

Cornerstone Number 2—FOCUS!

As a professional trainer and speaker, I am often asked about the best methods for keeping an audience focused on what the speaker is saying. Time and time again speakers, sales people, customer service reps and executives lose the attention of the intended group due to a myriad of distractions as well as terribly boring material. In both the **WOW Presentations** training and the **Executive Presentation Mastery** training, participants learn how valuable it is to control the Focus at all times. In this email I wanted to help you **now** with this valuable cornerstone to your presentation mastery.

I will be sending out more of these tips in the next few months. Please feel free to send feedback on how this helps you in your situation or if you have questions about how to apply this to your work.

Focus: Moving the focus in a commanding way – At any one point in any presentation your audience is focused on something. This step teaches you to keep them focused on where you want their attention to be.

For the purposes of this dialogue I want you to imagine that when you speak to anyone the Focus is literally an object. For example I like to use a little red ball called the Focus Ball. At every point in any conversation or presentation there is focus. The people you are speaking to are either focused smack on what you hope or something else. Often the people I coach tell me that they feel like a victim of the focus. I teach them that the focus is like this little red ball and if they practice moving the focus using the ball they will see dramatic changes in their presentations. You can do this now by taking any object and using it to move the focus. When you begin speaking you are holding the ball in your hand because the focus is on you. If you are giving a presentation and you want people to look at a Power Point slide on screen, then move the "Focus" to that screen using words and actions. If you want them to look at you then you hold the "Focus Ball" on you again. This exercise gets your mind to acknowledge the focus as a real object that can be controlled. As you make a point about certain parts of your presentation you then move the Focus Ball to that place either with your words or your actions or both. This creates an amazing element of engagement to your presentation.

Does this work?

Recently while coaching a CEO who was to deliver a presentation to several thousand of his employees I ran an exercise using the Focus Ball. When he wanted to make a point about the great sales numbers for the year I guided him to actually use the words and actions that would powerfully move the focus.

"Everyone focus on that slide for a moment. Now look at me everyone, those numbers are that high because you are delivering above and beyond what we expect. Now put your attention on the other people at your table, give yourselves a hand for this amazing achievement."

Do you notice how he moves the focus in a commanding way with his words. To accompany this powerful technique he also moved his hands and body to motion each focus change. This is how a normally boring and adequate message becomes engaging! When you are designing your presentations always remember that the Focus is in your control. When you practice this technique, practice using an object to represent the focus. Just don't start throwing objects at your audience. :) Then, as this CEO did, move the focus with your words and movements. Remember, if you do not control the Focus it will control you! I hope this helps you to add a level of presentation mastery to your work.

Cheers,



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