Effective Leadership Communication and Presentation Skills

Prepared especially for the Leadership Development Program

Facilitators:
Janet Larsen Palmer, Ph.D.
Neal Larsen Palmer, Ph.D.

February 3 & 4, 2009
The mission of Communication Excellence Institute is . . .
To promote excellence in communication, especially when the stakes are high.

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Effective Leadership Communication and Presentation Skills
February 3 & 4, 2009

Your Facilitators...

Janet Larsen Palmer, Ph.D.
Neal Larsen Palmer, Ph.D.

President of Communication Excellence Institute, a professional consulting firm in management communication in the greater Los Angeles area, Dr. Janet Larsen Palmer has over 20 years’ experience as a Professor of Communication (at both Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and Arizona State University), a Fortune 500 corporate manager, and a university administrator. Author of three books and many articles, she has consulted on communication with individual executives, universities, and corporations both in the U.S. and Europe. Dr. Palmer has won over 25 national awards for her teaching, research, business leadership, and public service in communication. Active for years in the National Association of Women Business Owners, she recently received a Commendation from the Governor of the State of California for her “outstanding achievements in the business community that have helped inspire many others to reach for the best.” Dr. Palmer has been named Woman of Achievement–Entrepreneur of the Year by the San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the YWCA, and she has served as both President of the San Dimas Chamber of Commerce and as California Delegate to the White House Conference on Small Business. A faculty member of the Executive Leadership and Management Institute at Stanford University and also at the Executive Doctorate Program of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Palmer offers specialized programs on communication skills for academic professionals and business leaders. She also has extensive experience working with healthcare executives. While an American Council on Education Fellow in Academic Administration, Dr. Palmer served as Special Assistant to the President at California State University, Fullerton. Janet Larsen Palmer has a B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. from the School of Communication at Northwestern University.

Executive Vice President of Communication Excellence Institute, Dr. Neal Larsen Palmer has 20 years’ experience consulting with executives and professionals in corporations and federal, state, and local governments. He has won many speaking awards, and was the top Dale Carnegie instructor in Southern California. Formerly an editor and publisher of technical publications in computer and advanced technology at the NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena and Project Manager of Eastern European research at the Library of Congress, he also served as Instructor of Management for the University of Redlands, conducting management development programs for corporate and government professionals. As a faculty member of the Executive Leadership and Management Institute at Stanford University and the Executive Doctorate Program of the University of Pennsylvania, he teams with Dr. Janet Larsen Palmer to offer communication consulting for business officers. Dr. Palmer, a linguist who reads and speaks twelve languages, holds a B.S. from Georgetown University, an M.A. from UC Berkeley, and a Ph.D. from The University of Michigan.

Founded in 1986 by the Palmers, Communication Excellence Institute has grown to be one of the Top 50 Woman-Owned Businesses in California’s Inland Empire.
How can I improve my persuasive impact to influence and motivate staff and colleagues at CSUF?

The Pyramid of Success for Campus Leaders

- Communication Skills
- Other-Directedness
- Specialized Knowledge
- Speaking Skills
- Human Relations
- Confidence

85% of a leader’s success depends on communication skills and attitudes toward people. Only 15% of a leader’s success depends on specialized knowledge.
What is a Good Communicator?

“A good person speaking [and writing] well.”

Quintilian
35-96 C.E.

The Right Tool for the Job

In campus communication, first be thoughtful about the communication medium you choose.
The Right Tool for the Job

Use handwritten notes to:

- Send personal congratulations, a note of appreciation, a “thank you,” or condolences.
- Regret or accept a written invitation.
- Create friendly, warm, personalized communication.
The Right Tool for the Job

Use “snail mail” to:

- Conduct formal business, especially with the “outside.”
- Confirm legal arrangements, such as appointments, grants, and promotions.
- Send materials that are too lengthy to fax or email.
- Provide a letter of recommendation or introduction.
- Share reports or documents that need to have a “shelf life.”
- Communicate confidential information (such as financial records and legal papers).
- Follow-up a faxed document, as a courtesy.

The Right Tool for the Job

Use a fax (facsimile) message to:

- Send information for immediate receipt.
- Show the recipient exactly how names are spelled, an article is laid out, etc.
- Communicate material that contains hand-writing or drawing.
**The Right Tool for the Job**

**Use email to:**
- Request input with a medium turnaround time (e.g., in 24 to 48 hours).
- Quickly provide a document as an attachment.
- Share important information conveniently with many colleagues.
- Ask for feedback on an issue from diverse recipients.
- Engage in sustained “serial monologues” about philosophical or other professional issues.
- Create a “reverse paper-trail.”

