

From the Ballroom and the Boardroom to the Classroom... Presentations in Education

What this whitepaper is not:

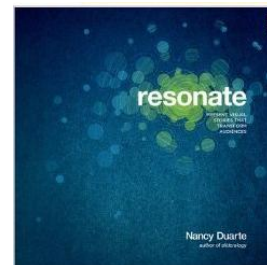
- A formula for creating “sticky” messages and presentations
- A recommendation listing effective physical and vocal techniques of platform delivery
- A “how to” on creating engaging and aesthetic PowerPoint’s to accompany presentations

Everyone can go to any bookstore and find the shelves filled with books promoting the best techniques or programs to use from Making It Stick to Present Like a CEO and How to Wow in PowerPoint. If you truly want to improve all aspects of your presentation skills, many of the books you’ll find contain a treasure trove of information and I recommend reading as many of them as you can. Visit my website www.ppt4teachers.com to find a very complete listing of the latest “cutting edge” books.

What this whitepaper is:

- Information to help recognize, learn and present in the correct presentation type
- Connect correct presentations types / styles with the correct audience type
- A primer resource to improve all presentations types and benefit all audiences

Whenever we think of or use the term presentation, the first thought that generally comes to mind is some type of business presentation. Business and presentations is the natural pairing. Most times, when thinking about the particulars of delivering a presentation, we envision some sort of corporate boardroom meeting, an IPO or Venture Capital meeting with slides, charts and diagrams. For her book Resonate, Nancy Duarte, the CEO of Duarte Design even developed a visual entitled the “Presentation Landscape”. The premise of the



Business / Education Presentation Landscape

<u>Presentation</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Importance Rank</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Formal</u>
	Keynote Address	1.	Conference Keynoting	
	Visionary Statement	2.	Professional Conference breakout sessions	
	Board Meeting	3.	Professional development in-services	
	Product Launch	4.	Open Houses	
	PO	5.	School / Class assemblies	
	Sales Presentation	6.	Social / Community Organization presentations: Knights of Columbus, Sertoma, Rotary, etc	
	VC Funding	7.	Town meetings: budget proposals, building plans, calendar changes	
	Analyst Presentation w/ Exec Summary	8.	SIC (School Improvement Council) / PTA meetings	
	Research w/ Exec Summary	9.	School Board meetings	
	Execution Presentation	10.	Professional / Business organization presentations: Oconee Alliance, etc.	
	Corporate Overview	11.	Administrative meetings (county/district or individual schools)	
	Lecture	12.	Faculty meetings	
	Earnings Report	13.	Classroom instruction	
	Execution Plans	14.	Small Group Tutoring	
	Staff Meeting	15.	Individual Tutoring	
<u>Slideument</u>	Reports Strategy	16.	Report	<u>Informal</u>

visual is to couple the degree of presentation importance and formality to various types of presentations with the type of document (and with amount of text content) that supports the presentation. The results of this “Presentation Landscape” also included to what type of audience the presentations were delivered. I believe that Education also has its own “Presentation Landscape” that parallels the visual Nancy Duarte designed. But, where do we start to be able to effectively present in our landscape?

We have to admit that many educators have either never had or have had a limited amount of opportunities to deliver different types of presentations to different audiences. Even though all presentations contain the same basic elements and are built via message development, platform delivery and supporting technology- presentations in the Educational Presentation Landscape are not the same. When educators present to fellow educators, many can relate to their fellow educators but still have a tendency to build and deliver their presentations as if they are back in the classroom with students as their audience. Many educators also have the tendency to present based on what they have experienced, the way they prefer to deliver information or the way they have provided instruction when they were in the classroom. In most instances, we present the way we teach.



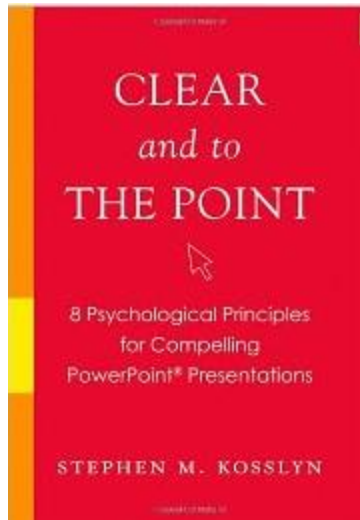
However, not all education presentations are classroom presentations or presentations to peers. Now, when educators present outside the classroom or to people / organizations outside of education, many still use the same “teaching” presentation style and presentation type. This can create a “disconnect” between presenter and audience, which ultimately causes the audience NOT to receive the needed message. How can we correct this problem? Educators need to be able to design / deliver varied types of presentations and tailor each to meet the needs / expectations of every audience.

