HATE IT!"

Instead of: "OUR CREATIVE PROCESS..."

Try: "HOW WE MAKE THE ADS."

And when you rehearse, pause at the end of each slide and ask yourself: "What's the point of this slide? Why am I showing it to these listeners? What role does it play in meeting my objectives? Is it for them... or is it for me?" If it doesn't add anything, get rid of it.

## Step 6: Read Through

The longer you spend writing your presentation, the closer you get to it. At some point you've been buried in the detail so long that it's easy to forget your listeners or the objective that you set.

We created the Read Through to let you step back from your presentation and see it as the listener, rather than the presenter. When you have your script and visual aids, think about the listeners in your audience and then imagine yourself hearing your presentation for the first time. Read it out loud, listen to your own words and watch the visual aids, stopping after each paragraph to ask yourself these questions, one at a time:

- Did I need to hear that?
- So What?
- Did I understand that?
- What does that mean to me?

We find that this read-through can cut up to 30% in length from your presentation, while helping you sharpen the focus.

**TIP: The pitch team had been planning their final presentation for more than six weeks. They were halfway through the third rehearsal when the Managing Director stood up: "This is a load of rubbish," she said. "How much of this prospect really need to hear? There's so much even I'm bored stiff!"**

**So we had four business colleagues pretend to be the client executive team. We briefed them thoroughly and then we presented to them. We asked them to dwell on just two questions as they listened: "Do I understand this?" and, "So what?"**

**Whenever one of the role players felt that they needed to ask one of the two questions,**

**they would shout it out and the presenters would evaluate the worth of the material delivered.**

**By the end of that rehearsal two hours later, we had cut the presentation from 90 minutes to 60. It was clearer; it made more sense and it was relevant.**

If you're rehearsing alone, then put yourself in the mind of the listener. Be brutal with yourself. Ask: "As the listener, do I really need to know that? Do I know it already? So what? How does it affect me?"

## Step 7: Rehearse

Each time you rehearse you find something that could be better. If you don't rehearse you find all those things at the same time...unfortunately that will probably be during the final presentation!

Rehearse to yourself, in the shower, in front of a mirror, in the car, in an empty boardroom, in front of your colleagues, in the presentation room that you'll be using.

If you physically rehearse the presentation out loud, you'll discover where wording appears awkward and identify the areas that could be fine tuned. You'll be able to check the length. Often, your speech notes will appear fine when you've finished writing them, but they may not flow nearly as smoothly when read out aloud – better to make mistakes when the client isn't in the room!

Please don't fall for the old wife's tale that too much rehearsing makes you rigid or stilted. If you believe that, then simply watch any of the great sports people and tell me when they stop rehearsing. They keep practising, because they know they get better every time.

You should physically rehearse the presentation at least three times. And as a bonus, you'll be less nervous.

**TIP: A remarkable number of presenters seem to do their best to avoid rehearsals before a major presentation, often with very different excuses. One school of thought says that rehearsal stifles creativity and creates 'robots'. Another says, "I can't rehearse, because I'm not ready"**

**Let's deal with both of them, the latter first.**

**The concept of not being ready to rehearse is a fascinating one, because logically, you rehearse specifically because you're NOT ready.**

"Rehearsal stifling creativity" is another strange notion. True, if you feel that presenting is about memorising words so they can be delivered verbatim, then you'll limit yourself. But true creativity in presentations comes from an 'aware' presenter reacting to the listeners, usually in an impromptu situation where something the presenter has said has created 'contact' with the listeners, generating spontaneous reactions.

Unfortunately, too many presenters are so focused on the need to get the words right, that they're unable to spare enough attention to see these reactions. The secret is to rid your mind of distractions by physically rehearsing the mechanics of the

presentation. Thus you're able to focus on the most important component of the event – the listeners.

**TIP: In advertising there used to be a joke that when the cry goes out, “Client’s in the foyer,” the creative department responds, “We’ll have the concept ready in half an hour.” It’s a standing joke that the creative department is always the last to be ready in an ad agency pitch, but the fact is that creativity does not fit readily into time slots. And the truth is that pressure does make diamonds.**

The best presentations are honed right up to the time the client arrives because every presentation can always be a little better, regardless of how much time has gone into its creation. The reality is that it's usually impossible to 'see' a presentation during the first, second or even third rehearsal. Its magic occurs right at the end because the presentation team only starts delivering the real messages crisply and clearly after it has worked its way through all the information that has been collected during the process.

