

*Moving people  
with a great  
presentation*



***POWER***  
***YOUR***  
***POINT***

MARKUS GASSER

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## This book has been written for everyone who communicates.

*Do you create printed or online documents and give presentations? Then read on. I would like to give you some insights and methods from people who made an impact. To improve presentations, business-meetings, conferences, websites and printed communication.*

*It is my goal to make presentations shorter, more relevant for the audience and – yes – more entertaining. People shouldn't have to 'sit through' a presentation. They should be looking forward to it, because they know that they will hear something that is relevant to them and maybe even be inspired for their own lives. Imagine a world where business presentations and congresses were like that. Utopian? Not at all. Just watch some of the presentations on TED.com. So let's see what you could do to make your presentation like one of those good ones. Let's travel back some 2000 years and learn from the old masters of rhetoric how to make an impression and how to move people.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Markus Gasser*

# We all thirst for knowledge, but we are drowning in information.

*Throughout the day, every day, we are confronted with so much information that it is impossible to focus our attention to all different ways of communication around us. As a consequence we try to avoid taking in useless information. Unfortunately, most presentations are overloaded with data and as a consequence people switch off and stop listening. Your presentation should not fall into this category.*

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# ***WHY MANY PRESENTATIONS FAIL...***

*AND HOW TO FIX IT*

## ***Don't let your presentation be one of those:***

*Let's begin with two typical presentation-situations all of us have experienced far too often in their business lives.*

### **Creating slides the typical way**

*You are sitting in front of your computer in order to create a presentation. You have collected a lot of material: written material, figures, diagrams and maybe some tables. You fire up Powerpoint or some other presentation software and start typing... After a while, you start to move the text back and forth, you create and erase slides. You put pictures and other elements randomly into the layout and try to make it look good somehow. And you cannot be sure how people will react to your presentation or if they will react at all. Stop! Don't do it again! It will only lead to many hours of futile work, frustration and a questionable result. Powerful presentations are not created this way.*

### **Sitting in the audience of a typical presentation**

*It is 11:30 a.m. You are sitting in a dimmed conference room. You are listening to the 3rd presentation in a row and there will be four more that day. It is hard for you to concentrate and to take in all that information. Most speeches follow the same pattern: 'Today I will talk about 1., 2., 3., 4,... This is 1., 2., 3., 4.... Today we talked about 1., 2., 3., 4,...'. You cannot wait for lunchtime and to make time pass more quickly you start to type some emails or texts on your smartphone ...*

Many people think of themselves not as talented presenters. They are scared to speak in front of an audience and they see presentations as a painful and time consuming task that somehow comes with the duties of their job. You know what? I think, that this is not true. Most people have just never learned how to create a speech. It would be the same if I had to drive a car without having a driver's license. I probably would

think that I simply could not do it, but all it would need was some driving lessons. I would learn how to start up the engine, switch gears, drive, understand the traffic-regulations and how to park. And after some practice, I wouldn't ask myself anymore, whether I was a talented driver or not. I would just drive my car. It would have become a normal part of my life. I am convinced that with presentations it is just the same. Not that everybody could be a high-class presenter. Well, not everybody can drive a car in a race. But just as a car can be a useful and important part of one's everyday-life a presentation should also be a useful and important part of one's business-life.

In this book I want to provide you with you some powerful, simple and proven methods you can use to create a presentation that makes an impact in a reasonable amount of time.

You will learn how to structure a presentation from scratch, how to relate your topic to the interests of your audience. You will discover secrets from the greatest masters of speech throughout history and you will learn how to apply simple and functional principles to your communication.

***Let's begin by analysing why most presentations fail and what you can do to adapt your presentation to your audience's needs and wishes.***

There is one thing that all boring and time-consuming presentations have in common: they are not about the audience. They are full of features of a product, technical details or innumerable tables and numbers. Don't get me wrong. I know that sometimes it is appropriate to communicate details and numbers. But it depends on the context and structure whether these are informative and relevant to people or just make them stop listening to you.

It simply doesn't work, because we are not 'empty vessels', waiting to be filled with information. Our heads are usually filled with worries, things urgently waiting on our desk and a full calendar. No one is waiting for more information. We all block off information as soon as it seems useless to us. People stop listening and either let their thoughts wander or they start texting or surfing the internet. Don't waste their time!

Almost every subject can be presented in an interesting and entertaining manner. Even dry facts like figures and statistics can be (and should be) interesting for the audience. Most people just haven't learned how to convey information in an intelligible and simple way. That's why so many presentations offer far too many details and therefore start to get demanding and boring for the audience. But there is a way to fix this problem: do not start your presentation with your topic, start by reflecting your audience.

### **It's all about the audience**

All successful speeches have one thing in common: they are about the audience. They offer interesting and relevant information and cause some form of reaction. They make an impact.

The focus when preparing any presentation should be the audience and not the contents of your topic. It is not about you or your project or your company. A presentation is not about the features of a product or a recital

of facts. If you want to communicate that, you should write an email, have a personal conversation or send out some printed information.

Presentations should give your audience the opportunity to take something away with them. People should find new perspectives and answers in your speech. And they should learn something new and important for their (work-)lives. They might want to invest their time or money. Or maybe they want to take action concerning a certain issue. In any case, they decide on something (often unconsciously) after your presentation: 'Take action?'; 'Change behaviour?'; 'Tell others?'; 'Yes or no?'. Start to think about this decision.

## **The audience's decision**

If you reflect about what you want your audience to decide after your presentation before you write it, it will become quite clear what you have to communicate to them.

*When Steve Jobs presented the iPhone 1, he didn't kill the audience with technical details and features and the like (although there would have been plenty of revolutionary details to tell). His presentation was about owning an iPod, an internet-compatible communicator and a telephone all in one device, and thus not having to carry around several gadgets. He talked about the complicated ways to write and navigate with the other 'so called' (Steve Jobs) smartphones and the simple solution the iPhone offered. It was about music and video. And it also was about how to gain a 1% market-share in the first year. Jobs gave the audience a lot to tell their friends about and, sure enough, most people who watched Jobs' keynote, were not happy with their 'old' smartphones and having to handle several different electronic devices. Jobs didn't say: 'Go out and buy it'. Instead, he gave people*

*‘The goal of this book is to make business-presentations shorter, more relevant for the audience and – yes – also more entertaining.’*

— M. Gasser

Fire up your presentations with a single A4-page that incorporates insights from the areas of rhetorics, brain-science and storytelling: **the ‘Power your Point’-map!**

You will learn step by step how to draft a powerful presentation or any business-communication in a short time – be it just by yourself or as part of a team. In this book you will meet great masters of rhetorics and presentation from all times and you will get many useful insights and immediately applicable tips along the way.