



## FIRST THINGS FIRST, DON'T WASTE MY TIME

- The goal of a presentation is to TRANSFORM the audience
- Reports inform, stories are designed to entertain
- Reports should be distributed and stories should be told
- Blending the two creates a perfect world where facts and stories are layered like a cake
- One of the first things to include is a call to adventure - a gap between what is and what could be; when effectively constructed – an imbalance is created and the audience will want your presentation to resolve this imbalance

Examples of transforming audiences

| MOVE FROM    | → | MOVE TO     | MOVE FROM     | → | MOVE TO       |
|--------------|---|-------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| Apathy       | ■ | Interest    | Doubt         | ■ | Believe       |
| Cancel       | ■ | Implement   | Ignore        | ■ | Respond       |
| Chaos        | ■ | Structure   | Maintain      | ■ | Change        |
| Close-Minded | ■ | Open-minded | Naysayer      | ■ | Advocate      |
| Complicate   | ■ | Simplify    | Obligated     | ■ | Passionate    |
| Control      | ■ | Empower     | Reject        | ■ | Accept        |
| Delay        | ■ | Do          | Skeptical     | ■ | Hopeful       |
| Disapprove   | ■ | Recommend   | Standardize   | ■ | Differentiate |
| Disregard    | ■ | Examine     | Think         | ■ | Know          |
| Divide       | ■ | Unite       | Uncomfortable | ■ | Comfortable   |

## STORIES, BUT ONLY IF YOU WANT THEM TO PAY ATTENTION

- It's not the information itself that is important but the emotional impact of the information; the difference between an ordinary presentation and a captivating presentation is EMOTION
- Why use stories?
  - We are hardwired to learn lessons from observing change in others
  - People like to follow leaders who have survived challenges
  - When we listen to a story, the chemicals in our body actually change and our minds become transfixed; rendered motionless either with terror or amazement
  - Here's a BIG one: Stories are easy to repeat
  - Because I said so! (I snuck that one in)
- Great stories show growth and transformation, known in the movies as the character arc



## YOUR ROLE: BE A MENTOR

- Remember it is not all about you; presentations are not to show how smart you are...this will alienate your audience
- It is the responsibility of the presenter to do more than sift through a bunch of data and “pass it on”; we must help our audience gain the insight
- If you are trying to influence during your presentation, help your audience see themselves as the hero of the story
- Your role as the presenter is to be a MENTOR
  - The mentor gives the hero guidance, confidence and tools
  - The change/idea you are requesting may come with a struggle for the hero (the audience) and you should acknowledge that
  - As the mentor, your presentation should prepare them for what they can expect for the rest of the journey
  - Every audience will persist in a state of rest unless they are compelled to change - YOU must compel them

Questions to ask yourself as the mentor:



## DESTINATION, DESTINATION, DESTINATION

- Presentations should have a destination; if you don't map out where you want the audience to be when they leave; guess what, THEY WON'T GET THERE
- Start by creating an outline
- EVERY BIT of content you share should propel the audience towards that destination; otherwise it is just NOISE
- Ask yourself:
  - What is the first thing you want your audience to experience?
  - What is the first impression you want them to have?



## CONTRAST IS YOUR FRIEND

- If you do not have contrast then your presentation will be BORING
- Three types of contrast
  - Content – move between what is and what could be
  - Emotion – move between analytical and emotional content
  - Delivery – move between traditional and non-traditional delivery

## TRADITIONAL VS. NONTRADITIONAL

### Stage

- |                        |   |                        |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Be the main event      | ■ | Share the main event   |
| Hide behind the podium | ■ | Be free to roam        |
| Use stage as-is        | ■ | Use stage as a setting |

### Style

- |                       |   |                        |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| Serious business tone | ■ | Humor and enthusiasm   |
| Monotone              | ■ | Vocal and pace variety |

### Visuals

- |                         |   |                        |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Read slides             | ■ | Minimize slides        |
| Talk about your product | ■ | Show them your product |

### Interaction

- |                      |   |                            |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Minimize disruptions | ■ | Plan disruptions           |
| Resist live feedback | ■ | Embrace real-time feedback |
| Request silence      | ■ | Encourage exchanges        |

### Content

- |                           |   |                                       |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Familiarity with features | ■ | Wonderment and awe at features        |
| Flawless knowledge        | ■ | Self-deprecating humanness            |
| Long-winded downloads     | ■ | Memorable, headline-sized sound bites |

### Involvement

- |                  |   |                                |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| One-way delivery | ■ | Interactive aspects throughout |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------|

## EXERCISE RESTRAINT, SOME IDEAS MUST DIE

- Although you may feel that all the ideas you generated are insightfully riveting – they need to be sorted, organized and some ideas must die...EXERCISE A LITTLE RESTRAINT PEOPLE
- Filtering is important because you don't want to make your audience discern what is most important
- Audiences are screaming "make it clear" not "cram more in"
- Some tips:
  - Each topic/big idea should be turned into a message...Why? Because topics are neutral – messages are emotionally charged
  - Include the meaningful and exclude the obvious; the way that our brains work, it is actually BETTER to intentionally leave out missing pieces
  - Leave them wanting more...enough said



## DESIGN LIKE YOU MEAN IT

- One idea/message per slide
- Slides are free – so why are we cramming?
- The audience visually re-engages every time you advance a slide
- Audiences lose interest approx every three minutes – so you should be advancing the slide at least this often or you will lose them
- Slides should serve as a backdrop – YOU, not the slide delivers the message
- People can only process one inbound message at a time; they will either listen to you – or read your slides – they can NOT do both
- Move as much text as possible off of the slide to the note-pages (for you) and an audience handout (Yeess! Just like this hand-out - you're getting it, now!)
- Unfamiliar approaches grab more attention
- Avoid cliché images, why? Because they are familiar and boring
- Images can evoke a full range of emotions all by themselves (and remember, emotions are important)

## FINAL THOUGHTS: STAND OUT

- Create a handful of succinct, clear sound bites planted throughout the presentation
- An audience's interest is directly proportionate to the presenters preparation
- Yes, it takes a lot of time: if it were easy, everyone would do it! That's the point - STAND OUT!
- The Bland Leading the Bland: It feels safer and easier to conform to the well-worn groove of sameness than to stand out and be vulnerable, but being buried in a sea of sameness does not yield greatness or solve big problems
- Change your world, one presentation at a time! Make an impact!



## RESOURCES

- *Design For How People Learn* by Julie Dirksen
- *Resonate* by Nancy Duarte