EPICENTRAL

A Newsletter from Epicenter Development Group highlighting ideas that improve organizations

Welcome to Epicenter Development Group's newsletter, EPICentral. The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight fundamental ideas that have helped organizations develop and maintain great manufacturing and service operations. We hope that you find our EPICentral newsletter helpful, and we would welcome your comments on its content.

Effective Presentation Skills - Part II
The Top Ten Presentation Tips

"The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause." - Mark Twain

In last month's newsletter, we reviewed the general principles that go into creating and delivering a successful presentation (newsletter link). In this month's article, we are going to review our **TOP TEN ah-hah's** from over twenty-five years of doing presentations both personally and professionally.

#10: Tell a Story / Make it Personal
- Presentations are always more powerful if you can connect with the audience through a personal story that is related to the topic.

#9: Don't Rely Entirely on Technology
- Technology can be a great aid for delivering information. However, it can (and will) fail to work properly at times. Consider how you might complete your presentation without a projector, for example, and prepare accordingly.

#8: Repeat Audience Questions
- This is one that I learned in a Dale Carnegie public speaking course. Repeating an audience member's question out loud to the entire group is a great way to stay connected with the audience. In addition, this technique allows the speaker to rephrase the question if it is "harsh" or difficult to understand while also maintaining control of the presentation.

#7: Control Your Body!
- Be aware of how your body moves throughout the presentation. Body movements can both help you present your message (good use of hands, eye contact, body position) or distract your audience (pacing, fidgeting, etc.).

#6: Don't Say You Know if You Don't
- It is always better to defer a question if you don't know the answer than to "guess." It might be appropriate to say "Thanks for your question. I'm really not sure what the answer is but would be happy to research it and get back with you after the presentation."

#5: Don't Keep Going if People Don't Understand
- As much as you might like to stick with a scheduled agenda, it is usually better to **NOT** move forward in your presentation if people have questions. Consider how you might evaluate how the audience is "keeping up" throughout the presentation and adjust accordingly.

#4: Find a Way to Interact
- The most powerful presentations include interaction between the audience and the speaker. Consider being explicit with your audience at the beginning of the presentation (what do you want from them?) and using brainstorming, polling or "raising of hands" to keep people engaged.

#3: Repeat the Key Message
- People will only remember a portion of what you present. For this reason, it is important to repeat your desired key message(s) throughout the presentation. I will often do a summary of the key message(s) at the end of the presentation and list them on a hand-out if practical.

#2: Find a Connection with Your Audience
- Finding connections with your audience BEFORE your presentation is like the difference between doing a "cold call" and a call to a friend. Consider ways to build connections through facility walk-throughs or informal discussions with upcoming audience members. This will not only enable you to use more tailored/personalized examples in your presentation, but will also help you to be less nervous when presenting.

#1: Be Flexible / Stuff Happens
- Things never go exactly as planned so be open to flexibility within the framework of your agenda. For this reason, I always try to state the primary and secondary objectives at the beginning of a presentation and then remind people if things get off track. Sometimes things need to go a "round-about" way to get to where you want to go.

Thoughts (Repeated from Part I of this topic):

- There are numerous books, articles, classes and organizations centered around effective speaking. I think, however, that the biggest challenge isn't understanding WHAT to do but, rather, getting solid experience doing presentations. I would recommend finding opportunities to practice presenting in your professional and personal lives whenever possible.
- Consider how you might get feedback from your audience on how your presentation went. I regularly have people fill out feedback forms after public speaking engagements. I would be happy to share the form as interested.
- If you are interested in learning more about public speeches that Epicenter has completed, you can click on the Speaker Services link here.

Next Steps

If you would like more information on this topic or other similar types of tools, please contact Bill Proctor with your request at wproctor@epicentergroup.com or 216-702-0952. You can also find previous issues of EPICentral at Newsletters.

Mr. Proctor also speaks on a variety of problem-solving and system design topics that can help companies significantly increase the success and profitability of their businesses. If you are interested in having Bill speak at one of your upcoming meetings/events or would like more information on any of the speaking topics, please visit Speaker Services or you can email sales@epicentergroup.com.

Epicenter Development Group is a unique consulting firm that seamlessly integrates the disciplines of Systems Engineering and Organizational Analysis & Development to create practical design solutions to your toughest challenges. It is on the cutting edge of problem-solving solutions and the creator of a unique process called GreenRoom Engineering. This process adds greater value and cost savings for clients as compared to traditional engineering methods.

William Proctor, Epicenter's founder and president, has provided services around the country to more than 100 companies consisting of a variety of organizations; and Epicenter continues to grow as a resource for firms of all sizes.

To learn more about Epicenter Development Group, visit our website:

www.epicentergroup.com

Epicenter News

We are excited to be starting a project with a new client (AGC) in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

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