

Thinking of Making a Promotional Online Video? Presentation Skills to Ensure your Success

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It takes courage to show up.

No less, showing up online where thousands of people can rewind, pause, and study if you're the person they want to hire. People want to feel your authenticity, expertise and passion. If you've got these, you're off to a good start.

Here are seven additional tips to make it easier for your listener to hear you and take action on your message.

1. Organize and get crystal clear with what you want to convey. If you can write your purpose on the back of a business card, you have the clarity necessary to get your point across. If it doesn't fit, keep chiseling away for your ultimate goal. Then decide on your main points and give yourself and your viewers a road map. If you have three points to share, tell them. People love numbers – it gives them a reference point and will keep you both on the same page. Keep asking yourself, "How can I make it easier for my listener to understand?" The more organized and focused you are the easier it will be for them to hear what you have to say.

2. Keep your sentences short. When writing your script, you can test it by recognizing if each sentence can be said in one breath. When you take a full body breath before you begin your next sentence, your voice will sound richer. By deliberately taking a deep breath, you'll give your listeners a moment to digest what you just said. The filler words like um, ah and ya-know sneak in when we think of a speech or video clip as one entire segment. Many people unconsciously use them to string the whole speech together. Thinking of each sentence as a complete thought will alleviate these pesky filler words and keep people focused on your message.

3. When you say your name, make sure the pitch goes down at the end. If it sounds like a question (going up at the end) people will question you. Notice how people say their names on their phone recordings or when they're introducing themselves with their elevator speech. If it goes up at the end, chances are you'll feel uneasy about their ability. Listen to famous TV personalities like Barbara Walters and the ever-popular Walter Cronkite. When they say their name, it goes down at the end. Say Microsoft out loud. It goes down, right? Now say your name. How does it sound? An easy way to correct it is to say your first name slightly higher in pitch – the last name will automatically go down.

4. Eliminate distracting gestures. Many people say they feel better when they talk with their hands, but repetitive gestures that are on automatic take people's attention away from what you're saying. Making facial expressions that show your aliveness is a

plus (much different than someone who makes expressions merely to get attention). When your gestures and facial expressions match your words, they add impact and build trust. An eye-opening exercise is to have a friend or coach mimic what you are doing with your body language as you speak about a subject that's important to you. You'll soon see if it's adding impact to your message or not. Generally speaking, people feel more comfortable with rounded gestures than linear, pointing type gestures. Maintain soft eye contact with the camera and feel your feet on the floor. Even though most online videos don't show your entire body, people will still feel if you are grounded or merely a talking head.

5. Use descriptive words and adjectives when sharing a short story or testimonial. Give your listeners enough sensual stimulation to keep them involved. Ask yourself how you can make it more visual and alive. One testimonial might start with, "A woman walked into my clinic for her appointment..." Consider another version, "A frustrated and clearly overworked woman marched into my clinic determined to get relief..." Record yourself and listen. Edit for boredom and add for interest.

6. Wear solid colors. Cameras have difficulty responding to high contrast or vivid colors like black and white or bright red. For best results, wear dark blue or pastels. If you've had a lot of compliments on a certain color you wear, consider wearing that; color does make a difference. Avoid small check or pinstripe patterns. Wear clothes that match what you want to convey. Depending on where it's being filmed, make sure the background is congruent with your message.

7. Warm up before you go on camera. Warm up your voice with some deep breathing and toning exercises. Shake your body and let it move however it wants to. Loosen up and relax. Take a minute and remind yourself of the passion you feel for your product or service. How has it served you? Why are you in this business? What kind of person do you want to serve and who is your ideal client? Speak to them from the core of your values and how you might help. Feel the significance of your message and don't be shy about it. Let your enthusiasm come from the inside out and straight to the heart of the person watching.

Presenting yourself to more people through the use on online video can bring up new challenges. That's a good sign – you're growing. Embrace it all and celebrate your successes along the way.