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**Email Standards**

- Get to the point quickly! The most important statements should appear in the first paragraph.
- Create single subject messages whenever possible.
- Create a strong subject line that identifies the message content.
**Email Standards**

- Use a greeting line.
- Proofread and use spell check.
- Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or distinguish a title or heading. Capitalizing whole words means SHOUTING!
- Make use of bullets and short paragraphs whenever possible.
- Always have a signature line, especially for external emails.

**Email Trends**

- Email has virtually replaced “snail mail” and fax messages.
- Email tends to be overused because it is easy and inexpensive.
- Email always has a “distancing” factor.
- The number of CC’s and BCC’s is getting out of hand.
Email Trends

- Most people know that using both upper and lower case communicates best. There is an unfortunate trend, though, toward all-lower case which conveys a rushed image and tends to trivialize the message.
- Misspellings in emails affect your image of professionalism.
- Emails create quick and effective written records of information.
- Emails should be organized and “stored” as carefully as paper files.

An “Email Principle” to Live By

Whenever anything negative is expressed in an email, change the communication medium immediately! Email is ineffective for conflict resolution.
Remember:

Never put anything in writing that you would be *embarrassed* to read on the front page of the newspaper or on every computer screen across campus.
Bureaucratic Expressions to Avoid

pending receipt of
heretofore
our Mr. James
I remain
thanking you in advance
we are in receipt of
in view of
with reference to

attached hereto
acknowledge receipt of
pursuant to
per your request
according to our records
of same
for your information
permit me to say

enclosed herein
attached please find
under separate cover
do not hesitate to
duly
favor a reply
said letter
beg to inform

“Instant Warmers”

**Instead of...**
activate
advise, inform
along these lines, on the order of
as per
assist
check in the amount of
communicate
deeem
demonstrate
due to the fact that
facilitate
for the purpose of
forward
free of charge
He is of the opinion that
in accordance with
in advance of
in compliance with your request
indicate/inform
individual
initial
initiate
in the amount of
in the event that
kindly
make an adjustment in
modification
of a confidential nature
party

**Use...**
begin
say, tell, let us know
like, similar to
as, according to
help
check for
write, tell, explain
believe, consider
show
because
ease, simplify
for
send
free
He thinks
according to
before, earlier
as you requested
say, tell
person (or professional title)
first
begin, start
for
if, in case
please
adjust
change
confidential
person (or a name)
## “Instant Warmers” Continued

**Instead of...**  
*past history*  
*prior to*  
*subsequent to*  
*terminate*  
*the undersigned/writer*  
*until such time that*  
*utilize*  
*with regard to*  
*you will find enclosed*

<table>
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<th>Use</th>
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<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prior to</td>
<td>before, earlier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsequent to</td>
<td>after, later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terminate</td>
<td>end, stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the undersigned/writer</td>
<td>I, me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until such time that</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utilize</td>
<td>use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with regard to</td>
<td>regarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you will find enclosed</td>
<td>here is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“As President, I go from one presentation to another, it seems. I wish I’d learned how to speak well earlier in my career. Most of what I know about speaking has come through trial and error.”

– University President of a large Midwestern institution

“Help! I Have to Give a Presentation!”
What is the Ultimate Reason We Ever Give Oral Presentations?

Could it be…

I wonder if it is…

Building a Professional Relationship

Goal #1:
To be seen as professional, knowledgeable, and credible.

Goal #2:
To build rapport with your audience.
Communication Always Exists on Two Levels at Once

The Relationship Slot

The "Slot"

Task

Relationship

Time

Remember:
Feelings First ~ Logic Second

I know I have to make a presentation, but I’ve got STAGE FRIGHT!

- Anxious
- Fearful
- Nervous
- Dry mouth
- Tight muscles
- Pounding heart
- Upset stomach
- Sweaty palms
- Hands shake
- Wobbly knees
Tips for Curing Stage Fright

Psychological Tips

1. You never look as nervous as you feel.
2. Your audience WANTS you to succeed!
3. Act “as if” you radiated confidence.
4. Take a deep breath and repeat an affirmation.

**Remember:**

Some stage fright IS useful.

Tips for Curing Stage Fright

Physical Tips

1. Don’t sit quietly before your speech. Move!
2. Don’t eat much before speaking.
3. Avoid dairy products.
4. Drink cool water with lemon. Avoid alcohol.
5. Let a throat lozenge dissolve in your mouth.
6. Have a glass of water (no ice) near you.
7. Take a couple of “beats” before starting.
How Do You “Read” a Presentation?

