

# Captivate, Motivate, Educate

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Creating a “**knock your socks off**” business presentation can seem overwhelming. Regardless of whether you’re making a formal presentation at a conference or sitting across the table with a client or your boss, there are three key things to remember.

- Captivate
- Motivate
- Educate

Many of us assume our only responsibility is to educate. Educating is just part of the equation. People get bored easily. We also need to captivate our listeners, otherwise attention will drift. After all, they have a lot going on in their personal and business lives, and this affects how well they will listen. Right from the get-go, we have to bring them into our world. With attention, we get retention. So how do we do that?

First, your introduction should pack a punch. As you set context for the meeting, be sure it sparks interest. Strong verbs and descriptive words are just the thing. For example, an opening statement, such as, “*We are bleeding customers,*” would definitely make heads rise. Personal stories and startling statistics also command attention. If your listeners feel what you say shows value, you will hook them.

Another way of starting strong is to be very energetic. Passion is contagious! Move towards your listeners if you are standing. Don’t stay tethered to your laptop. Sustain eye contact. Do big, meaningful gestures and smile. Poker faces make people uncomfortable. The more dynamic you seem, the more engaged they will become.

It is easy to assume that people will know what they should do as a result of listening to you. They don’t! We have to motivate them to take action. Upfront, tell them your position or feeling on the subject, product or service. If they see you as the subject matter expert, your position can be very motivating. Additionally, clearly state what action you want them to consider and the benefits. Be sure to stress

the benefits; otherwise, they may not connect the dots. If you are clear on your position, any recommended actions and the payoff, you focus your listeners and motivate them to pay attention to what follows.

There is no doubt that we have to educate our listeners. Your listeners need to understand your message from start to finish. In the simplest language possible, explain your ideas. Back up your assertions with proof. Provide examples. Examples are essential when influencing. Be careful of going into unnecessary detail or discussing too many points. Three main ideas are ideal. Always, always consider the knowledge level and needs of your listeners.

Captivating, motivating and educating are critical elements in any message. They need equal consideration. As you review your message, evaluate how effectively you have considered these issues. Remember, it is a disservice to bore busy people.

**Question:** *What do you do to captivate your listeners? We’re interested in your reaction to this article – Click here – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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