More often than not, it's the sheer exhaustion of a 2am final rehearsal that finally results in an awareness of the real message (and enables large cuts to be made to the length of the presentation).

So welcome the pressure, because you need it to get the best result. With it comes adrenaline and energy, and the listeners will see both in the actual presentation.

If there is a gap between your final rehearsal and the presentation, use it to challenge everything yet again.

## Step 8: Delivery

### Impact of eye contact

We often talk about eye contact as a concept and we're all aware of its importance, yet it's not something often taught in schools. (By eye contact, I mean when my eyes meet yours.)

It's difficult to develop skill in this most powerful of presentation tools just by reading about its benefits in a book. In this area more than any other, practical exercises such as those we use in RogenSi programs prove invaluable.

When good eye contact is used it creates a number of impressions, including:

- Trust
- Confidence
- Caring
- Interest in the listener
- Competence
- Enthusiasm
- Authority

- Rapport
- Honesty
- Credibility
- Awareness
- Willingness to communicate
- Determination.

Used badly what does it show?

- Weakness
- Dishonesty
- Shiftiness
- Nervousness
- Discomfort
- Insecurity
- Unwillingness to be there

The effectiveness of eye contact is changed by varying the amount of time you look at someone, and by varying the distance that you are apart...closer is more powerful, further away less powerful. The longer you hold eye contact, the more things change, sometimes for the better, sometimes not.

### Eye Contact

#### One-to-one

Here are four strategies for using eye contact in a one-to-one situation:

Less: If you wanted to appear humble, use a lot less.

Safe: Typically people who have the same amount of eye contact have good rapport, are equals, partners, peers.

Constructive: Use the same amount as the listener then gradually increase yours a little more to build rapport.

More: Use a lot more eye contact than the other person and you could be perceived as strong, assertive, confident (but use too much and you could be seen as aggressive or dominating).

#### Eye contact: group situation

When using eye contact in a presentation, deliver complete thoughts to individuals and use different amounts of eye contact according to the role of the listener in your presentation, eg.

### **Decision Maker:**

When there is only one person who will make the decision then give that person 60 to 70% of your eye contact, and spread the rest around.

### **Key Influencer:**

When there are key influencers present, give the decision maker the most eye contact, the key influencers the next most and spread the rest around.

### **By Role:**

When mentioning marketing, for example, look at the marketing manager, when mentioning finance look at the finance person, when talking overall company image look to the MD or Chairman.

### **Everyone is Equal:**

If there are 10 people present and all have a vote, spread your eye contact around, giving each person 10%.

**TIP: Practise alone in a room, delivering complete thoughts to the empty chairs.**

## **Gestures**

How can gestures add to your presentation?

- They'll make you more animated
- They'll clarify and emphasize
- They can add fun
- They'll make you NATURAL because it is natural to use them.
- They will enable you to describe shapes and sizes
- They will help you focus listener attention on a specific point
- They'll add energy and variety

Gestures should be comfortable, because they are a natural part of talking. So use them naturally, to describe size and shape, to emphasize and to create tone and mood. And remember, it's just as natural to rest between gesturing.

### **Rest positions**

Here are just some of the places to rest your hands between gestures:

On the furniture.

Holding the felt tipped pen.

One hand lightly in pocket.

Hands clasped in front.

Hands behind your back.

Holding notes or a folder.

Combinations of the above.

**TIP: A comfortable rest position is hands lightly clasped, elbows bent, ready to gesture as required.**

### **'Tailoring' gestures**

Gestures will have a different impact on your image as a presenter according to the size of the gestures you use. You may want to vary the size to suit the listeners.

Here are some guidelines:

#### **Conservative**

To create a conservative feel use small gestures – perhaps less than the size of a volleyball, and made between belt to lower chest height, projecting not much past the sides of your body. These reflect a conservative personality.

#### **Moderate**

To reflect a more 'moderate' image, use gestures that extend past your sides, and reach up higher than your chest.

#### **Dynamic**

'Dynamic' presenters use much larger gestures. They may also include fast, energetic, stabbing, chopping or punching gestures.

You can affect the impression you create by using different sorts of gestures.

### **Summary**

Don't rely on one rest position. Use different gestures at different times. Gestures are a form of visual aid. So consider the impact they have on the overall impression you want to create for your listeners.