Preparing a Manuscript the Professional Way

• Use outlines instead of written text, whenever possible.
• Speak in oral, not written, English.
• Type your notes on 8-1/2 x 11 sheets of paper.
• Encase the pages in non-glare sheet protectors with black sheets behind each one.
• Use 16 to 18-point type (Bookman preferred) in serifed, upper-lower case.
Preparing a Manuscript the Professional Way

- Double-space your notes.
- Position your notes as high as possible on the lectern.
- Stand back from the lectern, or hold your notes out far enough, so that you can look at your notes without lowering your head.
- Slide one sheet over the other as you speak.
- Have your notes go no lower on the page than ___________THIS!__________

How to Speak From a Prepared Text
How to Speak From a Prepared Text

Leave 5-10 minutes for Q&A

“Prime the Pump”

Prepare a conclusion
**Principles**

- Listen cordially
- Always repeat the question
- Clarify, if necessary
- Compliment, if appropriate
- Answer briefly & concisely

**Survival Skills**

- Admit if you don’t know the answer
- Don’t get ruffled by negative comments
- Say “and” in place of “but”
- Do not repeat accusations word-for-word
- NEVER become defensive
What about *PowerPoint*?

*POWERPOINT* is neither the *POWER* nor the *POINT*. It is only a tool!
Basics of Preparation

- Don’t forget eye appeal
- Must be readable
- Consistent design element
- Only 6 – 8 lines
- Only 6 – 8 words per line
- Avoid long sentences

EXAMPLE OF POOR “EYE APPEAL”

Technology Licensing, IP, Contracts

Dr. I. M. Brilliant
Technology Licensing & Contracts Officer
(555) 447-3135, ext. 3004
EXAMPLE OF IMPROVED “EYE APPEAL”

Technology Licensing, IP, and Contracts

Dr. I. M. Brilliant
Technology Licensing & Contracts Officer
(555) 447-3135, ext. 3004

EXAMPLE OF UNREADABLE SLIDE
3. Grayfield Campus Summary

A. CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Science/Math/Central Plant Complex (Project # 375A) – Askhin+Pallen has met with all user groups and confirmed program and space needs for all academic and support units for Math and Science curricula. Further program refinement of Data Center and Southern Plant elements in progress.

- Performing Arts Modernization (Project # 306A) – Mercy Wang-Denn Logan Architects have completed the Programming Phase and presented the SEC with conceptual designs. These conceptual designs will be presented to the BXT in April 2009.
Grayfield Campus Summary
Current Activities

A. CURRENT ACTIVITIES
  • Science/Math/Central Plant Complex (Project # 375A)
    • User group meeting
    • Ongoing Program refinement in progress
    • Completion target date

**REMEDY:** DIVIDE SLIDE AND SIMPLIFY BULLETS

Grayfield Campus Summary
Current Activities, *continued*

A. CURRENT ACTIVITIES
  • Performing Arts Modernization (Project # 306A)
    • Architects’ designs complete
    • Starting approval process

**REMEDY:** DIVIDE SLIDE AND SIMPLIFY BULLETS
Basics of Delivery

- Never read bullets!
- Always change slides yourself.
- Look at the computer screen and audience, not the image.
- Don’t walk in front of the projector.
- YOU are in control!

In PowerPoint Presentations,

Don’t assume that your personal style isn’t important!
Communicating Organizational Realities

Advice on communicating **good news:**

- Do it quickly
- Provide necessary context, but keep history brief
- Deliver the “core good news” emphatically
- Immediately follow with the impact of this good news
- Lead a celebratory response

Advice on communicating **bad news:**

- Do it slowly
- Provide background
- Deliver the “core bad news” briefly
- Immediately follow with the assistance you’re offering
- End with a sincere expression of concern in a compassionate tone
Communicating Organizational Realities
Cushioning Techniques

“It seems to me . . .”
“It looks like . . .”
“Does that sound like something that would work for you?”
“How do you mean?”
“. . . Is that about right?”
“How does that sound to you?”
“I’m trying to do some fact-finding.”
“Did you happen to . . .?”
“We had a little situation . . .”

Communicating Organizational Realities
Cushioning Techniques

“Can you shed any light on . . .”
“I need your advice on something.”
“What are your feelings on that?”
“I’ve heard something that deeply concerns me. Can you enlighten me on this?”
“An issue came up . . .”
“Would you be willing to . . .?”
“Would you be receptive to . . .?”
“Please help me understand . . .”
Communicating Organizational Realities

Raising a Negative Without Offending

“I’m uncomfortable . . .”
“This doesn’t feel right.”
“This is problematic for me.”
“I’m having trouble with that.”
“I think we need to take another look at that.”
“There’s a downside here, though.”
“We’ll just have to agree to disagree.”
“My desired state is . . .”

