

A collection of practical tips from Asia's largest network of Top CxOs, Experts and Thought Leaders

# 101 LESSONS TO BE A DAMN GOOD SPEAKER!

FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO STAND IN FRONT OF AN  
AUDIENCE TO INSPIRE AND ACHIEVE

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**DEEPSHIKHA KUMAR**

WITH ANUKRITI BANSAL

"Speech is all it takes to make your personal brand  
unforgettable."

—**speakin**



"According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy."

- **Jerry Seinfeld**



"The human brain starts working the moment you are born and never stops... until you stand up to speak in public."

- **George Jessel**



# **to our speakers and audiences worldwide**

MAY YOU HAVE

excellence in speech, clarity of thought, correctness of  
interpretation and inspiration of a lifetime

# INTRODUCTION

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101 Lessons to be a Damn Good Speaker! focuses on new as well as veteran speakers and provides a handy book of never to be forgotten nuances of speech. This book brings to you real-time lessons, learnings, insights and takeaways from India's largest network of speakers and experts - SpeakIn. It is SpeakIn's official guide on being a five-star speaker in front of audiences of any shape and size. The book is segmented into three sections - 1. Content, 2. Delivery, and 3. YOUR Brand as a Speaker.

I am sure this book will open you up to a fascinating world of speech and delivery. Happy SpeakIn!

**IF YOU ARE A SPEAKER, YOU DESERVE TO BE THERE.**  
**HAVE FAITH, DO YOUR BEST AND YOU WILL UNDOUBTEDLY MAKE AN IMPACT.**



1



**CONTENT**

"Hey Karen, do  
you speak?"

"Damn right, I  
do!"



1.

# **EVERYONE IS A SPEAKER**

**THERE IS NOTHING CALLED A  
PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER, NEITHER  
IS THERE ANYTHING CALLED A  
NON-SPEAKER.**



**2.**

## **”SPEAK FROM YOUR GUT”**

**THE BEST OF SPEAKERS ARE THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED THEIR JOURNEY AND BRING THEIR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO THE STAGE. BEST TOLD ARE STORIES WHICH ARE YOUR OWN.**





**3.**

## **FOCUS ON EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

**A SPEAKER WHO CAN MAKE HIS AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE HIS CHARACTER'S EMOTIONS THROUGH HIS CONTENT AND PRESENTATION, WINS A SPOT IN AUDIENCE'S MIND. PEOPLE DO NOT REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID, BUT THEY DO REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.**

4.

## EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD OL' STORY

STORYTELLING IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF INVOKING THE RIGHT EMOTIONS IN YOUR AUDIENCE. “WHAT YOU’RE TRYING TO DO, WHEN YOU TELL A STORY, IS TO WRITE ABOUT AN EVENT IN YOUR LIFE THAT MADE YOU FEEL SOME PARTICULAR WAY. AND WHAT YOU’RE TRYING TO DO, WHEN YOU TELL A STORY, IS TO GET THE AUDIENCE TO HAVE THAT SAME FEELING.”

