

MARILYN PINCUS

BOOST YOUR PRESENTATION IQ

Proven Techniques for
Winning Presentations
and Speeches

Featuring *THE PRESENTATION IQ TEST*
to help you quickly prepare your winning speech

SIMPLE STRATEGIES for conveying your
ideas to every audience

Tips on HANDLING TOUGH CROWDS,
including demanding Q & A sessions

Boost Your Presentation IQ

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Marilyn Pincus

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Praise for Boost Your Presentation IQ

"Whether you are you giving a presentation in front of 500 people or for 3 people in a meeting, your personal presentation style and speaking abilities will enhance or detract from the point your are trying to make. Marilyn Pincus shows you how to have impact whether you are speaking for 5 minutes or 6 hours!"

—Joan Burge
Founder and CEO
Office Dynamics, Ltd.

"Help on every page for even the most poised and experienced presenter/communicator. This book's arrangement and format signal a fresh approach to a subject that bedevils us all in this age of so much information and so little meaning and relevancy—how to effectively reach our audiences. Read it, learn and communicate."

—Paul M. Sanchez, ABC, APR
Communication Business Leader
Mercer Human Resource Consulting
Europe

"Meeting planners pay fees of \$50,000 and more for celebrity speakers. Fame alone won't make the sale. These speakers perfected their presentation skills. Marilyn Pincus unveils strategies every great speaker uses."

—Angela Schelp
Executive Speakers Bureau

This book is dedicated to my cherished grandchildren
Emily Beth Rosenweig
and
Vasya David Pincus

Acknowledgments

Here's to the supporting cast! An author writes the book alone, but that's where the solitude ends. Shine the spotlight on the many talented people at McGraw-Hill who put the author's rendering through dress rehearsal and ready it for opening night. Top billing in that department belongs to the editor, Ms. Donya Dickerson. Hats off to the cadre of people who work to make the book a long running hit. Finally, a round of applause is reserved for Ms. Grace E. Freedson, Literary Agent. I couldn't have done it without you. Many thanks to you all.

Introduction

In the workplace your success depends heavily upon how you're received. *How you're received dictates how recipients respond.* Based on how you present an idea, people may or may not buy something from you, may or may not learn something from you, and may or may not be disposed to conduct business with you or keep you employed!

Because you want to be well received, it's important that your presentation skills are top-notch. Discover how best to use winning presentation skills, and you'll be in a powerful position to obtain the results you desire.

Boost Your Presentation IQ takes you on a unique Q&A journey. When you reach the final destination, at the end of the book, you will have an arsenal of valuable communication techniques at your disposal.

Decisions, Decisions

Here's how this book works: Fifty questions are posed. Each one is partnered with three different scenarios—or three possible answers. You select the best answers and keep score. Brief explanations reveal why one answer is stronger than the others. Each answer receives a point assignment, and these points enable you to quickly judge your Presentation IQ. As a result, you zero in on what you need to do, how you need to do it, and why it's recommended.

Get ready to make more sales, train others to be more productive, win support from customers, clients, colleagues, and vendors, and cement your position as a valued employee. Every time you step up to make a presentation—whether in front of hundreds of people or just a few—you'll dazzle them with your ability to communicate. Not only will you

get your way more often, but more people will see you as someone who inspires confidence.

Here's an illustration:

Jill Smith has been told by her boss that her staff of 10 will be moved to a new building located in a nearby town. Jill's staff is highly trained, and company executives are counting on her to motivate all these employees to make the transition to the new address. Jill knows that two of the 10 are outspoken and tend to influence the others. She considers three approaches to presenting her staff with the news.

Which is the best approach for delivering this news?

- (A) Gather everyone together and announce the move to the new building. Explain why the move is necessary and how each of them will benefit by working at this new location.
- (B) Prior to calling a formal meeting, talk with the two outspoken employees. Take special note of their responses. If objections surface, get permission from management to take steps to satisfy complaints that are likely to arise at the meeting.
- (C) Select a different venue for this meeting. Jill Smith usually holds staff meetings in a conference room, but now she plans to invite the staff to a lunch meeting at a local restaurant. She reserves a table in a private room and arranges for the hostess to escort each employee to the table.

Approach:

- (A) Adequate. This approach isn't especially creative, but it will suffice. The important point is stressing benefits.
- (B) Weak. A good manager can solicit input from most or all staff members casually and without fanfare. If only one or two people are approached, it sets up an aura of intrigue and a suggestion that something bad is about to happen. Tongues start wagging and nothing positive is gained.
- (C) Favored: It's important that staff members focus on the message. By inviting staff to a new meeting place, the manager underscores the importance of the message. Moreover, the restaurant site helps set the mood. "Something good is about to be announced."

Jill's actions put the spotlight on three Presentation Skills:

1. *Know your audience.* Know their objectives, their capacity to understand your message.
2. *Get their attention:* Every minute is precious, and people have short attention spans. The special meeting place acts as an unspoken attention grabber.
3. *Prepare:* Jill Smith was thinking ahead. She prepared to counter objections. Of course, one assumes that prior to the meeting she obtained permission from her boss to satisfy anticipated objections.

Rate yourself: Which one do you favor?

If you chose answer (A), give yourself 2 points.

If you chose answer (B), give yourself zero points.

If you chose answer (C), give yourself 5 points.

Add them up. How many points did you earn?

As you move through *Boost Your Presentation IQ*, tally all the points you've earned to get an indication of how you're doing. This is not a scientific method for assessing Presentation Skills, but it does provide you with a measurement tool. Are your Presentation Skills good? Could they be better? If they're already tops, good for you! You've just received a pleasant confirmation of this fact.