“I really respect your position, but I can’t go along with it.”
“I’d like very much to help you, but I’m afraid I can’t.”
“Are there any risks in this?”
“Let me check my perception on this.”
“I’d love to help you, but I’m going to have to pass on this one.”
“There’s a flip side to that, however.”
How to Disagree in Meetings Without Being Disagreeable

**Situation:**

*Person A* offers an opinion. You disagree, and want to argue your opposing point-of-view.

**Step 1:** Find something in *Person A’s* comment that you relate to or agree with – such as the overall goal you both share.

---

How to Disagree in Meetings Without Being Disagreeable

**Step 2:** Begin your comment by affirming something about what *Person A* said, such as:

“I agree with Susan that we must handle this sooner rather than later.”

*Or*

“Mark, you are absolutely right – we’re really in a budget crisis here, and we have to cut back expenses.”
How to Disagree in Meetings Without Being Disagreeable

**Step 3:** State your opinion by starting a new sentence without using “but.”

**Examples:**

“I agree with Susan that we must handle this sooner rather than later. I want to caution us, though, about moving too fast before we’ve considered all options. Why don’t we consult with the Dean first?”

Or

“Mark, you are absolutely right – we’re really in a budget crisis here, and we have to cut back expenses. I feel strongly, though, that we shouldn’t reduce part-time faculty. Let me tell you why...”
Two Secrets to Disagreeing Respectfully

Relate before you respond.

Never use “but.”

Remember

If you fail to compliment other people, don’t expect them to remain open to your criticism.
A Speaker's Credibility

Substance x Power x Openness

In face-to-face situations, 93% of your impact comes through nonverbal channels: 55% through body language, 38% through paralanguage.
3 Nonverbal “Zones”

- Stability
- Mobility
- Stability

Good speakers are always ANCHORED in a solid speaker’s stance

Balanced
Off-Balance
If a speaker does not have a solid speaker’s stance, credibility is diminished by 38%.

Good speakers are anchored by their chin and head positions.
A too-high chin gives the unintended message of arrogance, remove, or belligerence.

Head Alignment

Head Cocked
Senator Barack Obama

Head Straight
Senator John McCain

Saddleback Interview
August 16, 2008
Head Alignment

What do you “read” in this picture?
Zone of Mobility

Joints of Strength

Joints of Weakness

Zone of Mobility (Seated)

Jack Welch – Expressive Hands
Two “Classes” of Gestures

Open Gestures | Closed Gestures

Remember:
Gestures are always part of a “communication context”
But what do I do with my HANDS?!

Rule: One hand may not touch the other.

Find your comfortable “neutral position”
Standing “neutral position”
All but 3 have it right

Sitting “neutral position”
Only 1 has it really right
A good speaker’s hands are expressive and open.

Speakers who show their palms comfortably and frequently are more believable.
Be sure all of your gestures are sincere

Finger-pointing is a negative indicator
Try not to make fists as you gesture. Fists are usually seen as hostile or combative.

Self-touching and “preening gestures” suggest self-consciousness.
Crossed arms indicate that a person is closed off.

Crossed arms can send a “mixed message”.

[Images of people with crossed arms, indicating closed-off body language.]
What do you “read” here?

Good speakers try never to have a barrier between themselves and others

Unfortunate

Got it right!

Very Unfortunate
Be especially careful of

making *yourself* a barrier

“Steepling” creates a barrier and can send mixed messages
“Steepling” can also mean "I’m thinking it over"

Clasped hands are power-robbers
Total body “shut-down!”

What do you “read” in this photo?
How should a professional sit at a table for maximum impact?

- Lean forward, resting forearms on table
- Keep arms out of parallel
- Keep your “solar plexus” open and take up more body space

Always have both hands visible
Lifting your hands off the table shows more energy and commitment.

Women should use the “Queen Elizabeth” ankle cross.
Steer clear of “The Cowboy” power gesture

What is your level of “Facial Affect?”