To accomplish this, educators need to be open to new concepts and learn new techniques that work in the business sector concerning presentations. We also need answers to several basic questions. First, we need to know what the official description of a “presentation.” Presentations are different than public speaking and are given to influence or initiate some call to action. Presentations make use of a wide range of techniques that include demonstrations, interactive audience participation, humor, storytelling, drama and entertainment. We as educators also need to understand that “presentations” are a tool used successfully in the business sector. This “tool” fulfills the following concepts:

- “Presentations” are essentially selling. This can be a product, a service, or an idea. We as educators are sales people. We sell content, knowledge and skills sets. A good salesman doesn’t sell; he makes you want to buy. Educators need to be sales people.
- “Presentations” are really exercises in persuasion. Persuasion: taking the audience from where they are at the start of the presentation and move them to your objective.
- “Presentations” are successful when emotion overrules logic alone.

If “selling” or persuasion is the final call to action or goal we want form our audiences, what are the additional goals in a presentation that will help achieve our final result? According to expert Stephen

Kosslyn in his book Clear and To the Point, all support elements (PowerPoint) presentations and their ultimate success, have their foundation in addressing eight psychological principles grouped in three goals. **GOAL #1: Connect with your audience.** No matter how “good” the message is, if there is a



“disconnect” between the presenter and the audience, the message will never be received. You’ll communicate effectively when you focus the audience’s attention and interest on a specific message. Remember to speak to your audience, not at them. Within GOAL #1, we find two principles. *Principle #1: The Principle of Relevance* which stresses that communication is most effective when neither too little nor too much information is presented. A presentation must be built from the beginning on your “take away” message. Every element should be relevant to what you want the audience to know and believe at the end of the presentation. The audience only needs to be told what they need to know to get your message. *Principle #2: The Principle of Appropriate Knowledge* states that communication requires prior knowledge of relevant concepts, jargon and symbols. To communicate effectively, your presentation must be pitched at the right level for the audience

you wish to reach. Consider three factors. 1) Make the pitch in terms with what the audience already knows. Think about the sophistication and complexity of vocabulary and grammar. 2) Use familiar visuals in regards to graphs, charts and diagrams, not some format that’s foreign. 3) Finally, the specific concepts and information you use. If you assume the audience members know more than they actually do, you will not connect with them.

GOAL #2: Direct and hold attention. If your audience doesn’t focus on the visuals that provide support for your message, chances are they may receive the wrong message, parts of a message or no message. We need to present material in such a way that leads the audience through it step by step, and not resulting in the audience getting lost, confused or overwhelmed. In order for your PowerPoint presentation to communicate effectively, it must hold your audience’s attention effectively. Goal #2 contains three principles that will assist in audience attention / focus. *Principle #3: The Principle of Salience* directs that attention is drawn to large perceptible differences. Our brains detect differences. We can’t help being drawn to large differences in perceptible qualities. These could be size, color, or movement. Salient elements are those clearly different from other elements on a slide. These differences hijack an audience’s attention. This principle also leads us to prioritize different aspects of the message, highlighting what is most important at any given moment in time. *Principle #4: The Principle of Discriminability* promotes that two properties must be differ by a large enough proportion or they will not be distinguished. Discriminability occurs when we can tell two things apart; where salience occurs when the differences are so large that attention is involuntarily grabbed by the stand-out object or event. If a change is so small that it can’t be seen, there might as well be none. *Principle #5: The Principle of Perceptual Organization* states that people group elements into units, which they then attend to and remember. You can direct the audience’s attention by how you arrange material on the slide. Your audience will view individual elements of a slide as a group. An example: one fish among

many or a school of fish. Learning aspects of Gestalt Theories of Visual Communication will help in the design of your slides.

GOAL #3: Promote understanding and memory. GOAL #3 contains the last three principles.