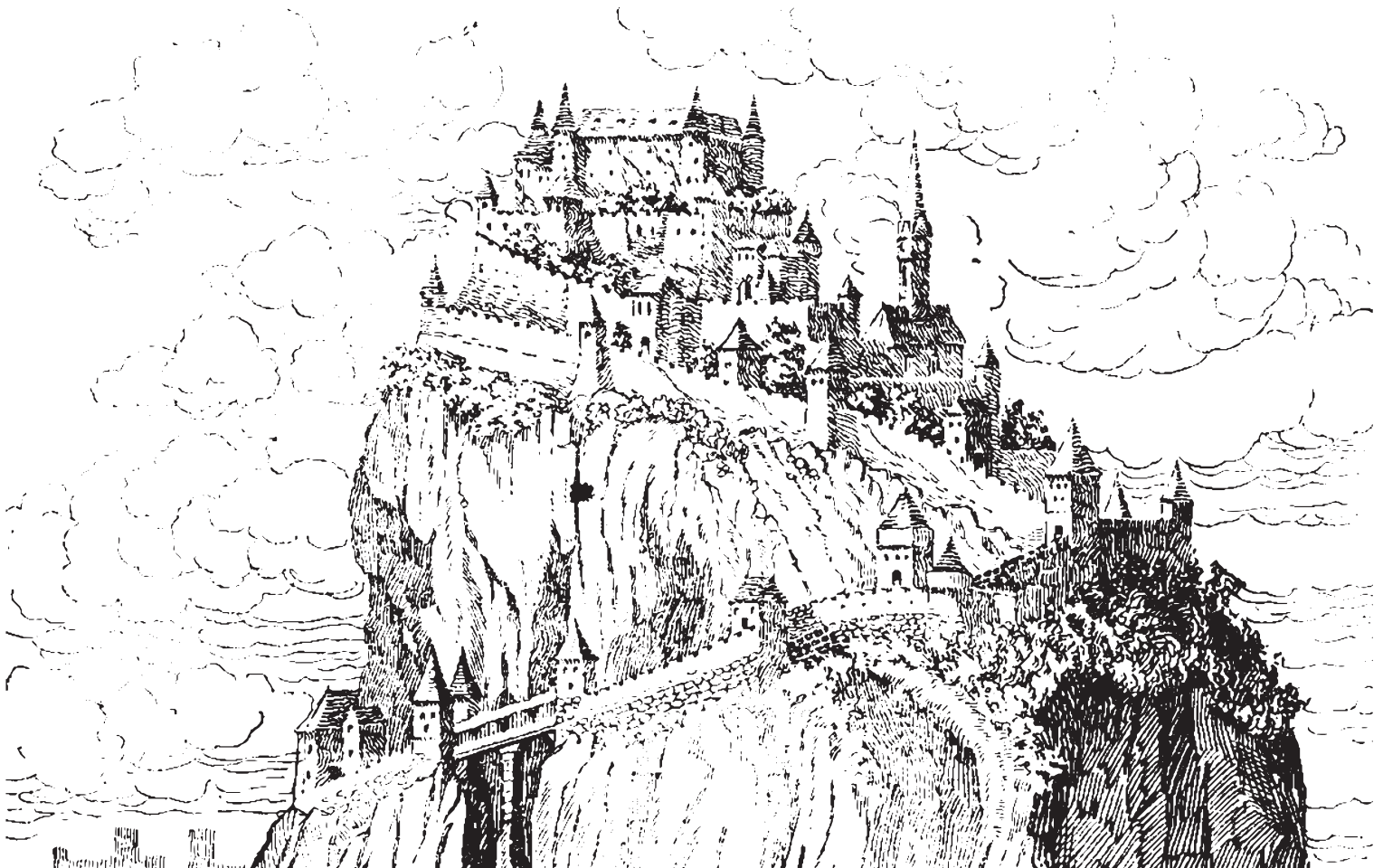




5.

**ONCE UPON A TIME \_\_\_\_\_**  
**EVERY DAY \_\_\_\_\_**  
**ONE DAY \_\_\_\_\_**  
**BECAUSE OF THAT \_\_\_\_\_**  
**UNTIL FINALLY \_\_\_\_\_**

**EVERY STORY SHOULD HAVE A BEGINNING, A MIDDLE AND AN END, AND A CHARACTER WHO TRANSFORMS FOR THE CLIMAX. PIXAR HAS VERY SUCCESSFULLY USED KENN ADAMS' THE STORY SPINE AS A TOOL TO STRUCTURE THE BEST OF THEIR STORIES.**





**6.**

**IF YOU  
ARE NOT PREPARED  
TO BE WRONG  
YOU WILL NEVER  
BE ORIGINAL**

**A SPEAKER WHO BOASTS OF  
REHEARSING, AND EMPHASIZES  
ON TOO MUCH PREPARATION  
ISN'T REALLY A SPEAKER.  
IF YOU HAVE TO PRACTICE TOO  
MUCH, IT IS NOT YOUR CONTENT.**

7.

# ISN'T MR. IRRELEVANT THE ABSOLUTE WORST?

APART FROM A STRUCTURE EVERY  
STORY YOU TELL SHOULD HAVE A  
CLEAR PURPOSE. WHY IS THIS STORY  
RELEVANT TO THE THEME OR AT THIS  
TIME?



"Brilliant copy, it made me cry. It was more moving than Martin Luther King's speech. But Harris, there's one thing I keep asking myself - will it sell dog food?"



**8.**

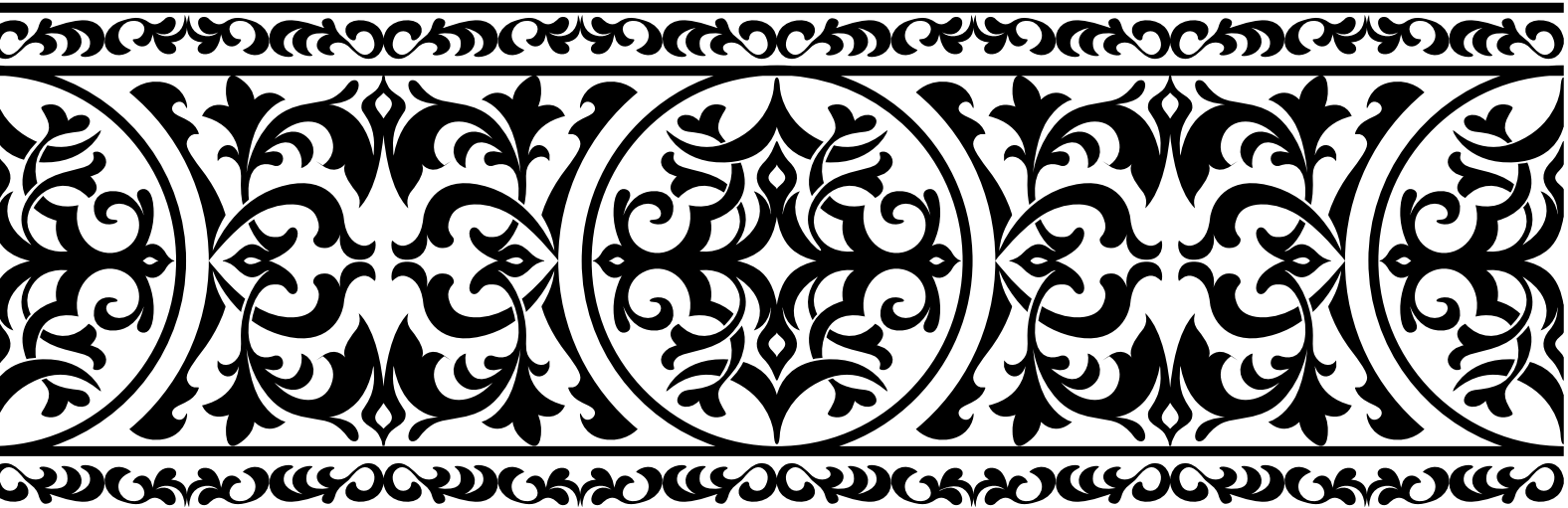
# SEPARATE FACTS FROM FICTION

**DO ENSURE ALL YOUR DATA POINTS, STATEMENTS, STATISTICS, EXAMPLES ARE REFERENCE CHECKED WITH CREDIBLE RESEARCH SOURCES. DO ENOUGH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH – ONE INCORRECT DATA POINT CAN ERODE YOUR CREDIBILITY FOR A LONG TIME ON THE SUBJECT.**



9.