You have the ability to change the size, speed or energy levels with which you use gestures to create different impressions. Practise in front of a mirror or with a friendly audience.

### **Movement**

Movement is one of the most important, but least understood, aspects of presenting.

It certainly has a powerful impact on a presentation, because it can change the feelings in the room without a word being spoken.

As with gestures, moving around the room will also create impressions:

- a) You'll look more natural.
- b) You'll be animated, energetic and interesting.
- e) You'll get more attention.
- f) You'll affect the chemistry and mood in the room.

Movement is often the first thing that you notice about a person; whether they move with confidence or uncertainty.

Nervous movement (shuffling of feet, meandering across the floor without purpose) will distract, but movement with purpose will add to the presentation.

### **Mood and tone**

Think about the use of space as being the opportunity to change how you might be perceived.

#### *Conservative*

You'll tend to present from one place in the room, typically around the screen. You may not move much at all, and your stance typically will be upright, formal, symmetrical.

#### *Moderate*

You'll move around the front of the room, usually not going further than the closest listener in the audience. But using this extra space will allow you to introduce angles and you can present from several positions in the room eg. directly in front, stage left or stage right, or any combination of those positions plus sitting, standing, resting etc.

#### *Dynamic*

As a dynamic presenter you can and will use the whole room, perhaps starting the presentation from an unusual location, moving with energy, using different parts of the room to create specific effects. You can join the listeners, presenting from behind them, beside them, on the table, under it ...whatever works!!!

### **Using the room**

Where you stand in relation to your listeners will be a key ingredient in determining the relationship/feeling between you and your audience. At RogenSi we have named a few positions to give an impression of how you might be perceived:

#### *Teacher-Pupil*

This is an influential position. Out in front of the "class" like a teacher, usually close to the screen or flip chart:

"I, (the teacher) am closer to the data...

"I'll teach. You listen"

As the "teacher" you are closer to the chart or blackboard than the listeners. It's easy to use good eye contact with each person; it's a conventional presenting position – and a good position to maintain control. There's distance between the presenter and the listeners. But it's not the only position.

#### *Facilitator*

The feeling of moving around the front of the room, interacting with some of your audience, is one of "facilitating their understanding" of the messages. More interaction with the audience means there's less attention on you as the presenter. It's a less formal presentation style.

#### *Partner*

By using the room and moving into your audience you give a strong feeling of: "Let's look together at the problem". For example, it's a good position to adopt to introduce the participants to each other. You actually stand right behind each person, resting your hands on their shoulders if appropriate, and then introducing each to the others. Your voice will naturally take on a more informal, conversational tone, and you'll be closer to the decision maker. By moving into the audience you'll effectively destroy the "public speaker" impression.

#### *Sitting teacher*

When seated at the front of the audience, you're at the same level as the listeners, and therefore not as intimidating; listeners usually find it easier to ask and answer questions. However, you may find it a little harder to maintain control because you're not above the audience and not the single point of listener focus.

#### *Coach*

Another dynamic position – but seldom used – is that of coach ie. seated or standing at the rear of the table, as if the coach of a football team, urging the team forward, motivating them. Give some thought to how you will ensure that listener attention is where you want it, on the screen or on yourself.

#### *Decision Maker*

When one person is obviously the ONLY important listener in terms of approving your recommendation, it is occasionally valid to sit down beside that person or crouch beside him or her while you explain a specific part of the pitch. That particular point in the presentation becomes virtually one-on-one. Acknowledge the importance of that person by take a step or two toward them before making a strong pitch.

### **Planning movement**

When you're planning your next presentation go through each part of your structure and ask: "What feeling do I need to create at this point in the presentation?". For example, if you want a low-key start, you might use the "seated facilitator" position, then move forward to the "teacher/pupil" position to gain greater control. You might present each major area of your presentation from a new position. If it's appropriate, do it.

### **Summary**

Every point in the room has a feeling. Movement is powerful because it affects the feelings in the room. You use movement to create conservative or dynamic impressions and there are literally thousands of positions in the room, each a little different.

**TIP: As the presenter, you can control when you start to speak, when you change volume and pace and when you stop speaking.**

You can start, change and stop your visual aids.

You can decide when to gesture, when to change the size of your gestures, and when to stop gesturing.