High?
Or
Low?
Talking Through a Smile

You “read” a person’s overall level of happiness by whether they talk through a pleasant expression, even on neutral subjects

The “Eyebrow Flash”
**Elements of Good Eye Contact**

**Irices in the center of a person’s eyes indicate honesty and straightforwardness**

- Sideways eye contact looks coy or flirtatious

  - Inappropriate

  - Appropriate
To build rapport, focus on the color of a person’s eyes

What do you “read” in this picture?
Good and Bad Wrinkles

Good Wrinkles Show Earnestness
Good communicators build their vocal presence through paralanguage

How to Turn a Boring Speaker Into an Interesting Speaker in 20 Minutes or Less

- Really hit key words
- Speak in short sentences
- Increase your volume by 50% - 100%
- Pause between sentences
People who speak slightly louder than normal are seen as more intelligent and confident.

People should speak slightly faster than normal, but keep articulation clear.

We can hear 750-800 wpm.

We speak at 150-160 wpm.
Tips for using your voice to build credibility

Work on your voice quality

Tentative

Definitive

Downward inflection is always better than “UPTALK”
Tips for using your voice to build credibility

A warm voice invites collaboration

Tips for using your voice as a leader to build credibility

Avoid fillers and hedges

“I don’t know if this is the right time or not, but…”

“Ya know”

“Perhaps”

“Well…”

“Um, uh…”

“Kinda”

“Maybe…Sorta”

“Like”
Harness the Power of Nonverbal Communication

and you’ll be seen as a highly effective campus leader.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Now let's VIDEO!
### Registration Form for Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

<table>
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<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>City:</td>
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<td>State:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Phone: ( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell or Home Phone: ( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of CEI Course Taken Today: Effective Leadership Communication and Presentation Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Course:</td>
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<td>Length in Hours:</td>
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<td>CEUs Granted for This Course:</td>
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Appendix
## The Rogue’s Gallery of Wordy and Bureaucratic Phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Wordy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Better</strong></th>
<th><strong>Wordy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Better</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>accounted for by the fact that</td>
<td>caused by</td>
<td>equally as good as</td>
<td>as good as</td>
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<tr>
<td>add the point that</td>
<td>add</td>
<td>excepting a small number of cases</td>
<td>usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a great deal of</td>
<td>much</td>
<td>few/many in number</td>
<td>few/many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a large number/quantity of</td>
<td>many/much</td>
<td>first and foremost</td>
<td>first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>along the lines of</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>for the purpose of</td>
<td>for/to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>along with</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>for the (simple) reason</td>
<td>since/because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a lot many/much a major portion of</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>for those situations in which</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a minimum/maximum of</td>
<td>at least/most</td>
<td>for your information</td>
<td>Omit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an example of this is</td>
<td>for example</td>
<td>if at all possible</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fact that any and all are found to be in agreement</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>if needed/required/appropriate/necessary</td>
<td>Omit</td>
</tr>
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<td>are of the opinion</td>
<td>believe</td>
<td>in accordance with</td>
<td>as/according to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a result of</td>
<td>because of</td>
<td>in addition</td>
<td>also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a usual/general rule</td>
<td>usually/generally</td>
<td>in conjunction with</td>
<td>and/with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as far as requirements are concerned</td>
<td>with requirements</td>
<td>in connection with</td>
<td>about/of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as of now</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>in excess of</td>
<td>more than</td>
</tr>
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<td>as per your request</td>
<td>as you requested</td>
<td>in favor of</td>
<td>for</td>
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<tr>
<td>as regards</td>
<td>about</td>
<td>in lieu of</td>
<td>instead of/in place of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as related to</td>
<td>about/for</td>
<td>in light/view of the fact that</td>
<td>because/since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assuming that</td>
<td>if</td>
<td>in order that</td>
<td>so that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as the occasion warrants</td>
<td>when necessary</td>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as to whether</td>
<td>whether</td>
<td>in rare cases</td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
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<td>a substantial segment</td>
<td>many/much</td>
<td>in reference REGARD to</td>
<td>about</td>
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<tr>
<td>as well as</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>in relation to/with</td>
<td>to/with</td>
</tr>
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<td>at (the) present (time)</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>in such a manner/way/fashion that</td>
<td>so that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at some future date</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>in terms of</td>
<td>in/as/like/by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at such time</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>in the amount of</td>
<td>of/for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the present writing</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>in the area/field of</td>
<td>in</td>
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<td>now</td>
<td>in the case of</td>
<td>for</td>
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<td>a wide variety</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>in (the) case that</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on the fact that</td>
<td>due to/because</td>
<td>in the course of</td>
<td>during/while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by dint of</td>
<td>because of/through</td>
<td>in the event of/that</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by means of</td>
<td>by/with</td>
<td>in the final analysis</td>
<td>in summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the fact that</td>
<td>in that</td>
<td>in the form of</td>
<td>as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the use of</td>
<td>consensus</td>
<td>in the initial instance</td>
<td>(at) first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consensus of opinion</td>
<td>about/on</td>
<td>in the instance of</td>
<td>for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concerning</td>
<td>although</td>
<td>in the interests of</td>
<td>for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>despite the fact that</td>
<td></td>
<td>in the matter of</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>due to the fact that</td>
<td>because/since</td>
<td>in the majority of cases/instances</td>
<td>usually/mostly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during the year of 1980</td>
<td>during 1980</td>
<td>in the near future</td>
<td>soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each and every one of</td>
<td>each/every/all</td>
<td>in the neighborhood of</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in the normal course of</td>
<td>normally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wordy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Better</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the not too distant future</td>
<td>soon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the opinion of this writer</td>
<td>in my opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the range of</td>
<td>in/ between</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the same way as described</td>
<td>as described</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in this day and age</td>
<td>today/in this age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in view of (the fact that)</td>
<td>because of/ considering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is a matter of</td>
<td>is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is found to be</td>
<td>is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is often the case that</td>
<td>often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it stands to reason</td>
<td>Omit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minimize as far as possible</td>
<td>minimize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never before in the past</td>
<td>never before</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not of a high order of notwithstanding the fact that</td>
<td>not very although</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of considerable magnitude</td>
<td>large</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>Omit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the order of magnitude of</td>
<td>about</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on account of (the fact that)</td>
<td>because of (because)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on a few occasions</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on behalf of</td>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one and the same</td>
<td>the same</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the basis of</td>
<td>by/from</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the grounds that</td>
<td>because</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the hypothesis that</td>
<td>assuming that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Wordy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Better</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on the present occasion</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permit me</td>
<td>Omit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pursuant to</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason is because</td>
<td>reason is that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative to this</td>
<td>about this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taking this factor into consideration</td>
<td>therefore it seems that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is apparent that the only difference being</td>
<td>except that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the question as to whether</td>
<td>whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there are not many who</td>
<td>few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is very little doubt that</td>
<td>doubtless/ no doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throughout the entire week</td>
<td>all week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>together with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to summarize the above</td>
<td>in summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the fullest possible extent</td>
<td>as much as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the maximum extent fully possible</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until such time</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with a view to solving</td>
<td>to solve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within the realm of possibility possible</td>
<td>possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with reference/respect to</td>
<td>for/about/by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the exception of</td>
<td>except</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the result that</td>
<td>so that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with this in mind it is clear that</td>
<td>therefore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Rogues’ Gallery
of ANTI Service-Oriented Phrases