**GO AHEAD AND CHEAT..  
ONLY TALK ABOUT THINGS  
YOU GENUINELY CARE  
FOR. YOU CAN'T  
MANUFACTURE PASSION.**





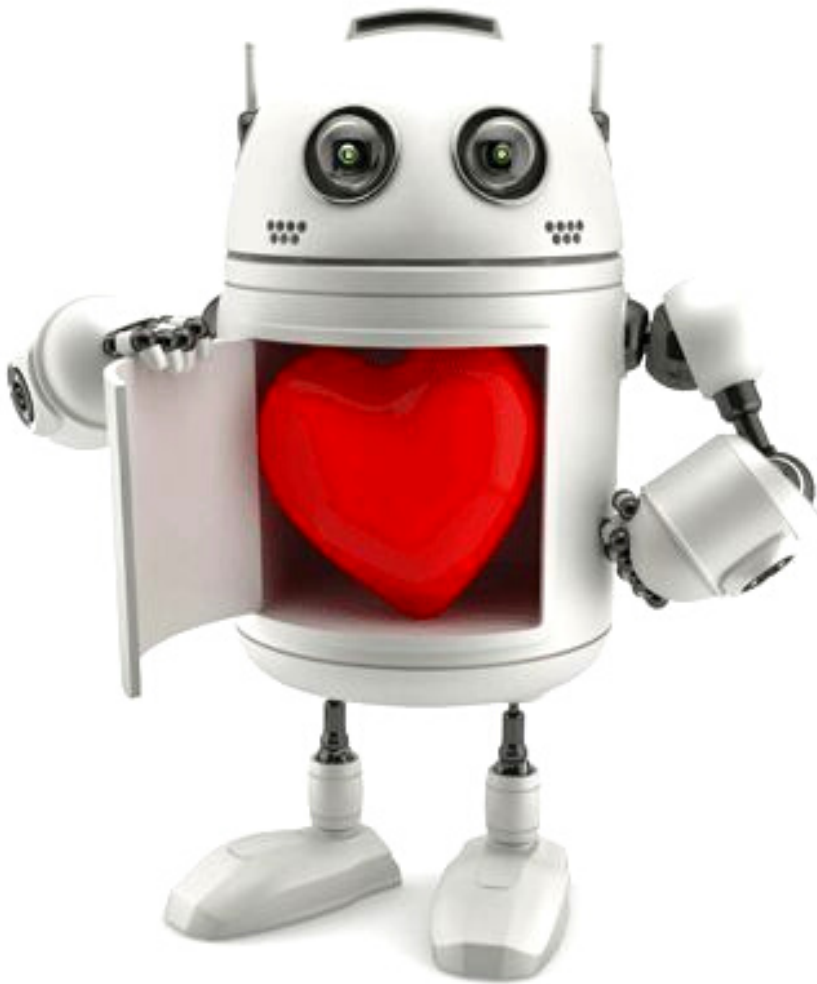


**10.**

# **THREE IS YOUR NUMBER**

**BUILD A THREE POINT  
PRESENTATION. HUMANS  
ARE BEST WIRED TO  
REMEMBER AND RETAIN UP-  
TO THREE THINGS FROM ANY  
ENCOUNTER. STICK TO THE RULE  
OF THREE -  
THREE TAKEAWAYS,  
THREE DATA-POINTS,  
THREE HIGHLIGHTS AND MORE.**





# 11. **DON'T BE A ROBOT ONSTAGE**

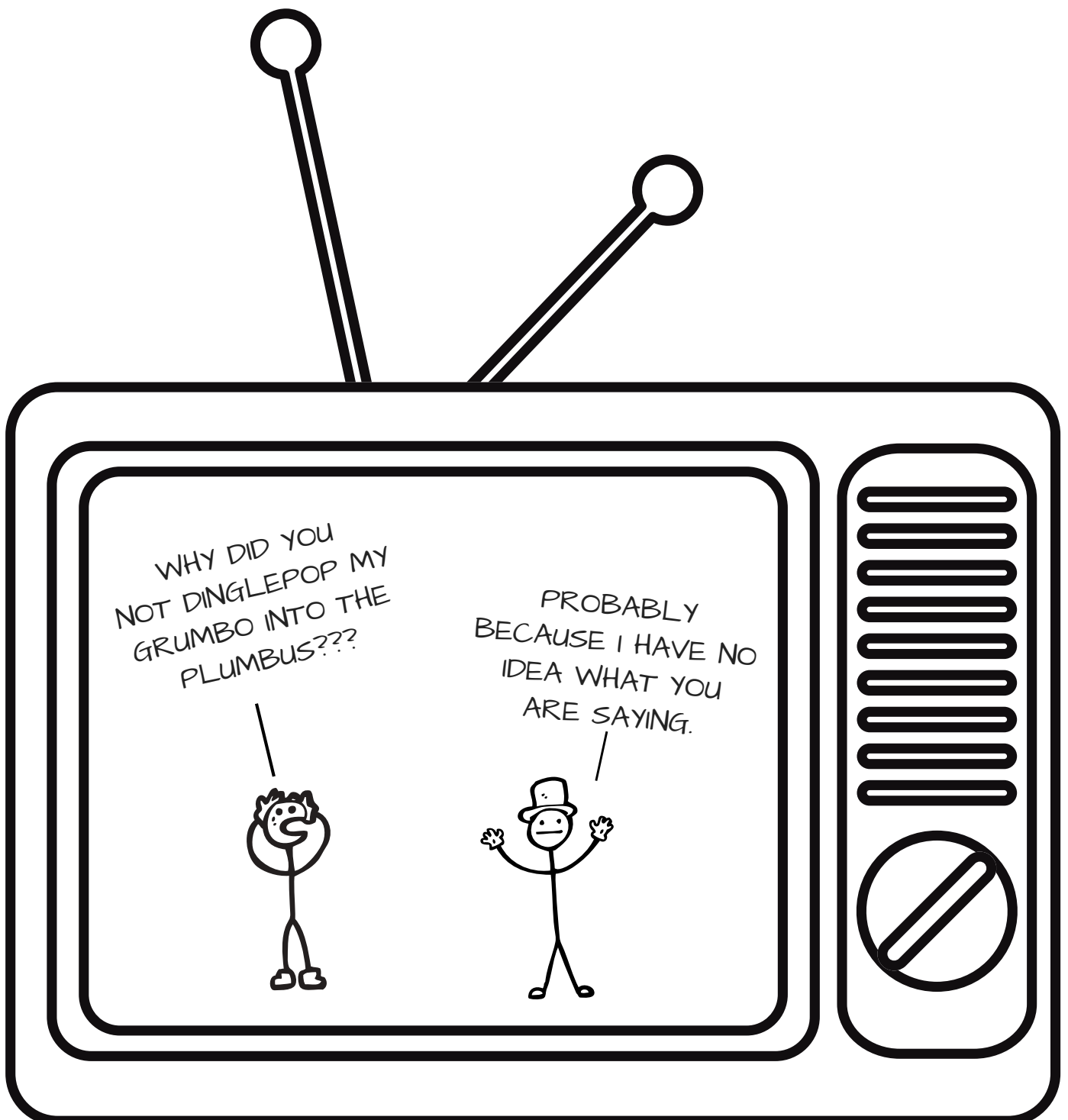
**DISPLAY OF EMOTIONS IN EXPRESSIONS AND PITCH ARE A CRITICAL PART OF GOOD CONTENT DELIVERY. IT SHOULD HOWEVER BE CONTEXTUAL, IN LINE WITH THE CONTENT BEING SPOKEN ABOUT.**

