

# 10 Tips that Work for Truly Persuasive Presentations

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Many people don't have a good grasp of the basics for presenting persuasively. Even if they know what they are, they don't use them. Are you one of those people?

Knowing how to deliver effective, persuasive presentations is a critical core competency for everyone, no matter what their job. We are ALL selling either our products and services or our ideas.

Tanja Parsley, the Canadian Distributor of UPFRONT Persuasion through Presentation, and Judie Knoerle, the author of the UPFRONT program, have trained and coached thousands of professionals over the years. While many such presenters demonstrate strengths and challenges, they have all benefited from these 10 tips.

## 1. Know the Needs of Your Audience

**Prepare:** Ask, research, learn, survey. Your presentation will fall flat if you don't include this critical preparation adequately.

As obvious as this might seem, the **number one error** that professionals make is *not* clarifying the needs of the audience. This makes it difficult to connect your points to their needs. Inadequate preparation will cause your audience to shrug and think "So what?"

By asking the right questions before the event, and during the event, you'll be able to make relevant points that target their needs. Instead of "So what?" they will say "Ah-hah!"

## 2. Ask Questions To Involve Your Audience

Connect with people, ask for a show of hands, ask for examples, and ask them for their questions and challenges throughout your presentation. This will relax you while signalling your sincere interest in them. Involving the audience engages their hearts and minds from the very start and primes the pump for persuasion because you will be able to leverage *their* ideas.

## 3. Hone Your Listening Skills

Listen with the intent to learn. Imagine the question behind their question. Be curious. Use deep listening and ask them to tell you more. Drill down until you get to the core issue or real question.

With authentic listening skills you aren't just going through the motions. You are demonstrating how **trustworthy** you are and how involved you want to be with their real issues.

#### 4. **Build Your Storytelling Toolbox**

Powerful stories grab people's attention and engage their thinking. Theory and good ideas won't convince anybody of anything. Add personal stories, analogies, testimonials and examples with sufficient detail to bring your points to life.

Make sure you are authentic, and there's a point to the story. Tell them what the point is, and how it may relate to their own situations.

Example: *"I'm telling you this story because you may have had a similar experience, or know someone who has."* or *"What I'm going to present may open your eyes to new ideas. From my experiences you may be able to create your own solutions, imagine a better future or take your business to the next level."*

Share the story but leave plenty of room for them to draw their own conclusions. You could also ask them what the story means to them.

#### 5. **Use Benefit Statements**

If you have had any sales training you know the importance of speaking about the benefits of your offerings. Whether you are selling a product, a solution or your ideas the same principle applies. The challenge is knowing *how* to use Benefit Statements effectively and creatively.

The key is to discover the real benefits that speak to profound human wants and needs. Ultimately, everyone wants to belong, and be loved and respected. Many people want to achieve power, prestige, and enjoy more time, money and energy. You must know how your products and services connect to universal drives and emotional hot buttons.

Your benefits aren't just selling points, they are a way for the audience to engage their imaginations, dream of a better place and enjoy positive feelings associated with reaching goals.

#### 6. **Persuade with Problems and Pain**

Don't hesitate to use emotional stories or statistics to trigger a pain point. People are motivated in two primal ways – towards pleasure and away from pain.

Through your stories you can help your audience become aware of problems they may not yet have identified. You can help them understand the risks and consequences of not solving those problems. They will be motivated to take action when they understand the dangers.

Follow up with success stories to orient them to solutions.

## 7. Use Power Words

What are the common emotional hot buttons that your audience members relate to? What words resonate with your targeted demographic? Use words they use, and use power words to reach for emotional impact: “achieve, streamline, determine, ignite, motivate, prepare, will, generate, exceed, utilized, definitely, consolidate, positively, restore, know, do.”

## 8. Create Word Pictures

Use multi-sensory language: Weave a tapestry with your words to paint pictures. Help your audience see, feel and hear what you have to say.

**Visual** – “See, look, bright, picture, colourful, illuminate, clear, flash, appear, perspective, focused, foggy, bull’s eye, imagine, map out, paint the picture”

**Auditory** – “Hear, listen, loud, sound, melodious, be heard, resonate, tune in, rings true, discuss, expression, off key”

**Kinesthetic** – “Feel, pressing, touch, exciting, fits, firm, spike, elevate, hands on, secure, nailed down, concrete steps, weave, compress, feel comfortable, handle it, keep in touch, stay connected, hang on to that thought”

**Digital** – “Think, know, understand, comprehend, contemplate, wonder, organize, be cohesive, be congruent”

## 9. Hone Your Delivery Skills

Remember, you are a **dynamic living visual** - use your physical presence to drive home your presentation points. Project energy, use your hands, body, eyes and voice to full advantage.

Become a ‘student of the game’ and commit to becoming the most captivating and compelling speaker you can be. It is a learned skill. Intentionally capture yourself presenting on video and begin to develop a ‘presence’ that feels natural and yet professional.

### Be Authentic

Build genuine rapport and trust. Forget ‘presenter mode’. Be you – the best you that you can be. It’s not about being the perfect presenter. It’s about being connected and persuasive. Moving audiences to action is the bottom line.

## 10. Have a strong call to action

If the purpose of a persuasive presentation is to have the audience take action of some sort, then you need to let them know what action you want them to take. Far too often, the call to action is left out altogether. Don't assume they will be intuitive enough to figure out for themselves what you want them to do with the information. Tell them.

What makes a call to action strong?

- **Prepare:** Part of your preparation should always be to ask yourself "What do I want the audience to do as a result of my presentation?" If you aren't clear, it is almost impossible to clarify what you want for your audience.
- **Set the expectations early:** At the beginning of your presentation let your audience know what you will be asking for at the end. Your audience will appreciate the clarity you provide and be able to listen with different filters knowing what to expect. "As a result of this presentation, we would like to meet with your team and review the first stage of this project."
- **Ask for action.** At the close of your presentation, ask for action on the part of your audience. You as the presenter may have follow-up action steps but don't kid yourself into thinking this is a call to action. A Call to Action is what you want the audience to do as a result of your presentation.

**Wrong Way:** "I will send you the additional information you requested tomorrow"

**Right Way:** "If I send the additional information tomorrow, can we set up a follow up call on Friday to get your reaction and discuss next steps to engage your team? Are you available at 2:00 on Friday?"

If only someone had given us these 10 tips when we first started out in business... we would have saved tons of time and energy, experienced much less anxiety and achieved success in half the time!

We hope this is useful in the work you do. For more information send us an email or call.

*Tanja Parsley is President of Partners in Performance, a dedicated group of speakers, coaches and trainers who help their clients create more sales, shorter selling cycles and more revenue per sale.*

*For more sales and presentation tips and resources visit our website at [www.partnersinperformance.ca](http://www.partnersinperformance.ca) or contact Tanja*