• Calm down.
• Excuse me...
• I can’t...
• I can’t find any record of it.
• I can’t help you without your (ID, admission form, etc.)
• I don’t have time.
• I don’t have to take (listen to) this!
• I haven’t had time.
• If you had just...
• I’ll have to ask someone else if it’s okay.
• I’m busy right now.
• I’m sorry, I’ll lose my job if I...
• I’m sorry to say this, but...
• It’s our policy.
• It’s your fault.
• I’ve done all I can.
• Let me see if I got this straight.
• Let me tell you how we operate.
• Look, if you keep talking like this, I’m going to hang up.
• Next!
• No problem.
• Our computers are down.
• Our manager never lets anyone...
• Pay me now, or pay me later.

• Please don’t use that language!
• Sorry about that.
• Sorry, we’re closed.
• That’s not my job.
• That’s the way we’ve always done it around here.
• There’s no way...
• They don’t pay me enough.
• They never tell us...
• We did the best we could.
• We don’t, we can’t...
• We never...
• We’re under-staffed.
• We’ve done all we can.
• What do you expect me to do?
• What do you want me to do about it?
• What seems to be the problem?
• What was that again?
• Why didn’t you...
• Yeah, but...
• You can talk to my supervisor, but he/she will tell you the same thing.
• You can’t do that.
• You don’t have to yell.
• You need to..., you’ll have to...
• You should have done...
• You’ll just have to wait.
• You’re not the only one who...
Phrases that Promote a Service Orientation