**IT IS DISTRESSING TO HEAR A SPEAKER TALK ABOUT DEATH AND LOSS OF LIFE WITH A HUGE SMILE ON HIS FACE.**

12.

# SKIP THE JARGON

EVEN WITH A TECHNICAL PRESENTATION. USE SHORT, SIMPLE SENTENCES WITH EVERYDAY LANGUAGE AND EXAMPLES TO DELIVER THE MOST COMPLICATED OF TOPICS.







**13.**

# **STICK TO YOUR MOTIF**

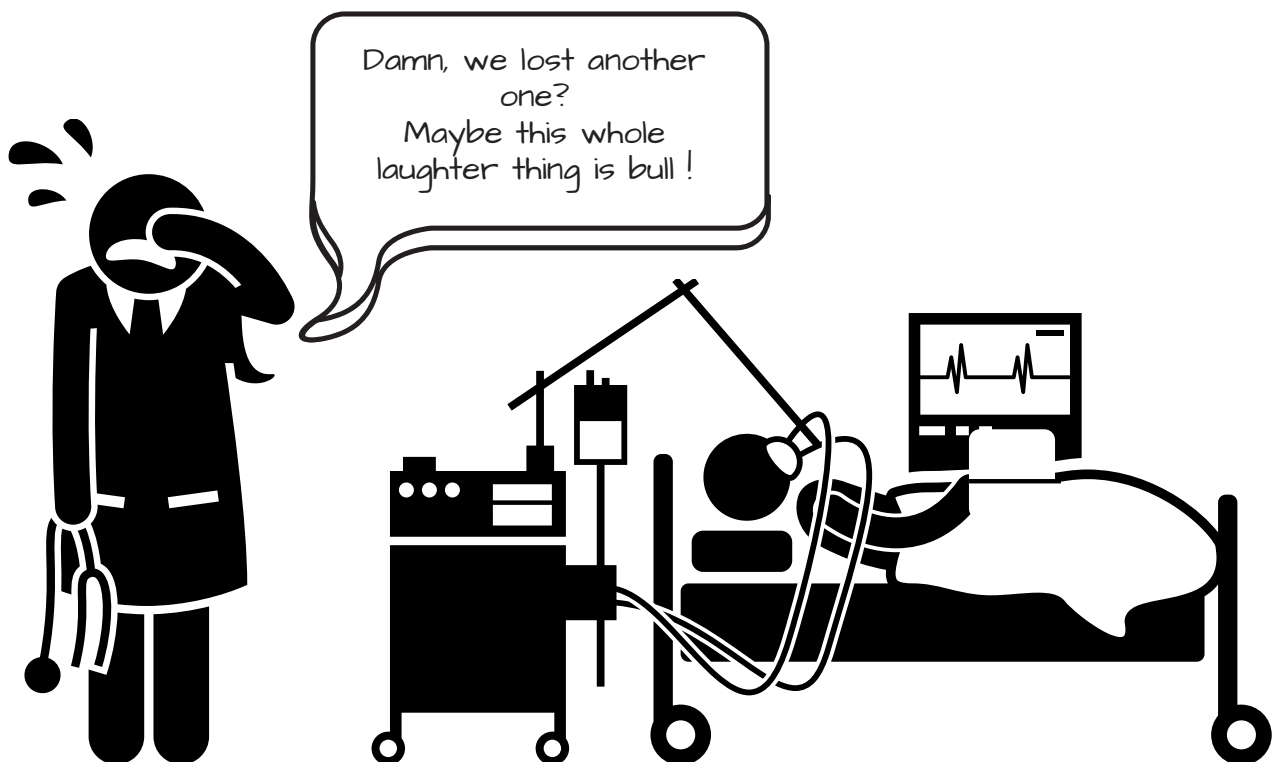
**UNDERSTANDING  
OF AND PASSION  
FOR, A  
PARTICULAR AREA  
OF EXPERTISE IS  
THE FOUNDATION  
FROM WHERE YOU  
START BUILDING  
YOUR SPEAKER  
PROFILE.**

# 14.

## LAUGHTER MAY NOT BE THE BEST MEDICINE

**JOKES ARE A PASSE. ESPECIALLY THE SOCIAL MEDIA ONES. MAKE A LIGHT COMMENT, TELL A STORY, BE INTERACTIVE, ASK A QUESTION. NO JOKES - IT CREATES PRESSURE ON YOU - ESPECIALLY WHEN IT DOESN'T TURN OUT TO BE AS FUNNY AS ONE INTENDED IT TO BE. NOT UNLESS YOU ARE A STAND-UP COMEDIAN.**

\*



\* I have known many a speakers who constantly use social media jokes as punch lines. Such content may have a momentary impact but has limited shelf life.