As you read through the explanations, you'll also notice that the definitions of Presentation Skills aren't static. *Know your audience*, for example, may be explained as paying attention to whether the audience is composed of people from a predominately different culture than your own or composed of retirees as opposed to working people. These are not the same as the *Know your audience* definitions provided in the Jill Smith illustration, which involved predicting each person's response to change. Before you know it, you'll (painlessly) acquire a broad base of information about what to consider when you want to know your audience.

At the back of the book you'll find a complete list of Presentation Skills. Refer to it when you're getting ready to make a presentation. You'll be reminded about priority points in a to-the-point style. For example, *tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them.* You'll find this reminder under "Prepare." This and other "At-a-Glance Reminders" are within easy reach whenever you seek a refresher.

While *Boost Your Presentation IQ* spotlights dozens of everyday type presentations such as the above example, it also offers lots of information on making presentations to large audiences. You'll find scenarios that dis-

cuss being a Keynote Speaker, Master or Mistress of Ceremonies, and so on. And you'll find ample information to boost your presentation IQ when you address audiences that number in the hundreds and thousands. Scenarios that target on-camera presentations (e.g., television appearances) and radio presentations, as well as in a theater or a large auditorium, are explored too.

Part Two of the book, "Proven Techniques for Boosting Your Presentation IQ," contains techniques, tips, and strategies that you can use to further improve your presentation skills. This section is heavy with details.

By the time you close this book, you will have been transported to every imaginable presentation venue and be equipped to exceed expectations. And then you can go ahead and take a bow. You will have earned it!

Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Introduction **ix**

Part 1 The Presentation IQ Test **1**

Test One: Popular Types of Presentations 3
Test Two: Know Your Audience 25
Test Three: Beginnings, Middles, and Ends: Organizing
Your Presentation 47
Test Four: Using Visuals 69
Test Five: Handling Questions and Other Concerns 91
Score Card 113

**Part 2 Proven Techniques for Boosting
Your Presentation IQ** **117**

Chapter One: Quick Keys to Successful Presentations 119
Chapter Two: Preparation 133
Chapter Three: How Did I Do? 147
Chapter Four: Moving On to Your Next Presentation 155
Index 167

PART 1

**The
Presentation
IQ Test**

Test One

Popular Types of Presentations

Report, Inform, Explain, Announce

Whatever the venue—small or large—when you have information to deliver, the key point is to focus on the facts. You muddy the waters when you frequently digress to offer your opinions, make attempts to be humorous, or otherwise stray from the specifics. On those occasions when opinions are pertinent, you're well advised to save them for the end.

During these types of presentations, there are typically a lot of facts. Facts can be dry:

The plant opens at 6:00 A.M. The new bus route includes a stop at our warehouse. Sales were off by 20 percent last quarter. Headquarters will be closed for two weeks in December and employees will receive one week's pay. Anyone eligible for vacation pay can declare the second week a vacation week and collect two weeks' pay.

When you have numerous facts to report or when complex numbers are involved, arrange for listeners to "see" them as well as hear them. A hand-out of some type is practical and easy to produce. Keep it simple. Make it brief. If consequences are directly related to the information you're presenting, say so. These consequences are facts too. The availability of vacation pay, in the situation mentioned above, is a perfect example. If

possible, ask for questions and provide answers at the end of your presentation. If not, end by referring listeners to another forum. For example:

This information is posted on the company Web site. You'll hear more about this from the human resources director at our regular staff meeting.

The more disciplined you are about sticking to the facts, the more successful you'll be at providing complete information. People are free to absorb the new information without distraction, and you will accomplish your mission.

Since it is likely you'll be involved in reporting, informing, explaining, or announcing on a fairly regular basis, use the first three scenarios and related questions included in this part of the Presentation IQ Test to hone your skills in these areas.

Persuade, Win Over, Sell

The next most popular type of presentation is trying to persuade your audience. Your mission here is to stimulate or inspire listeners to act. You want those individuals to believe something they didn't believe before you confronted them. A shy and retiring manner of speaking won't do the job. You'll probably present an upbeat, animated persona to listeners. You'll work to raise the energy level in the room. You'll put people in the mood to say yes. In the process, you'll do everything within your power to accentuate the positive. If objections are raised, you'll address them quickly and move on. You'll strive to endear yourself to listeners because people do business with people they like. And when you're in front of a group trying to make a sale, you're conducting business!

Entertain, Divert, Relax, Set a Mood

The final set of questions in Part 1 of the Presentation IQ Test is about the mood you want to set. Some entertainers use "warm-up" acts to set a tone, to "tweak" the atmosphere, before they arrive on stage. And there are times when you'll address a group to get them ready for the main speaker or what is coming next. Other times, however, you'll be the only speaker, and you may be responsible for everything.

Question 1

Management hired a new chef for the company cafeteria and made other improvements in order to entice more employees to stay on the premises to eat lunch. They did this in an effort to prevent lunch hours from becoming lunch hours plus 15 minutes. In spite of their efforts, many employees still left the building for lunch. The company president decided to have casual meetings with employees to call attention to the new and improved cafeteria. Should the president:

- (A) Focus on the chef's qualifications. Don't omit anything that would showcase the chef's culinary talents.
- (B) Present the facts in a casual way. A one-page handout can list the chef's achievements and detail one week of menu selections.
- (C) Bring the chef along and introduce him or her to everyone. Arrange for the chef to be available to answer employees' questions if they seek out the chef in the cafeteria. Announce that this opportunity is available when the president makes introductions. Don't linger with any one group.