And most importantly, you can decide when to start moving, when to change from one position to another, and when to stop moving.

Unfortunately, many presenters stay in the one spot, transfixed for an hour while they talk. It removes one chance to provide variety and gives a presentation a very formal, dull sheen.

Others, perhaps realising they should move, set off around the room in a most distracting manner, meandering from place to place without rhyme or reason, talking as they walk, losing some of the power of the spoken word.

A better way is to stand in one spot to talk, then move to another place, and then speak again.

If you've something important to say, stand still when you say it. But if you're only speaking a few words as a transition then you can move when you do that.

## The Use Of Voice

Think of a presentation you've attended recently, perhaps delivered by an actor or public figure. Think about how they used their voices, and what impression that created for you.

Think about the sense of drama, the use of the pause, speed, variety, emphasis, tone, mood, creating an effect, energy, conviction, intention, credibility, authority and interest.

All will be affected by your use of voice and by controlling projection (how you get yourself heard at the back of the room); modulation (the 'light and shade' in your voice) and pausing (how you punctuate your delivery). You will provide variety while keeping attention and emphasizing the important passages.

## Projection

Voice projection is how you 'push' your voice out to the listeners. It's not volume. Trained actors can have a 'staged whisper' heard at the back of the room. A useful analogy is that of the amount of force you might use to throw a dart at a dartboard: Thrown too hard it bounces off; too soft it doesn't reach the board. Consider the concept of 'voice contact', using the right amount of energy to 'reach' the person and make contact.

Practise talking to a friend and ask when the contact is right for the message and occasion. Stand relatively close to the other person, deliver your line, then back away in stages, ensuring that the receiver feels the sentence 'hit' them.

## Modulation

You'll notice that radio announcers and actors can vary their voices quite dramatically not only in volume but also by using emotion, emphasis, pitch, and pace.

On a scale of one to ten (with 10 being the loudest you might ever shout... and 1 being a barely-heard staged whisper) most business people vary their volume

between 4.5 and 5.5 – in other words very little. The effect is conservative and can be monotonous and boring.

A moderate speaker will vary the volume from 3.5 to 7.5 and that's appropriate for most business situations.

The dynamic presenter knows that he or she can go from 1 (a staged whisper) to 9 (a shout), if it's appropriate for the chosen tone and mood.

Find yourself an empty meeting room and try this exercise, talking to each of the empty chairs, one at a time:

Deliver in a staged whisper to the first chair and say: "I would like you to have one, two and three". Keep your voice at the barely-audible level... Listen to yourself and think about the impression you are making.

(Then turn to another chair and deliver in a "normal" volume, saying: "I'd like you to have four, five and six," Listen to the difference.

Now turn to another chair and shout in your loudest voice: "You can have numbers seven and three...but not nine!!!!" Listen to yourself again and think about the impression you would make on a listener. Now do it again and again until you are better able to use your voice flexibly, across your entire range.

Now try delivering these sentences using excitement in your voice and changing the volume on key words:

"Look at the sparkling fireworks in the sky..."

"Hush, creep along very quietly..."

"I told you I don't want to be part of it. Leave me alone!"

"Are you kidding? You saved my life. I'll never be able to repay you"

"Come on, that's taking it a bit too far!"

Try imitating a newsreader or voice-over person – practise being over the top. Take a children's story book and read out a passage as if you were reading to a group of young children. Read slowly and loudly and notice the difference between that and your normal voice. Practise reading out a passage from a moving or exciting speech or poem. Again, place emphasis and emotion where it best fits.

## Pausing

The power of the pause is one of introducing drama and emphasis, by saying nothing! You can pause simply to take a breath; to enhance an emotional effect; to emphasize a word just spoken or about to be delivered. But don't under-estimate its power. A well-delivered pause is absolutely as important as a well-delivered key word.

## Summary

You can never under-estimate the power of your voice. Monotone is boring, so practise varying the volume, altering the pace of your delivery – adding more light and shade in your voice.

Make your messages clearer by using structure and visual aids, but also by pausing to avoid running words and ideas together.

When you rehearse, use your voice in different ways – vary the pace, discover where the pauses fit, and how hard or soft you can go.