• “Does that sound like something that would work for you?”
• “Hello! How are you today?”
• “Hi! My name is _______. How can I help you today?”
• “Here’s what I can do... “
• “How do you mean?”
• “How does that sound to you?”
• “I am so sorry that happened to you!”
• “I apologize for the difficulty you’ve been having.”
• “I can certainly understand how you might feel that way.”
• “I don’t blame you for feeling frustrated.”
• “I really want to help you, and in order to get started, may I please ask for your ID [application form, etc.].”
• “I wish I could give you that information. I can understand how that would be helpful to you. Unfortunately, I can’t do it, though, because of [law or policy] that is designed to protect you.”
• “I’m not the person who knows best how to do that, but let me connect you with the one who does.”
• “Is that about right?”
• “It’s my pleasure to serve you, NAME!”
• “Let’s see what the computer says here...”
• “Please help me understand...”
• “Sure, let’s see what we can do for you...”
• “Thank you for letting us know about that.”
• “Thank you for offering to do that, but it won’t be necessary.”
• “Thanks so much for waiting. I’ll be with you in just a brief moment, as soon as I finish this.”
• “That must be problematic for you.”
• “There’s no question this is a serious problem, and we must solve it right away.”
• “We really appreciate hearing this, and we’re dedicated to fixing it.”
• “We want to be responsive to your needs.”
• “We want to handle this right away.”
• “We would never want you to be inconvenienced that way!”
• “Would you be receptive to...?”
• “Would you be willing to...?”
• “You’re absolutely right about that.”
• “You’ve been great to work with!”
My New Spell Checker

Eye halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marques four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait a weigh.
As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite
Its rare lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My chequer tolled me sew.
The Truth Is, You Gave a Lousy Talk

By Tory DeFoe

Of course I couldn’t possibly be talking about you. After all, your friends and colleagues always congratulate you on your presentations. Even your competitors, when they approach you after your talks at national meetings, open their comments with, "Great talk!"

But seriously, don’t you routinely commend people whose conference talks were marginal? How many of your colleagues actually give a great talk? Yet you willingly pat them on the back and walk away smiling, even if the seminar put you to sleep or left you questionless because of its inaccessibility.

I know. You were just being polite. So what does it mean when they offer you the same empty praise?

Maybe it’s time to think about your presentation more objectively. To that end, I offer the following handy rubric. It doesn't focus on the things everyone already knows about public speaking (talk clearly, make eye contact). It focuses on the visual aids common to many a conference talk that are, nonetheless, often used badly. Use the rubric to grade your last seminar, awarding yourself between one and five points in each of the four categories. Be honest.

**Communication.** Academics often resort to slides to communicate information to listeners. That’s fine, but the slides should enhance rather than detract from your presentation. They detract when their content is confusing.

Take, for example, those presenters who are so familiar with their own field that they use acronyms, abbreviations, and other jargon to speed communication among their close colleagues and co-workers. The problem comes when presenters fail to realize that their jargon is specific to their field, or worse, to their private circle.

Many presenters justify the use of jargon by defining it during the talk. But remember, the audience cannot flip back four slides to review the meaning.

Scoring: If you absolutely avoid the use of slang, acronyms, and field-specific references in your presentations, you get five points. Give yourself four if you only use terms that are universally accepted by your entire field, and three if you define jargon on your slides and then repeat it throughout your presentation. But you get only two points if you fail to define your jargon, and one if the undefined terms are central to the topic of your talk.
Clarity. Having a substantive message is important. Delivering it clearly is, too. The clarity of a talk relates directly to the effort that a presenter is willing to invest in the presentation, and that effort is a measure of the presenter’s respect for the audience.

For example, let’s assume that the presenter is reviewing work that has already been published, and includes important data in a table. The presenter might scan the table into a slide directly from the published text. But no one beyond the second row of the audience will be able to read the scanned reproduction of the 12-point Times Roman font. If the presenter respects the audience, he or she will make the effort to reformat the table in a larger type size (18 to 24 points) with a clearer font (Arial or Helvetica).

Other principles of clarity also revolve around the idea of the speaker viewing the presentation from the perspective of the audience. Small type and fancy fonts look great on your monitor, but are difficult to read when they are projected on a wall.

Slides should have a title. If an audience member’s attention wanders for a moment, the title helps focus the viewer on the main point of the slide. And you do want to help the audience focus on your main points.

Colors are important. While you can see red type on a blue background on your monitor, the lack of contrast is hard to read on a slide and aggravating to the viewer. Yellow symbols on a white background might as well be written in invisible ink.

Scoring: If you always ask yourself how the audience will view your presentation and you make an effort to make each slide as clear as possible, you get five points. If you adopt a laissez-faire attitude (for example, you are willing to accept the default colors and fonts that Excel chooses for your graph), you get three points. If you purposely ignore the issue of clarity because your audience should be clamoring for front-row seats to grasp at your pearls of wisdom, you get one point.