**15.**

# **KNOW THE EVENT AGENDA**

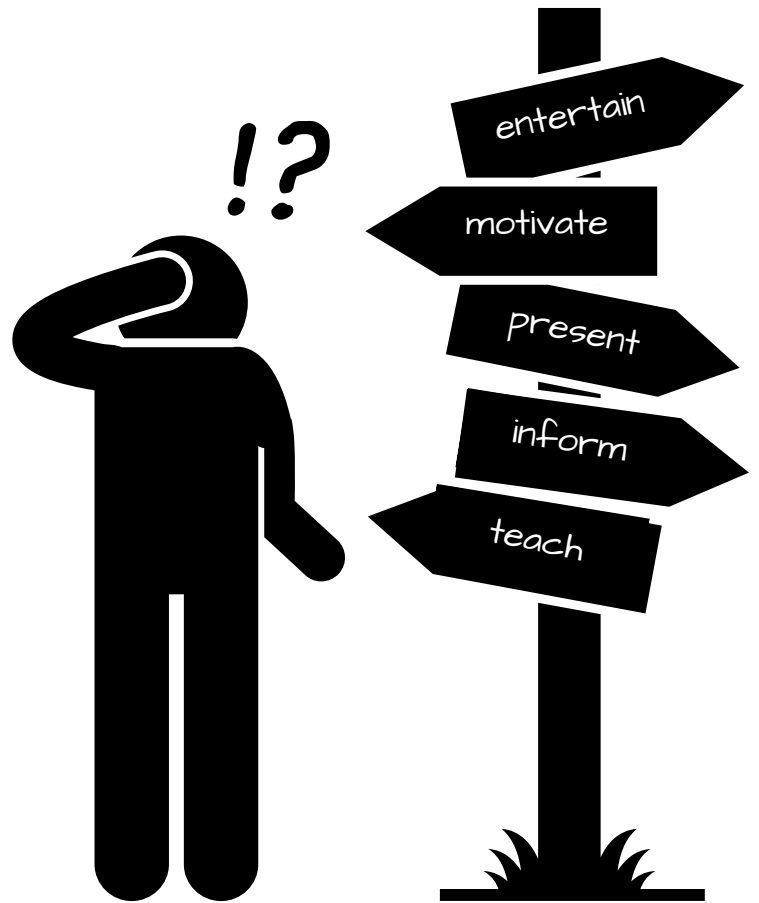
**LOOK THROUGH THE SESSIONS  
BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR SPEECH  
TO UNDERSTAND THE TOPICS BEING  
DISCUSSED, OTHER SPEAKER  
PROFILES AND POSSIBLE TOPICS  
WHICH YOU CAN ADD OR OMIT TO  
PREVENT REDUNDANCY.**





16.

**KNOW  
THE  
PURPOSE  
OF YOUR  
~~LIFE~~ talk**



**YOUR TALK, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE TOPIC, SHOULD CONNECT BACK TO THE OVERALL THEME OF THE EVENT, IF THERE IS ONE. IT IS ALSO BENEFICIAL TO DO A PRE-EVENT DEBRIEF WITH THE KEY-STAKEHOLDERS TO UNDERSTAND THEIR EXPECTATIONS AND ALIGN ACCORDINGLY.**

17.

**AS A SPEAKER,  
YOUR BEST  
PRESENTATIONS  
MUST DO THREE  
THINGS**



**ENTERTAIN**

**INFORM**

**INSPIRE**

# 17.1

## INFORM

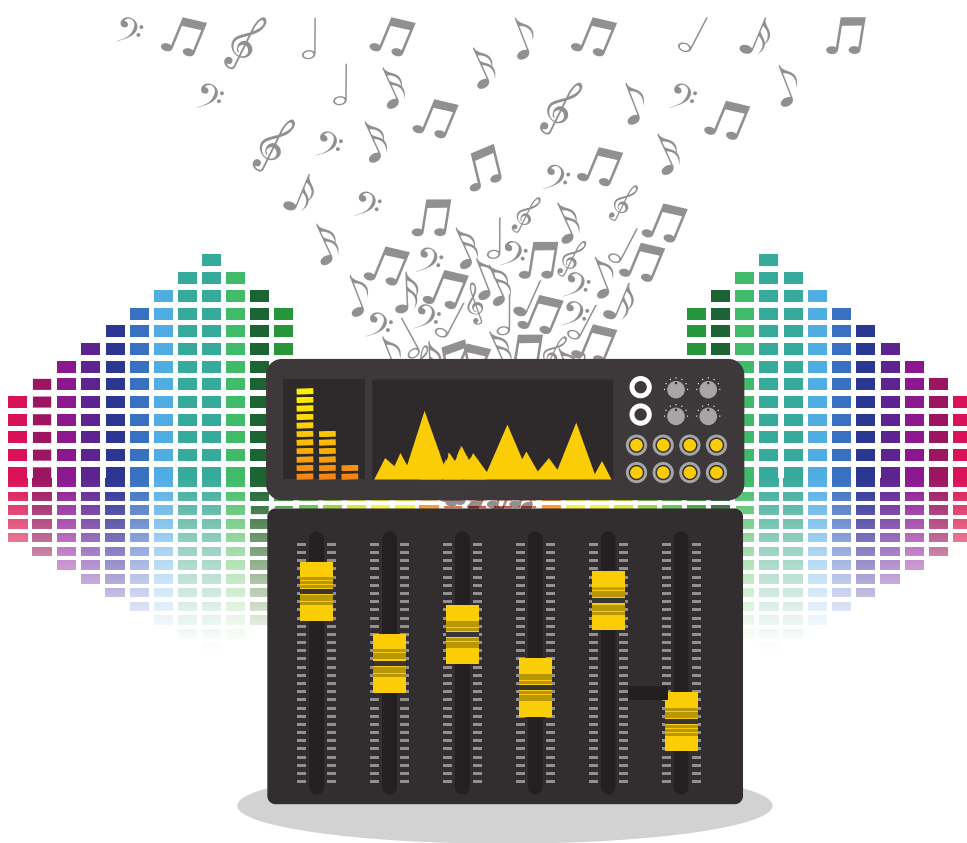
**HAVE A STRONG STORY BEFORE YOU GO INTO ANY PRESENTATION. THIS SHOULD BE RELEVANT TO THE OVERARCHING THEME, SHOULD BE NOVEL, AND SHOULD RELATE TO THE AUDIENCE (ASK YOURSELF, WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM?)**