**TIP: How can you use your voice to communicate better? How can you project better? First, practise pausing. Second, practise talking more slowly and more quickly. Third, practise changing your volume for key words and passages.**

It's a very common occurrence for someone change their whole demeanour when they start to present. The warmth and charisma that showed when they were chatting one-on-one disappears in a blaze of nervous energy when they stand to present. They become stilted, overly-formal, loud, precise – all aspects of communication which do little to build rapport. We call it "Toastmaster's Disease".

But one technique which may help is to add a few tiny, almost meaningless words to the front of each sentence eg.

Stilted Version:

"We at XYZ Company believe your problem is complex, but the solution is achievable".

Conversational version:

"You know, it's interesting, we believe your problem is complex, but the solution is achievable."

**TIP: The very act of standing up can be enough to make a speech stilted, formal and overly loud. Try rehearsing sitting down. Note how the voice becomes more relaxed and conversational, then stand up and maintain the same tone.**

**The difference can be dramatic.**

Many, many years ago, probably in a church of some kind, someone asked where they could rest their notes... and thus the lectern was born.

Today, every conference venue and most boardrooms have their own version, ranging from a stick with a flat top, to a complex electronic centre which controls video, curtains, lights, microphone and computers. Your challenge as a presenter is to use it in the most effective manner.

The starting point is to remember why they were invented – to hold your notes. That's all they should be used for. Today, however, we find that microphones are placed on the lectern, thus defining the position from which the presenter can talk.

Peter Rogen told me once that in 90 per cent of cases, the janitor positioned the

lectern the night before. Peter was making the point that too many presenters accept that because the lectern was set in a certain position, that is where it must remain. And you have the right to move it.

You have control:

You don't need a microphone to talk to less than 100 people. Ask for a lapel microphone if you need to talk to a bigger crowd.

Once you have a lapel mike, you only need the lectern to hold your notes, so feel free to move away from it when addressing individuals around the room.

And if you don't need notes, you don't need a lectern.

## Using Questions Skillfully

Our definition of Effective Communication starts with the concept that effective communication is an exchange of ideas, energy and actions rather than a one-way flow. Use questions to encourage this interaction between you and the listeners.

Questions will:

- Engage attention
- Establish better two-way communication
- Obtain information
- Check for understanding or misunderstanding
- Check for agreement or disagreement.

Train yourself in the art of questioning; it's one of the most valuable presentation tools.

## Preparing questions

- Prepare key questions ahead of time
- Plan the timing of your questions
- Be alert to situations that require unplanned questions, eg. noticing a listener looking puzzled, bewildered or confused
- Use questions sparingly until you're comfortable with their use
- Give positive feedback for answers given to your questions.

## Team Presentations

Team presentations are used when information from different areas of expertise has to be jointly presented. Assign one person to the role of 'Captain' of the team. This person becomes primarily responsible for the organization of the presentation and decides who joins the team.

*Hold an initial meeting (led by the Captain)*

- Discuss in as much detail as possible, the information you have about the audience. If you need more, appoint one team member to source that information
- Set the objective for the presentation
- Ensure that each team member clearly understands and agrees with the objective
- Clarify the individual roles of team members in achieving the objective. Set up planning and preparation schedules
- Ensure that each team member understands the sequence in which team members will speak and the underlying reasons for the sequence
- Call a second meeting at which team members describe their subject matter in detail, including the view points they will express
- Eliminate duplication or conflict amongst team members' contributions
- Discuss suggestions for improvement
- Undertake a 'read through' and/or rehearsal
- Establish smooth transitions
- Ensure that separate sections fit together to form an effective and complete presentation

If possible, conduct a dress rehearsal in the actual presentation room. This should be attended by all members of the team, including anyone who is making the introductory or closing remarks.

Reiterate the presentation key points for each team member to remember during the presentation. Tell them:

- You're in charge while presenting
- Clear your space
- Withdraw from the limelight when you're not presenting
- Do not make a sudden change in the content or delivery in your section as this can throw off a team member following, or discredit someone who spoke earlier.

Meet after the presentation to:

- Share feelings and comments
- Discuss results and methods for improvement.

## Overcoming Nerves

Surveys suggest that around 85% of people put the fear of presenting in their top 3 fears and of that number half put it above death itself. A bad case of nerves can be the difference between success and failure, between a career boost or the unemployment line. So what causes nerves?

Experts will tell you that the feeling is caused by a flood of adrenaline throughout the body, stemming from an inbuilt need to fight or flee from danger. That's interesting, but not necessarily helpful.