Focus. Technology is a good thing, right? The more, the better? Wrong.

My cell phone can store more than 200 phone numbers. Yours can probably store 10 times more. Does that mean I should find 200 phone numbers to put into my cell? No. If I had that many stored in my cell phone, it would take me longer to find the 20 I use regularly. Likewise, if PowerPoint offers 200 special effects, should I use them all in one presentation?

What is the goal of your talk? To deliver a message about content, right? At the end of your presentation, would you rather the audience ask questions about your subject area or about which pull-down menu in PowerPoint allows you to create that spinning checkerboard fade-in?

Please don’t show an empty slide to whet my appetite for theatrical entrances. If you feel the urge to tease the audience with a bit of text here, an arrow there, a picture that zooms into place, resist it. Just show me the whole concept and then use your words to guide my understanding of your slide.
Similarly, you should resist the temptation to personalize the background of your slides with artistic, esoteric watermarks. Your customized background only makes it more difficult to see the foreground and competes with your content for the attention of the audience.

You don’t have to insert that rainbow sunburst comet to draw attention to the title of your slide. I know where to find the title of a slide -- it’s at the top. Also, a frame around your slide is redundant; the projection screen provides a frame.

I’m not saying that technology is bad. If you incorporate multimedia because it is important to the content of your presentation, that’s a plus. But please don’t get too clever or cute. It only distracts me, and I have a short enough attention span as it is.

Scoring: Start by giving yourself five points. Now go through your talk and subtract half a point every time you find an example of unnecessary or distracting graphics or animation. Note: It is possible to achieve a negative score in this category.

Presentation. Even with compelling topics and outstanding visual aids, some speakers still find ways to undermine their own talks, and their primary means of torpedoing themselves lies in their presentation style. Remember, the audience is listening to your words and looking at your slides. You are performing.

Presentation Folly No. 1: If you don’t believe in your work, neither will the audience. Some presenters reflexively apologize for their presentations. That lack of confidence sends a message to the audience to stop listening. The speaker might say, "The experiment didn’t work, but here are the results" or "While it’s not the most exciting idea out there, here is my opinion."

If you don’t like your work, why waste my time by presenting it? There is a difference between humility and self-doubt. Humility is greeted with respect. Self-doubt spawns a lack of interest.

Likewise, if you feel the need to apologize for your slides, then change your slides. We’ve all heard a presenter say, "This is a busy slide, but I’ll walk you through it." No. Don’t walk me through it. Make a better slide. If that slide is the best way to present your idea, then don’t apologize for it.

Presentation Folly No. 2: If you take the time to show something during your presentation, have the decency to explain it. Folly No. 2 is a corollary to Folly No. 1.

"Here is a busy slide," you might say, "but just focus on this part of the slide." Why distract me with 30 pieces of information so that you can make one point? Again, make a slide that illustrates that point.

Don’t settle for a slide that was designed for another talk or another audience. After all, if you have time to animate the entrance of each of your bullet points, then you certainly have time to make a new slide.
Presentation Folly No. 3: Don’t disagree with your slides. Believe it or not, there are several ways to disagree with your slides, and they are all bad.

You can casually disagree with your slides by showing one set of information and saying something mildly different. That error is often made by people who are trying to avoid reading their slides. They are afraid to look dumb by speaking the words that they so carefully chose to type into their presentation.

Don’t be afraid to read the slide -- at least in small chunks. The audience is listening, but it is also reading your slides. When you purposely use different words, the audience then has to choose which version of the presentation takes precedence.

Worse yet, some speakers have a passive-aggressive relationship with their slides. I never understand how a speaker can put up a slide and then announce that the slide is showing the opposite of what is obviously displayed. But it happens regularly.

If you use the words, "This slide clearly shows," then the slide had better clearly show your point.

Worst of all, some speakers actually argue with their slides. "Ignore this statement. It’s wrong." "This slide shows an example, but it is not representative of the group." With those presenters, it is almost as if someone else made the slides, and they are criticizing the presentation.

Own the presentation, don't fight it.

Scoring: Award yourself five points. Keep all five if none of those follies apply to you, and subtract a point for each one you are guilty of. Give back all five points if you've committed all three.

OK, it’s time to tally your points. If you scored 18 to 20 points, you deserve every post-talk accolade you receive; 14 to 17 means you could stand to improve; 10 to 14, your presentations are not helping your career; fewer than 10, your presentations are probably hurting your career.

You might disagree with my recommendations and decide not to take any of my advice. Rest assured, if I see your next presentation, I’ll say "Great talk!" anyway.