

# **EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING**

**ALL TALKS PRESENTED IN SPEECH NEW ZEALAND EXAMINATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN THIS MODE:**

**PREPARED, PLANNED, PRACTISED AND DELIVERED IN PRESENTER'S OWN WORDS – IN A CONVERSATIONAL MANNER AND WITH APPROPRIATE FORMALITY.**

- The speaker neither memorises the speech word for word, nor reads every word
- The speaker organizes the points in ideas not in words
- The speaker, to aid memory and enhance the presentation, may use:

**appropriate visual aids, including PowerPoint slides**

**brief headings written on a card**

**appropriate objects**

**quotations read from the source**

**charts**

**handouts**

## **AUDIENCE ADVOCACY**

For the presenter to connect in conveying a message, the audience must be brought into equal focus with the presenter's objectives: eg *Audience Advocacy*.

This means learning to view yourself and your story (message) through the eyes of your audience.

Aristotle, the pioneer in the art of persuasion identified the key element and most important one, *Pathos*. Pathos refers to the ability to connect with the feelings, desires, wishes, fears and passions of the audience. Think of *empathy and sympathy*.

Aristotle wrote: '*Persuasion may come through the hearers when the speech stirs their emotions.*'

## **SHIFT IN FOCUS FROM FEATURES TO BENEFITS**

A Feature is a Fact or Quality – a Benefit deals with the idea you are advocating.

Whereas a Feature may be irrelevant to the needs or interests of your audience, a Benefit, by definition, is always relevant. Without Benefit you have no Audience Advocacy. For people to act on anything, they must have a **reason** to act, and the reason must be **their reason**, not yours.

## **THE ART AND BENEFITS OF BRAINSTORMING**

Spoken Language is governed by the **Right Brain** of creativity rather than focusing on the **Left Brain** which deals with grammar, structure, syntax, consistency etc.

When most people sit down at the computer to write a document, homily, or speech, their minds are front-loaded with Left Brain functions: logic, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Rather than bouncing freely from one idea to the next, dragging in names, references, pronouns, and concepts that may or may not be clear, they move methodically through a sequence of points, meticulously self-correcting their syntax and logic as they go.

But because the writer ruled by the Left brain is concentrating on the rules of logic, grammar, and so on, the natural flow of concepts is often impeded. Almost inevitably, the writer omits ideas that are necessary or includes ideas that are unnecessary, overly detailed or irrelevant.

**Starting** the work of developing a presentation with Left-brain considerations such as logic, sequence, grammar, and word choice is simply not effective. Crafting a presentation is a **Creative** task; it must start with the kind of creative resources that are available only on the right side of your brain. Use the right tool for the right job.

Therefore, start the story development process by doing what your brain is going to do anyway: follow the stream of consciousness and capture the results during Brainstorming.

## **BRAINSTORMING: DOING THE DATA DUMP PRODUCTIVELY**

- 1 Set up a large whiteboard or big pad of sketch paper. Have on hand a supply of markers in several colours. Use different colours to indicate different groups of levels of ideas.
- 2 Write your central theme or idea in the centre of the page.
- 3 **There are no bad ideas in brainstorming – let them all flow.**
- 4 Launch your ideas by writing single concepts. Explode the concept of each idea – using a different colour for each concept.
- 5 Be flexible! Add ideas as they arise. As the brainstorming process progresses, you'll find that ideas pop up all over the place. The ideas will

shift, connect, disconnect, and duplicate as they seek relationships with other ideas. This is your Right brain at work. Let it happen. Relationships will emerge, change, and develop. Capture all the activity on your whiteboard or sketch pad.

- 6 Consider all ideas during the brainstorm. Avoid thinking in structure, sequence or hierarchy.
- 7 Data Dump all ideas that are not relevant to your central theme.
- 8 Move from this idea of generating a host of ideas in relative chaos to an organized clearly known technique known as **clustering**. This is an essential technique for organizing material.

### **FOCUS BEFORE FLOW**

So far you've held off selecting any sequence of ideas for your presentation. Get your story/message straight; then and only then can you think about the most effective sequence of concepts for presenting that story persuasively. In developing your presentation, keep the proper order of the creative process in mind: *Focus before Flow*.

Now, having set the context with the **Framework form**, having poured out all the concepts that might be relevant to your presentation by **Brainstorming**, using an efficient **Data Dump** and having distilled those concepts and ideas by **Clustering**, you're ready to develop the flow and structure of ideas that will guide your presentation. Following this technique will enable you to deliver your presentation in **EXTEMPORANEOUS MODE**.

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*Speech New Zealand 17 July, 2008*

*Resource: Presenting to Win, The Art of Telling Your Story; by Jerry Wiessman*

*Publishers: Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2006*