The starting point in dealing with nerves is to appreciate that the difference between a dynamic presenter and a distracted ditherer, is FOCUS. The ability to focus on your listeners and on your objective in a presentation is a huge plus. It's almost impossible to focus on an objective if your mind is filled with distractions. With poor preparation you're consciously or subconsciously distracted by a host of questions:

"What if the audience doesn't like what I'm going to say?"

"What if someone asks a question I can't answer?"

"What if they find me lacking?"

"What if I make a goat of myself?"

"Am I holding my hands correctly?"

"Am I standing correctly?"

"Am I speaking loudly enough, clearly enough?"

"Am I using this computer/projector correctly?"

One key to overcoming nerves is to end these distracting thoughts. Once they're no longer spinning around inside your head, it's easier to focus on winning the business.

Most of these questions are caused by having failed to prepare or rehearse... leading to a lack of self-confidence and consequently having too much of your attention focused on yourself. As a truly nervous presenter your mind is filled with a buzz of distractions to the point where everything becomes fuzzy and even the notes can't keep you on track.

But a prepared presenter has practised what to do with the hands; how to use the visual aids; how to modulate the voice; where to look; what to say and what not to say. The prepared presenter knows a lot about the listeners and what they want to hear; knows the answers to the rough questions and has evidence to prove the answers; and knows who the decision makers are in the audience.

Solid audience analysis followed by preparation and rehearsal will overcome a host of distractions. And by answering the distracting questions in advance, your mind is clear and you're free to focus on the listeners and your objective.

If you're still nervous, then think of the physical things that have changed to your body as the presentation has drawn near. Are you breathing normally? Nervousness tends

to shut down the body. You move less, breath less, talk less. None of these thing help you present dynamically.

Top presenters use a variety of means to prepare themselves for their presentation or speech. Here are some we use at RogenSi:

- Sit quietly, close your eyes, and run a mental check-list of everything to do with the presentation. "Have I covered the points?" Tell yourself: "Yes, I can forget about that." As each item is mentally checked off you no longer need to worry about it
- Get into the presentation room early. Try out the equipment, practise the words, pace the floor, get used to the microphone or lectern, switch the projector on and off, adjust the lights until it becomes natural
- Tense your upper stomach muscles for 30 seconds, then relax. This helps loosen the muscles which drive the voice. Some presenters achieve the same by leaning with hands pushed against a wall
- Get rid of excess energy by shouting. This works by loosening up the voice box, (but can unnerve your fellow team members, and the client)
- Reiterate the objective of the presentation and focus on it
- Visualize yourself succeeding and picture the listeners responding positively
- When presenting, remember to deliver complete thoughts to individuals rather than speaking to the entire group. This is the natural thing to do

All the above techniques work. Some work for one presenter, some for others. It's a matter of trying each to find the one that best suits you.

But in the end, it's the simple answer which is right – and the hardest to do. You've got to prepare. You have to know your stuff. You have to rehearse. And you've got to keep your attention on the listeners and your objective.

## Rough Times

What if the audience becomes hostile?

At the beginning of each RogenSi presentation skills training program we ask participants to tell us what they most want to learn about. Quite a few nominate "handling a tough audience." But, as my mum used to say: "I've lain awake at night worrying about a lot of things...but most of them never happened". The fact is that most listeners want you to succeed. If you do not, they get embarrassed.

There is much you can do to avoid finding yourself in a difficult presenting position and most of it is about sound preparation, including knowing your listeners; knowing your

topic; knowing what questions you might get; and practising the answers (using evidence).

Think about each person in the audience and how your presentation might affect them. Think about their preferred communication style.

- Tough listeners will challenge assumptions, so make sure you have evidence to back up each claim
- It's often not possible for you to know everything about every topic – but if you can't answer the questions, make sure you've someone with you who can
- Go through your presentation and identify the issues that you think will cause rough times. Have a colleague do the same
- What questions are they likely to ask? By anticipating the actual questions you're less likely to see them as "interruptions" and more likely to see them as opportunities to clarify your message
- Do your research to ensure you've the right answers – the wrong answer is worse than no answer at all
- It's not good enough just to supply an answer. More often than not, hostile listeners will not take your word for it – you must be able to support it with evidence
- Practise your responses to ensure you portray confidence, are succinct in your responses and answer questions directly

## Rough Time Pointers

So we've prepared and we've rehearsed, but on the day the task can seem a lot more daunting. Here are some tips for managing rough times in the heat of the battle...