# 17.11

## ENTERTAIN

**(DANCE, IF YOU MUST)  
YOUR INPUTS ARE OF VALUE  
AND DESERVE ALL THE  
ATTENTION. TO AVOID MAKING  
PEOPLE SNOOZE AS YOU  
PRESENT AND SHARE ADD  
DRAMA, COLOUR, LIGHT HUMOUR,  
AND INTERACTION TO YOUR  
SPEECH. HAVE A RED BULL, IF  
YOU MUST BEFORE PRESENTING!  
EXUDE ENERGY.**







# 17.iii INSPIRE

**GREATEST PRESENTERS ARE EXCELLENT AT WEAVING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN PRESENTATIONS. SIFT THROUGH YOUR PAST, RECALL STORIES YOU MAY HAVE HEARD WHICH MOVED YOU. SHARE YOUR LESSONS, AND AUDIENCE WILL CONNECT TO YOU INSTANTLY.**

**18.**

# **GET TO THE POINT - QUICKLY**

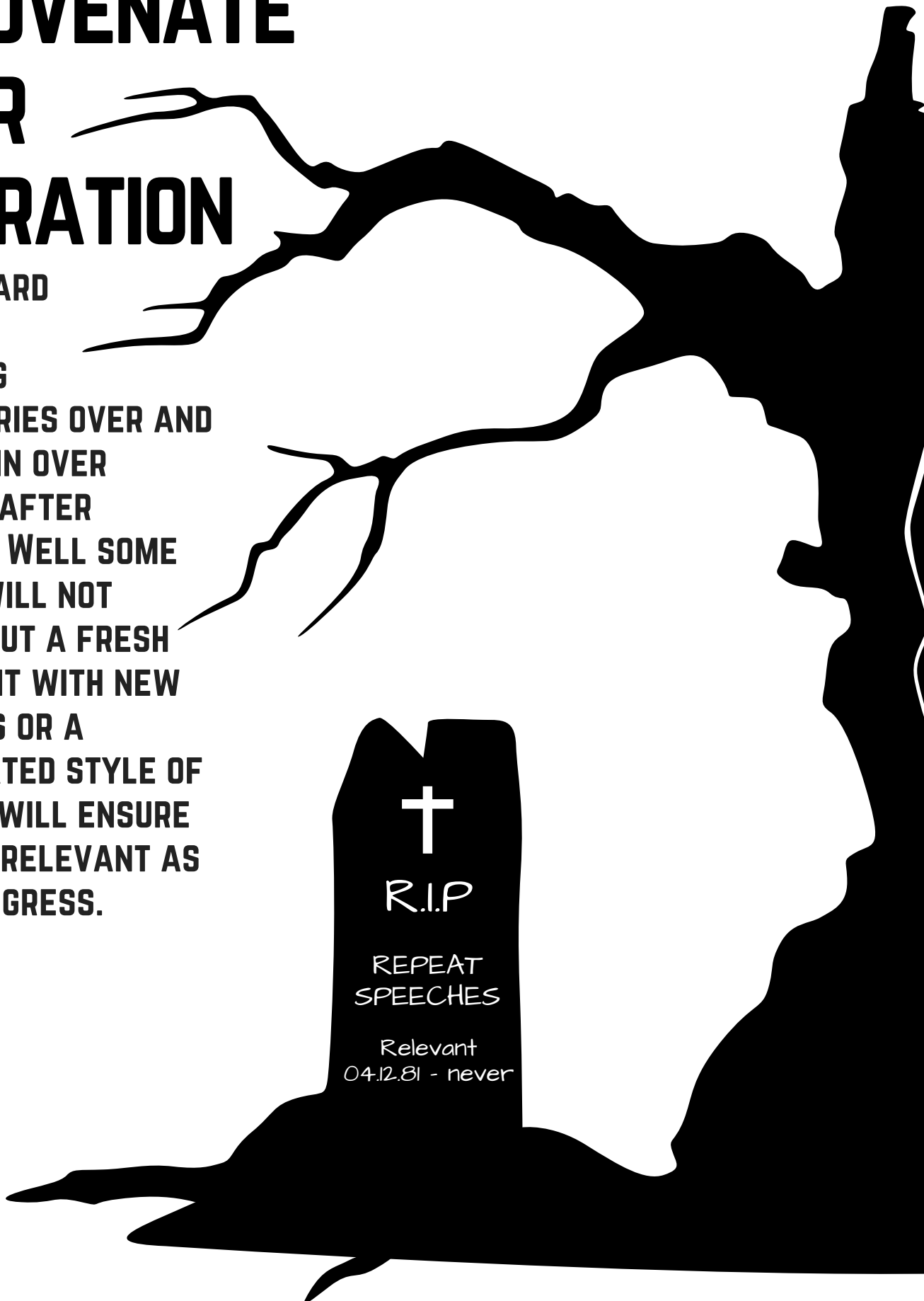
**DON'T TELL THE AUDIENCE THAT YOU ARE NERVOUS OR SCARED OR DRUNK OR HIGH. JUST DO YOUR BEST, MAKING AN EXCUSE WILL NOT LOWER EXPECTATIONS AND WILL INSTEAD SEND THEM ON A THINKING SPREE. EXCEPT WHEN YOU ARE LATE – JUST MAKE A QUICK APOLOGY AND MOVE ON – AUDIENCE WANTS YOU TO GET TO THE POINT.**



