

Get Real— Be Passionate!

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When people are in social situations, they usually aren't afraid to show their conviction. If they like their new car or their trip to Maui, they want others to know. Without even thinking about it, they use their body and their voice to recreate what they are feeling. However, when these same capable professionals speak to senior level executives or a large group, they often shut down. They worry about being "over the top," and consequently, they end up being perceived as dull or boring. Speakers who have impact never think twice about displaying their enthusiasm. They know if they are not excited, their listeners won't be either. There are three key things to remember to be a passionate speaker.

First, it is important to use your hands correctly. Gestures should not distract from your point. For example, if the speaker is talking about how particular software will dramatically improve the executive's ability to connect with his customers in real time, he must not be wringing his hands or twisting his ring.

Gestures should also not be repetitive. It may give the impression of over-gesturing, and listeners may begin to pay more attention to what the speaker is doing, instead of his ideas.

What gestures should be are varied and appropriate to the words. If the speaker wants to make a big point, she should use a big gesture. When sitting in a meeting, make sure to place your hands on the table, rather than fold them on your lap. If your hands are on the table, you will use them more often. Gestures that are believable or meaningful emanate from the shoulder and not from the wrist or elbow.

Secondly, let your face show how you feel. The enthusiast speaker smiles often and uses other appropriate facial expressions to support ideas. When a speaker is bent on selling a product or describing how the technology works, his face may become very intense. It may even become contorted, causing listeners to feel the speaker is not approachable.

Speakers who smile often and laugh frequently lighten the intensity of any meeting. They are well-liked and often invited back. A speaker's face is his calling card so don't overlook its importance.

Thirdly, make your points stand out by having energy in your voice. Nothing is more annoying than a speaker who has monotone. Speakers who have energy remember to pause and breathe often. They know that they have to stress a minimum of two or three words in every sentence if their listeners are going to believe their ideas add value.

Speakers who rush or those who don't stop to pause and breathe often run out of air. Consequently, their voice fades periodically, or it sounds strident and less friendly. By providing the necessary fuel for your voice, your listeners will remember your ideas.

Passionate speakers are motivational. They move people to decisions. They are seen as real or genuine by their listeners. If you want to distinguish yourself from the competition, do not hedge on letting energy out. "Good communication should be as stimulating as a strong cup of coffee and just as hard to sleep after (Ann Morrow Lindberg). Let your hands, face and voice captivate your listeners.

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. When you have to have impact, phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.