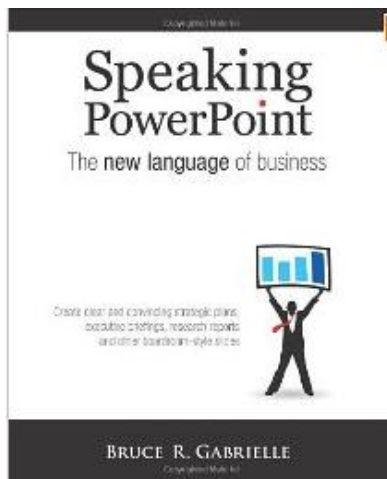
Principle # 6: The Principle of Compatibility states a message is easiest to understand if its form is compatible with its meaning. Our brain makes a direct connection between the properties of what we see and hear and the message. Audience's become confused when what they see and hear is opposite of the message. This is when conflict is created and audiences become disengaged. *Principle #7: The Principle of Informative Change* tells us that people expect changes in properties to carry information. Two factors are included in this principle. 1) Focus on when a change is seen or heard because then the audience expects they mean something. This is why when designing PowerPoint's; eliminate decorations or interesting visual changes that are there just to make the presentation more attractive. If words, shapes and effects don't convey information, they distract. 2) Every change in meaning should be reflected with a change in appearance. What they see / hear is what they get; and what you want to get should be signaled by something you show (or say). *Principle #8: The Principle of Capacity Limitations* underscores the concept that people have a limited capacity to retain and to process information, and so will not understand a message if too much information must be retained or processed. In most instances, audiences will give up if they have to work too hard to decode or understand a presentation. This principle can be broken into two parts: at best, audiences can only hold in mind four groups of information at once. 2) Effort is required to search for information or mentally transform information. Make sure the audience doesn't have to search a slide to discover what you are talking about or think too hard about the message.

As a primer, when you design your presentations, remember the following:

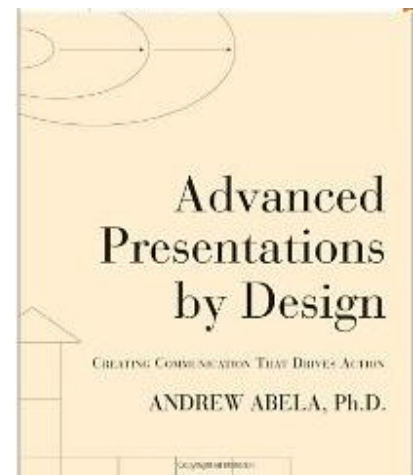
- Match your presentation to your audience, in regards to type, knowledge base, demographics and psychographics
- Good presenters are made.
- Building a presentation is a creative process; that means starting with the right brain.
- Presentations need to be visual. Because of their upbringing (television, video games, movies, etc.), most people under 35 are visual learners.
- Presentations and Presentation Skills are universally adaptable to almost every circumstance in which you speak and someone listens.
- Design your presentation in reverse. Establish what you want your audience to do at the end of your presentation and design all presentation elements to achieve that goal. Eliminate everything that doesn't drive your presentation to the established call to action.
- Stories and acting are essential in business presentations to insure message delivery. Use imagery to support them.
- Humor (some) is essential in establishing audience rapport.
- Capitalize on visual design techniques like Image Superiority Effect, Gestalt Theories of Visual Communication and the Psychology of Color
- In PowerPoint, have one point per slide

- Depending on the type of presentation and audience, remember, text should be limited.
- Take text (bullet points) and design as “Infographics.”
- Remember, if all anyone needs is a copy of your presentation (handouts with PowerPoint), they don’t need you.

Up to now, we’ve addressed what presentations are and the psychology behind them. In order to match our presentation to our audience, we have to develop and deliver the appropriate presentation and we need to ask the question, “What are the various types of presentations”? The answer to this question really depends on who you ask. Expert Dr. Andrew Abela cites the two main



types as **Ballroom** (A ballroom presentation is a presentation for an audience of 100 or more with audiences having the potential for varied demographics) and **Boardroom** (or Conference room presentations are presentations with smaller groups and have the potential to have similar demographics). Boardroom presentations are broken down into sub groups by expert Bruce Gabrielle based on the PowerPoint slide deck that accompanies them into;



BRIEFING (presented by a speaker in front of a large, mainly non-interactive audience), **DISCUSSION** (intended for group meetings where slides may be projected, printed as handouts or viewed remotely on a computer screen) and **READING** decks (intended for standalone reading, usually reports). In addition to those, other types of presentations that are delivered are Kiosk presentations which are used for selling / marketing purposes and Pecha Kucha, which is a style of presentation delivery based on time and number of slides.