### Listen

- To what is being said
- Don't prepare your answer while the question is being asked. Wait until you fully understand the question – and the issue behind it
- Listen to the tone and watch the body language – don't just focus on the words

### Clarify

- Do not attempt to answer a question if you're not clear on what you're being asked
- If in doubt ask for clarification or expansion

### Paraphrase

- It demonstrates to listeners that you've understood the question
- It gives you time
- It's a double check that your interpretation is correct, even if you think you understood

### Decide

- You need to decide whether you want to answer the question now or later
- Will it disrupt the flow of your presentation?
- Will it be covered later on?
- Do you know the answer?
- Will it annoy the listeners to defer your answer?

### Respond

- Take the question with full eye contact – it gives the impression of confidence
- Acknowledge the question
- Respond with full eye contact
- Check to see that the listener has understood your response and is satisfied with it

### A final critical review of your presentation

After you've prepared the presentation, check it using these questions:

- Have you all the information you'd like about who will be attending the presentation?
- Is your main recommendation clearly and simply worded?
- Have you analysed your listeners and used the data to give a 'tailored' presentation?
- Will you be telling the listeners what they need and want to know, as well as what you want to tell them?
- Is the sequence of your supporting materials clear and logical to your listeners?
- Do you have a clean opening and clean closing?
- Does each of your visual aids accomplish a specific purpose?
- Have you made it clear to your listeners why your presentation is particularly important to them at this time?

- Have you eliminated purposeless repetition?
- Have you deleted monotonous or boring portions?
- Does each and every item you intend to present contribute in a specific way to achieving your objective?
- Are the transitions clear?
- Is the presentation room set up? Have you checked to see that all mechanical aids are in working order?

*If you have done everything above, you are ready to present. Good luck!*

### Step 9: Review

Many people, once they have finished presenting, heave a sigh of relief and instantly move onto the next task. But there are real benefits in reviewing your presentation while it's still fresh in your mind. Take a few minutes and write down what you liked, what worked, what could have been better. Clip the notes to your script and visual aids and file it for next time.

If you know what 'worked', you can use it again. If you know what could have been better then you can steadily improve your skills. Ask yourself: "What have I learned?"

Talk to people who were part of your audience and ask them what could have been better.

### How To Ensure Continued Improvement

To ensure that your newly acquired/developed skills are retained, we strongly recommend that you put them into practice as soon (and as often) as possible, and use them to critique others.

There are some important aspects to consider when reviewing your presentations and those of your colleagues:

#### Planning and structure

What are the listeners' communication styles?

What matters to them?

What is the specific objective?

Was the purpose clear?

What were the key points?

Could you say "so what" or "who cares" to any of the statements made?

Was the right structure used?

What was the summary message? Was there a conclusion?

## **Delivery**

Where was your attention (on notes, on screen, on listeners)?  
Did you use “one thought, one person”?  
Were you moving naturally?  
Did you interact well with visuals?  
Eye contact – Was it appropriate for the situation and people?  
Voice projection – Was it appropriate for the occasion?  
Gestures – Were they used for a reason? Did they add to the effect?  
Movement – Check it for appropriateness/control.  
Comfort level – Did you feel at ease?  
Energy level – Was the level of intention right for the situation?  
Control – Were you in control of the room, equipment and material?  
Pauses – Were they used well eg. to create drama and allow listeners to catch up?  
Pace – Was it appropriate, varied?  
Clarity and emphasis of key issues – Were the tools of voice, eyes, gestures, pause, visuals, drama and movement used to place emphasis at the right times?

## **Visuals**

Was there one thought per visual?  
Did you control the visual aids well?  
Was there too much information to take in?  
Would another form of visual aids have been more appropriate for the listeners? (eg. flip charts versus PowerPoint?)  
Were there too many/too few visuals?

## **Conclusion**

Someone once said that the best way to become a good presenter was to practise, practise, and practise. Well, they were only half right. First, you have to make sure that you are practising doing it right, not repeating all the errors of previous disasters.

Get yourself the help of a professional coach, because sometimes you simply don't know what you don't know.