19.

# REJUVENATE YOUR NARRATION

I HAVE HEARD  
SPEAKERS  
REPEATING  
THEIR STORIES OVER AND  
OVER AGAIN OVER  
SESSIONS AFTER  
SESSIONS. WELL SOME  
STORIES WILL NOT  
CHANGE, BUT A FRESH  
TREATMENT WITH NEW  
EXAMPLES OR A  
REJUVENATED STYLE OF  
DELIVERY WILL ENSURE  
YOU STAY RELEVANT AS  
TIMES PROGRESS.



**20.**

**PLEASING PEOPLE  
NEVER REALLY  
PLEASES THEM..  
UNLESS YOU  
HAVE A TAIL AND BARK**

**SOME PEOPLE WILL NOT LIKE YOU  
– BOTH FOR WHAT YOU HAVE SAID  
AND FOR WHAT YOU HAVE NOT  
SAID. TRYING TO BE A PERPETUAL  
PEOPLE PLEASER WILL ONLY  
MAKE YOU BORING AND DRY. HAVE  
AN OPINION.**







**21.**

## **HAVE FUN WITH EXTEMPORES**

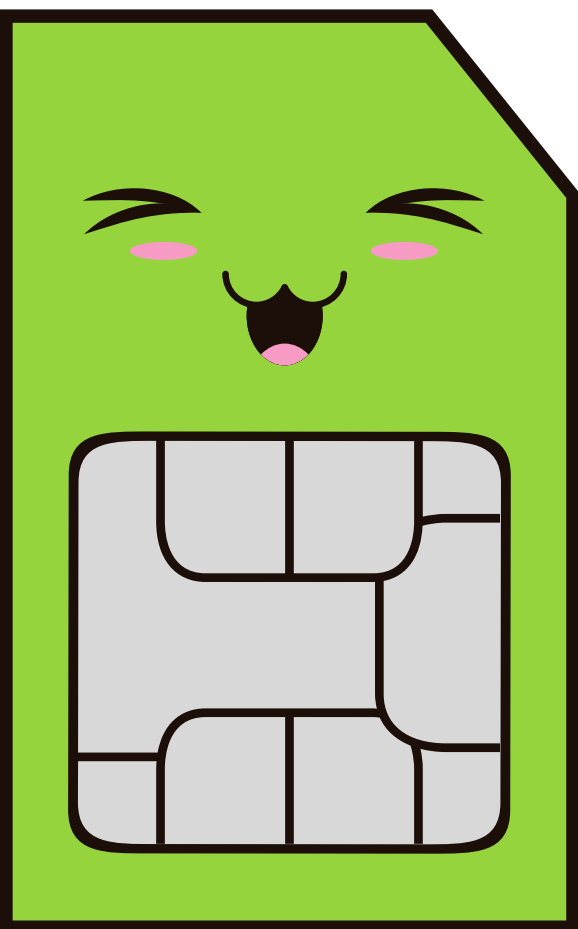
**WHEN ADDRESSING A TOPIC, REMEMBER A  
THREE POINT STRUCTURE:**

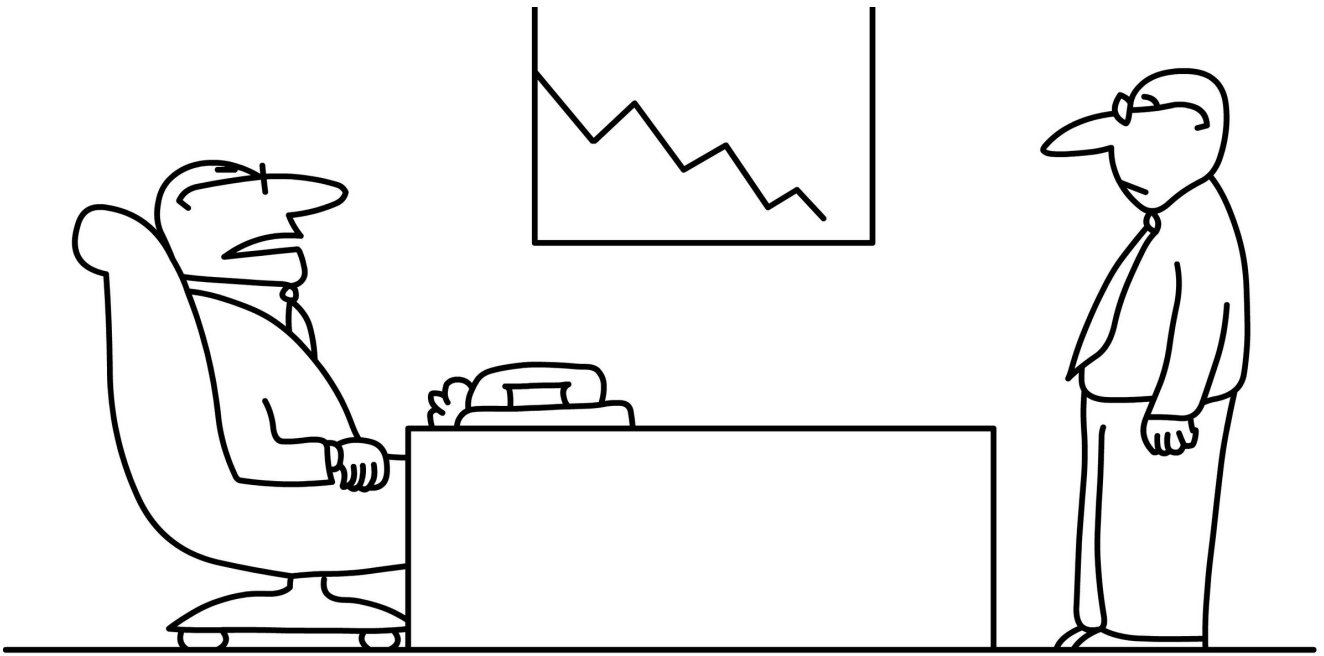
- 1) INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC.**
- 2) BODY OF THE TOPIC (THIS IS WHERE YOU HIGHLIGHT POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES, TAKE A POSITION ON ONE SIDE, PRESENT FACTS AND EVIDENCES TO SUPPORT YOUR POSITION), AND FINALLY, GIVE A**
- 3) CONCLUSION. THIS HELPS YOU STRUCTURE OUR THOUGHT PROCESS ESPECIALLY DURING AN EXTEMPORE.**