To start, let’s concentrate on “**Ballroom and Boardroom**” presentations found in the Landscape Chart. One element that defines the differences between types of presentations is based on the motivation level of the audience. Ballroom presentations usually have an audience that have lesser motivation for physical and mental attendance, and therefore have the higher need of imagery, infographics, humor, storytelling and entertainment to keep connected to the presentation and the presenter. If text is used in a Ballroom presentation, chances are the presenter turns the text into a

graphic by using limited words or uses word art. You’ll notice that the PowerPoint’s that accompany a Ballroom presentation reflect these concepts.

In the case of Boardroom presentations, audiences tend to be more or highly motivated to attend, read text dense slides / handouts and participate in the presentation. These “high text” slides are referred to by expert Garr Reynolds as slideuments (in reality, a document on a slide). Bullet points are appropriate in a Boardroom presentation, but even in a Boardroom presentation, text needs to be delivered better than in all bullet point format.



Expert Bruce Gabrielle designs his **BRIEFING DECK** slides using the following techniques:

- use slides when presenting,
- does not combine extensive text and pictures on a slide,
- uses bullet points separated by whitespace to add drama (but NO sub bullet points),
- uses concise or full sentences (similar to a newspaper headline),
- syncs the presenters keywords with bullet points,
- limits BULLET points on a slide to 3 or 4,
- uses short 2 – 3 word phrases as visual cues,
- when presenting extensive text with a picture, separates the text and the picture on two separate slides.
- uses no text animation.

For **DISCUSSION DECKS and handouts**;

- gives the audience handouts
- use slides with pictures and text,
- limit your slide to 3 – 4 bullet points,
- uses concise or full sentences (similar to a newspaper headline),
- syncs the presenters keywords with bullet points,
- limits BULLET points on a slide to 3 or 4,
- uses short 2 – 3 word phrases as visual cues.

For a **READING DECK**;

- writes bullet points as full sentences,
- uses the law of chunking – 3 – 4 bullets, whitespace and labels,
- considers using shapes or icons instead of bullet points,
- uses **selective reading blocks** (also called structured writing; replaces the paragraph with the information block which makes it easier to skim and locate information versus a typical text document),

- uses category labels for reference documents; summary labels to surface your line of reasoning ,
- uses large label fonts to encourage skimming, small label fonts to encourage reading,
- considers different strategies to manage excessive body text.

When using the **SELECTIVE READING BLOCK**, use the following principles:

- Full sentences. Develop your thinking and communicate clearly using full sentences.
- Limited. Write in 3 – 4 selective reading blocks per slide, the limits of the working memory.
- Visually distinct. Use whitespace or borders to visually separate each chunk of information.
- Labels. Use brief and meaningful labels to introduce and summarize each selective reading block.

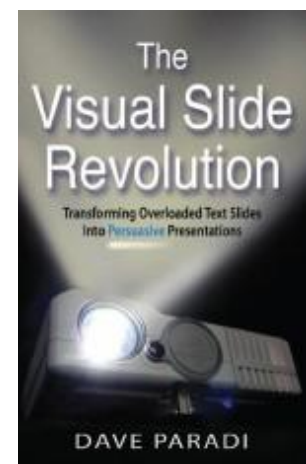
Mission & Vision		
Our Vision of a PC on every desktop is driving our 3 year goals and roadmap		
Vision		
by RTM:		
Copenhagen v3 will be the Social Hub on the web and for the single destination for consumer and user services.		
Business Goals		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build loyal customer base • Increase relevance of online service offerings 		
Copenhagen v3 will let people around the world:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try and buy Copenhagen and other services via tokens/subscriptions • Locate and connect with long lost friends • Anywhere access with any OS (Windows, Mac, Unix) • Connect and share with others while having fun at the same time while using the web and online • Access games, entertainment and social activities • Maintain their single online social identity 		
Roadmap		
2011 – v3. 3 begins	2012 – v3. 4	2013 – RTM
Q1 - ABCv: Canada launch -DEF: Russian, Polish, Korean, Chinese, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese	Q1 - RTM again beta 2, AgX beta 2	
Q2 - ABCv: India and Mexico launch -DEF: Nordic Languages, Czech, Turkish, Greek	Q2/Q3 - -OXOG and BLLP merge into a single site -BLLP services available in all 18 AgX languages (38 countries where a fine is charged)	- OGOG, RTM, BLLP and ABCv3 is a single site. -RTM online services available in all 38 RTM languages
Q3 - DEF: Slavic Languages Q4 - v3 begins AgX Beta 1, more languages	-VPBx (RTM) Rollout in Botswana	-VPGX (Ballyr) Rollout in Madagascar
2011 Goals	2012 Goals	Longer-Term Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 700 gross adds • 50% VOV unique visit increase • 50% VOV page view increase • 50% OxenRo Net Promoter score • 5K web designers, developers or elbows developers listed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trillions of gross adds • continued progress in engaging developers for web sites and online fun and games • Improved NPS + 45 • Increase in unique visits and page views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60344 AgX/DEF registered users by FY 17 • substantial trial and closed performance issues assessed