Attend a workshop, or organize some one-on-one coaching. While this book contains much of the data you will learn in a presentation skills program. It does not contain three critical elements:

1. Critique from your peers and from the coach.
2. Communication exercises designed to change bad behaviours.
3. Role play and practice (on video, so you can see and critique yourself).

Those three elements are, I believe, vital components in creating dynamic presenters.

# Appendix

## Suggested Reading

Pitch Doctor – Presenting to Win Multi-Million Dollar Accounts  
Neil Flett  
PRENTICE HALL

The Pitch Doctor's TOP 100 Business Presentation Tips  
Neil Flett  
REED PUBLICATIONS

Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication  
M. Assante & W. Gudykunst  
SAGE NEWBURY PARK

Persuasive Communication (1968)  
E. P. Bettinghaus  
HOLT, RINEHART & WINSTON INC

Influence – The New Psychology of Modern Persuasion  
R. B. Cialdini  
QUILL, NEW YORK

The Business of Communicating (1981)  
M. R. Davies & K. E. Kreis, J. B. Nutting, K. E. Tronc  
MCGRAW HILL BOOK COMPANY

International Communication – Media, Channels, Functions (1970)  
HD Fischer, J. C. Merrill (Eds)  
COMMUNICATION ARTS BOOKS

The Interpretation of Ritual (1972)  
S. La Fontaine (Ed)  
TAVISTOCK PUBLICATIONS

Bridging Differences, Effective Intergroup Communication and Publications  
W. B. Gudykunst  
SAGE PUBLICATIONS

The Silent Language (1959)  
E. T. Hall  
DOUBLEDAY, GARDEN CITY

The Order of Presentation in Persuasion (1957)  
C. I. Hovland  
NEW HAVEN AND LONDON, YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cultural Sensitivity and Management Communication Competence (1992)  
H. Irwin  
AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION

Beyond the Anthropology of Manners (1993)  
AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION (FORTHCOMING)

Language, Communication and Culture  
F. Korzenny (Eds) & S. Ting-Toomey  
CURRENT DIRECTIONS (1989)  
SAGE PUBLICATIONS

Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric (1991)  
H. C. Lawson-Tancred  
PENGUIN BOOKS

Why Don't People Listen  
Hugh McKay  
PAN MACMILLAN 1994

Learning to Listen  
Hugh McKay  
PAN MACMILLAN 1994

How to Read a Person Like a Book  
Gerald Nierenberg  
POCKET BOOKS

When West Meets East: Cultural Aspects of Doing Business in Asia (1987)  
J. A. Reeder  
BUSINESS HORIZONS

Intercultural Communication (1988)  
L. E. Sarbaugh, (Ed)  
TRANSACTION BOOKS, NEW BRUNSWICK & OXFORD

Intercultural Communication: A Perceptual Approach  
M. Singer  
PRENTICE HALL, ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS

You Just Don't Understand: Men & Women in Conversation  
Deborah Tannen  
VERAGO

Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation:  
Yun Kim Young

An Integrative Theory (1988)  
MULTILINGUAL MATTERS LTD

## About RogenSi

RogenSi is the global consultancy for exceptional performance, helping leaders and their teams deliver results in three of the hardest areas:

- Leading
- Inspiring Change
- Driving Sales Growth

It helps businesses succeed across a wide range of industries by focusing on the performance required to turn their strategy into winning results.

Its work is built around this core principle:

That Exceptional Performance (“EP”) comes from a combination of superior business knowledge, in all its forms; high level skills; and effective, applicable processes – all leveraged, exponentially, by the creation of a mindset that gives you the will to succeed.

$(\text{Knowledge} + \text{Skill} + \text{Process}) \times \text{Mindset} = \text{EP}$

The combination of the will, the skill and way to succeed makes possible the achievement of extraordinary outcomes.

Inspiring exceptional performance in business, for life

RogenSi does this with a 40 year consulting and training pedigree, focusing on the critical result areas – financial, cultural, operational, team engagement, individual motivation, sales and customer satisfaction – to build value over the short and the long term.

Global presence, local support – the best of both worlds

With offices in Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia Pacific, RogenSi continually developing global best practice for multi-country, regional and local solutions.

## For further information

On the full range of services that rogenSi can provide to help increase organisational and individual based performance please email

[mark.mccarthy@rogensi.com](mailto:mark.mccarthy@rogensi.com)

[www.rogensi.com](http://www.rogensi.com)

## NOTES