**22.**

## **CONNECT TO THE KNOWN**

**USE ANALOGIES AS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO CONNECT TO AUDIENCES WHEN INTRODUCING A COMPLEX OR A RELATIVELY NEW CONCEPT. THESE ARE USED TO BUILD LIKENESS BETWEEN WHAT AUDIENCES ALREADY KNOW AND WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO TELL THEM – TO MAKE YOUR POINT MORE MEMORABLE ONE. ANALOGIES CAN BE IN THE FORM OF PICTURES, NOUNS, OR OTHER FAMILIAR CONCEPTS.**






"It would appear, Hopkins, that your gut feel was only indigestion"

**23.**

# **LISTEN TO FEEDBACK. ANALYSE, INTERNALIZE, AND IMPROVISE**

**PERFECT 10S DO NOT EXIST FOR ANY SPEAKER WHO IS SPEAKING TO AN AUDIENCE OF A SIZE GREATER THAN ONE. HAVING SAID THAT, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU SLICE AND DICE THE FEEDBACK AND IDENTIFY TOP THREE TAKEAWAYS FROM EACH SESSION. AT SPEAKIN WE COLLECT FEEDBACK FOR EVERY SPEAKER FROM THE CLIENT ON A 10 POINT SCALE. THIS IS OUR FOOD WHICH ENERGIZES THE NEXT SESSION.**



who opened  
that damned  
closet???

**24.**

# KEEP YOUR ANECDOTES LIGHT HEARTED

**ON STAGE STORIES ARE NOT ABOUT SHARING YOUR DARK SECRETS AND DETAILING OUT EVERY SKELETON IN YOUR CLOSET - BUT A LIGHT COMMENT OR A RECENT PERSONAL EVENT CAN IMMEDIATELY BRING THE AUDIENCE TO YOUR SIDE. LEAVING PEOPLE WITH A SHORT PERSONALISED STORY/ EVENT DOES WONDERS TO THEIR ABILITY TO CONNECT TO YOU.**



**25.**

# **GET YOUR POINT ACROSS CLEARLY**

**THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF WRITING A GREAT, MEMORABLE SPEECH THAT ENGAGES AN AUDIENCE IS TO MAKE SURE YOUR MESSAGE IS SIMPLE, FREE OF JARGON AND STRUCTURED. AS THEY SAY "TELL THEM WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY. SAY IT. AND TELL 'EM WHAT YOU SAID."**



"Good evening. Tonight's news broadcast will be to the point. Everything's horrible. Good night."

26.

# AVOID POWER POINT SLIDES WITH HEAVY TEXT

**OFTEN TIMES SPEAKERS  
USE HEAVY TEXT AND  
DETAILED NOTES  
DURING KEYNOTE  
PRESENTATIONS. ITS  
BORING AT BEST AND  
LAZY AT THE LEAST.**

**DON'T DO THIS. ANY  
SLIDES YOU USE SHOULD  
BE AN ENHANCEMENT  
NOT A REPLACEMENT OF  
YOUR TALK. IF YOU'RE  
JUST GOING TO STAND  
UP THERE AND READ OFF  
THE SCREEN, WHAT  
DOES THE AUDIENCE  
NEED YOU FOR?**



**27.**

# **BRING VARIETY INTO YOUR CONTENT**

**SPEAKING IS ONE OF THE MOST  
SEASONAL PROFESSIONS KNOWN  
TO MANKIND. BRING VARIETY OF  
THOUGHT, CONTENT, STYLE AND  
DELIVERY TO APPEAL TO A  
WIDER AUDIENCE AND BE  
TIMELESS.**



**28.**

# **50 PERCENT OF PEOPLE WILL NOT AGREE WITH 50 PERCENT OF THE THINGS YOU SAY**

**AS IN LIFE, ON STAGE TOO 50 PERCENT OF PEOPLE WILL NOT  
AGREE WITH 50 PERCENT OF THE THINGS YOU SAY. JUST  
STICK TO YOUR FACTS, BE OPEN TO LEARNING AND LEAVE  
SPACE WHERE YOU CAN AGREE TO DISAGREE WITH EITHER  
THE AUDIENCE OR YOUR FELLOW SPEAKERS. REMEMBER,  
HUMILITY IS STILL YOUR BEST FRIEND.**

