

# Tips for Delivering a Scripted Presentation

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## Overview: The Paradox of Public Speaking

On the one hand, authenticity is everything. Being real. In touch, in the moment, with the meaning of what you are saying.

On the other hand, when you give a presentation, you are also “acting” ... “manipulating” ... working to cause your audience to believe and feel as you intend them to.

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## Recommended Printed Format (no Teleprompter)

Simple is sometimes the best!

- 18 point, Times New Roman font (because of its easy-to-read serif)
  - One and 1/2 line spacing
  - No paragraph “split” between two pages
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## Delivering from Printed Pages

The sight, and even sound, of your visibly “flipping” them detracts from the illusion you wish to subtly foster in even the unconscious minds of your audience: that you are speaking from the heart, not reading from text.

Whether standing at a podium or sitting at a table, position your stack of un-stapled pages on the right. Slide the top page – first page of the script – over to the left. You’re now viewing page 1 and page 2 together ... giving you a larger “window” onto your own message.

Then, in presentation or rehearsal (which should simulate delivery as closely as possible,) when you finish with page 1, slide page 2 over on top of it, now revealing page 3 on your right.

And so on ... always seeing two pages at once. Always being unobtrusive – silent and ‘invisible’ – as you present your message from text.

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## Effective Rehearsal (more important than you might realize)

### Quantity

You want to rehearse your text so often (in the right way – see below) that you come to know the material well enough to be comfortable and un-strained ... able to look up from the page and finish a sentence with audience contact before looking back down for the next cue.

**Caution:** this is not the same as “memorizing” the text for script-less delivery. (Memorization puts tremendous, real-time psychological pressure on a speaker and requires a much greater investment in time and technique for natural, relaxed delivery. And, in most contexts, memorization just isn't necessary.)

## Quality

What's very important – what will make a palpable difference during your ultimate presentation – is the right kind of rehearsal.

Of more consequence than the number of times you rehearse is the **quality** of every rehearsal.

***The more “real” you make each rehearsal for yourself, the more prepared, confident, and effective you will be when you're actually in front of your audience.***

Keeping rehearsal real means:

- Envisioning your audience vividly in front of you – every time you rehearse.
- Getting your energy up every time you rehearse ... as though each rehearsal were “the” event. Then maintaining your energy throughout. (Good quality rehearsal is fatiguing.)
- Frequent imaginary eye contact with your audience.
- Being every bit as conscious of your pacing and variety in rehearsal as you would want to be in front of your audience ... again, every time you rehearse.

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## Delivery

### The ‘Gap’ Between You and the Audience

The physical gap between you and the audience is also a psychological gap.

Your audience will not be aware of it, but this gap will affect their ability to maximally “connect” with you.

The literal gap is height – you are standing, they are sitting. And distance (between the front row and where you stand.)

To overcome this separation, psychologically, requires you to be “bigger” than your every day self – more energized, more “on”, with more presence ... larger-than-life in a way you would never be if you were sitting, cozily, right next to someone. Allow yourself to be “bigger” ... with more energy.

In every rehearsal, as well as in delivery, the positive impact of your energy needs to close the gap. That includes being “on”, already, even during every second in which you walk up to the stage/podium.

Many speakers write little notes to themselves in their texts as reminders during delivery: to SMILE ... to show ENERGY ... and to be FRIENDLY right from the start, etc.

You want each member of the audience to feel as though you're talking to and connecting directly with each of them ... that you're not as far away as you spatially really are.

### **Beginnings: Take Psychological Control of the Space**

You want to convey immediately with your voice and demeanor that you are comfortably "in charge" of the space ... and that we, your audience, have nothing to worry about.

The pilot knows what he/she is doing.

### **Eye-Contact**

If you know your material well enough, you can be confident and comfortable while having eye contact with participants ... so they feel as though you're talking to them, personally – honestly, and with conviction.

If direct eye contact makes you uncomfortable, however, you can "secretly" look at their foreheads ... they'll feel as though you're looking directly at them.

### **On-Stage Movement (if you're not presenting from a podium or lectern)**

When you observe other speakers, notice -- if you haven't already -- those who "wander" on-stage, tracing a restless path as they talk.

You will be more effective and convincing – it doesn't matter if this feels artificial to you (after all, you're giving a performance) – if you plant yourself like a firm pillar of authority ... moving across stage only when there's an important new point to be made, or a change in mood ... and then re-planting yourself. Ever the voice of authority -- never a restless or seemingly nervous or aimless wanderer on-stage.

### **Hand Gestures**

The best advice is the simplest: give yourself permission to be yourself.

If you talk with your hands naturally, then let yourself. If you don't in "real life," then don't try to fake it on-stage.

Audiences crave feeling a real connection with anyone addressing them. Otherwise, you become just part of a "show." Including your gestures.

The most important guidance is, let your mind and your voice be in sync with what you're saying. If you truly feel and are in touch with the meaning of what you say, **as you say it** ... then your audience will perceive your sincerity. They'll sense and believe in your genuineness, even as you consciously project it.

So in whatever way your hands move when you genuinely feel your own message ... that's how your hands should be on-stage.

Don't try to imitate someone else.

One of the most successful speeches I ever gave in my entire corporate career was when I realized I shouldn't try to be like the overpoweringly charismatic guy down the hall (all us VP's were on the same floor.)

He was astonishingly -- intimidatingly -- good at being his own gigantic self.

Instead ... when I allowed myself to be "me" on-stage -- earnest, sincere, sensitive -- and told a true story that had touched me early on in employment at the company ... I heard sniffles around the room as the audience of 500 District Managers hung on every word I said.

Afterward many told me, it was the best speech they'd ever heard at one of these sales conventions.

If I had tried, instead, to imitate my bullying rival down the hall ... I would never have achieved that success.

### **Variety: Tone, Emphasis, Inflection -- Selling & Clarity**

In real life, we say some phrases at throwaway speed ... but we pause and emphasize other words and phrases when they especially matter.

Or when we want to inject added impact and drama.  
Or when we want to compel attention.

That pattern is natural and automatic for everyone: one's meaning affects one's vocal delivery.

Your delivery should include variations in timing and emphasis. However, your variations must not be arbitrary. Any verbal "color" you add to your delivery should be chosen to help you make your key message points clearer and/or more vivid.

**Example:** The words in all caps in the sample text below are Emphasis Words. The ellipses are very slight pauses that allow the words in between to gain greater importance as your audience hears them.

But to CONTINUE to develop  
medicines to address unmet patient needs,  
we MUST ... adopt ... POLICIES  
that CONTROL costs while  
STILL allowing ... INNOVATION ... to flourish.

In the above sample, the speaker could have chosen different words to emphasize -- no

problem. But not to have had any at all? That would have been "deadly."

### Endings

Beginnings and Endings matter ... like first and last impressions, pound for pound they're more memorable than the "middle."

You want your final words to signal to the audience that you're done ... it's a moment in which they can applaud with no fear of interrupting you.

So if you conclude, "Thank you!", use your delivery to make a clear, definite, and positive ending to your talk.

### Inner Ham

Want to know the miracle of these best practices?

I help clients discover their "inner ham" if they're not already acquainted, just as I didn't used to be with my own.

Now ... **introvert** that I actually am, I am no longer an introvert on-stage.

Whenever I give a public speech, people always assume that I must be a very confident extrovert. And, by now -- using the tips I've just shared -- I really am, in fact, confident. I've put in plenty of preparation. I know and believe in my material. And I actually now enjoy releasing my own "inner ham." These days, "he" has a good time on-stage.

It's all learn-able, my friends. I've proven that with my own life.

These tips really do work!



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