

# How to Build a Presentation: The 7-Step Method for Speaking with Influence

By [Gary Genard](#)



Want to speak with presence and lasting influence? Follow The Genard Method's 7-step approach for building successful presentations.

You're experienced, knowledgeable, and passionate about your topic. Just as important, you're committed to giving listeners something that will help change their lives.

But do you know how to *move* an audience enough to make that happen?

However much information you possess, it won't resonate with audiences unless they perceive you as a leader they can trust and follow. Better still, the more memorable you are as a speaker, the more people will be inspired by what you say and take the action you're looking for.

Want to speak dynamically and make what you say unforgettable? Learn the essential techniques for commanding a stage in public speaking. Download my **free e-book**, "[12 Easy Ways to Achieve Presence and Charisma.](#)"

So how do you consistently develop the influence that's so essential for communicating as a leader?



## 7 Steps to Building a Great Presentation Every Time

To start, you need to know how to craft presentations that consistently deliver excellence. Plenty of books and articles discuss developing dynamic presentation skills. And those skills are important. But if you want your message to resonate and move audiences to *action*, you need to understand what goes into building a successful talk.

This means you need to combine a *strategy* for impactful speeches to partner with successful *execution*.

Below are what I consider the 7 key components of creating effective presentations. Follow this road map, and you'll be well on your way to building a following as a speaker who knows how to spin straw into gold when you take center stage.

**Step 1: Greeting.** Speakers often neglect an audience greeting to their detriment. Your greeting is an essential element of your presentation for all of the following reasons: (1) It's your first and best opportunity to establish rapport with listeners; (2) Your audience is paying maximum attention at this point; (3) Your credibility and the audience's trust in you start here; (4) Your tone and "flavor" as a speaker are established now; and (5) You either demonstrate you're going to be interesting . . . or not.

Establish solid eye contact (don't keep looking down at those notes!), and know exactly what you're going to say so you get off to a strong start. Your talk is like a rocket launch—and this is the moment when you fire up the engines.

**Step 2: The Grabber.** You need to compel your audience's attention at the start of your actual speech. That means avoiding what I call the "Today, I'm Going to Talk About . . ." syndrome. What could be more dampening to everyone's excitement? Instead, blast off with something original, intriguing, and creative. Use one of these, or come up with another way to begin that you think will hook this audience. Do this well and your listeners will be engaged for everything that follows.

**Step 3: The Preview of Your Speech.** Once you've grabbed your audience's attention, clue them in on what specific aspects of this topic you're going to address. Ever listen to a speaker and still be wondering 5 minutes into the talk what the topic is? Audiences will be much more receptive if they know where you're going with your subject. Following the great Dale Carnegie's advice: Tell 'em what you're going to say, say it, then tell 'em what you said. Here's an acronym that might help: B-L-U-F, or **Bottom Line Up Front**.

**Step 4: Your Main Points, with Evidence.** Develop your points logically backing up each one with *evidence*. Otherwise, it's all just your opinion. Why should your listeners believe you over the next person? Evidence can take many forms: expert opinion, personal anecdote, statistic, story, client testimonial, report, experimental data, photographic evidence—the list is as long as what's credible and supportive for your talk. And don't forget transitions. You may know how your main points fit together, but your audience doesn't. More on transitions in Step 6, below.



**Step 5: Vivid and Visual Language.** If there's an orphan in the family of effective speaking, it's the skill of using linguistics effectively. Words can either denote (refer to explicitly) or connote (suggest an association). Of the two, connotations are much more evocative because they can be emotionally powerful. For instance, my *New World Dictionary* tells me that "female parent" is explicit and serviceable enough; but *mother* connotes love, caring, tenderness, and a world of positive associations. Use language that's vivid enough to bring that emotional component front and center. Metaphors and comparative language are unusually good at doing this. And in terms of delivering that language, discover [\*\*the Churchill method of how to be an exciting speaker\*\*](#).

**Step 6: Transitions.** It's surprising how many speakers ignore the transitions that are needed to help audiences connect the main points of a speech. How many times have you heard these phrases: "The next slide shows . . ."; "My next point is . . ."; "Okay, now . . ."; and the infamous, "Moving right along . . ." The translation of each of these desperate pronouncements is: "I don't know how to get from what I was just talking about to the next main point, so I'll just baldly announce what's coming next." For your presentation to be a logical and organic whole, you must create effective transitions. Try an *internal summary* (what you were just talking about) followed by an *internal preview* (what's coming next). Transitions give your talk a logical shape.

**Step 7: The Clincher.** Just as your opening needs a Grabber, you can go from mundane to memorable in your conclusion by creating a powerful *clincher*. Remember: your closing is an invaluable opportunity to aid retention and so you need to do more than just recap your key points. Make your ending "sticky." Whatever you say at this critical time must *continue to resonate* with your listeners long after you've finished speaking. Ask yourself—always keeping in mind your audience and the situation—"What can I say that will help keep my message in the minds of my audience members?"

Keep these seven steps in mind and you'll consistently create presentations that lead audiences where you want them to go. You have great power as a speaker to motivate, inspire, and activate listeners. Giving them a well-developed talk that taps into the way audiences learn and respond is one of the secrets to establishing that kind of influence. This article was originally published in 2013. It is updated from time to time.

## About the Author

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**Gary Genard, Ph.D.**, founder of **The Genard Method**, is an expert in theater-based public speaking training. As an actor and speech coach, he uses performance techniques to help executives and leadership teams speak with confidence and influence. Dr. Genard consults and trains for corporations, governments, nonprofits, and individuals worldwide. He is the author of the books *How to Give a Speech* and *Fearless Speaking*, and the blog **Speak for Success!** To learn more, visit the [website](#) and follow Gary Genard on [Twitter](#).

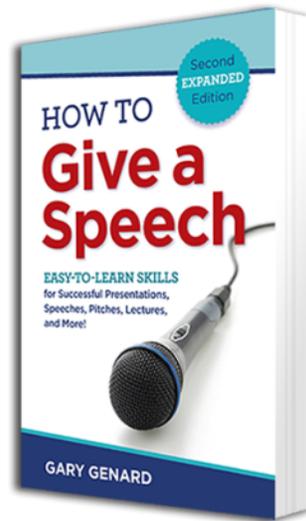
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