In the great debate concerning the use of text, many have suggested that by eliminating text, we solve the problem. There is a role for both text and images on a slide. In an effort to create a “visual slide”, expert David Paradi defines a visual slide as follows, “A visual slide is not the absence of text – it is the presence of a visual that encourages a conversation with an audience”. To design visual slides according to Paradi’s method, we follow cited research and rationales found in his book, The Visual Slide Revolution. The first three principles for designing visuals come from Professor Richard E. Mayer’s book Multimedia Learning.

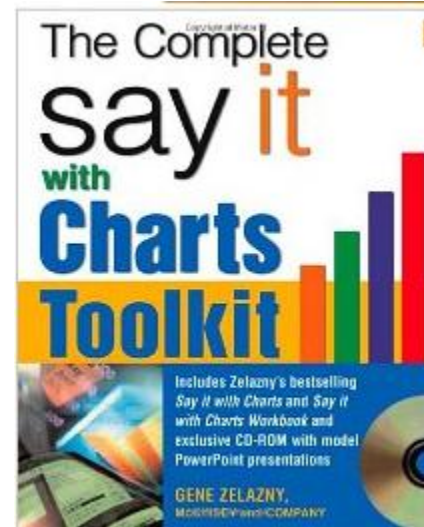
1) *The Multimedia Principle*: audience members understand better when both words and corresponding pictures are used rather than words alone.

2 / 3) *Modality & Redundancy Principles*: Audiences understand better

when our words are spoken rather than displayed as text for them to read. Paradi’s next cited research comes from Professor Allan Paivio’s *Dual-Coding Theory of Cognition* which states that information is processed in two distinct channels in the human brain; one deals with visual information and one handles verbal information. The brain codes each type of information differently and we comprehend it best when the visual and verbal information is consistent with each other. Applying Paivio’s theory to business presentations we recognize that a well-designed, clear visual that is explained verbally will result in the best understanding by the audience. Confusing visuals or reading that that is displayed will cause overload in one of the channels and leads to poorer results for the presentation. Paivio’s work supports the idea that visuals, properly used in a presentation, lead to more successful outcomes for presentations.



In an effort to limit the amount of text found on a slide, Paradi recommends the following five step method: 1) have one key point per slide, 2) look at the words that suggest a visual, 3) make certain the visual is in context for the audience so they will be able to relate to the visual and become engaged with the message, 4) make sure the point is crystal clear, and 5) keep the focus of the audience where you want it to be. By following these five concepts, it becomes much easier to design slides that are visual and not just “text slides” containing bullet points. In addition to images, visual slides can consist of autosshapes, charts, graphs, diagrams and other types of infographics. Expert Gene Zelazny recommends using a variety of charts to create visuals that will turn text slides into visuals and “speed up” the understanding of information. According to Zelazny, there are five different types of charts (pie, bar, column, line and dot) and five different types of comparisons (component, item, time series, frequency distribution and correlation). Combining chart types with comparison types offers a wide variety of options for eliminating bullet points. When the need arises, to pump new life into tired charts, diagrams and tables, learn to harness and develop your creativity with new designs. Creativity will refocus and keep your audience’s attention.



In education, I believe that there is a third type of presentation that should be considered and added to the Ballroom / Boardroom combination. Simply and obviously put, this would be a “**Classroom**” presentation. As silly as it sounds, many teachers provide instruction to students in the classroom but don’t approach its delivery as a presentation. In the classroom, we not only have to incorporate Ballroom techniques to insure audience / student attention, we also have to present text information using techniques found in Boardroom

presentations. In order to turn presenting information or a “lesson” into a learning event, not only can we vary the methods of delivering the information; incorporating images, color, typography, data, animations and video, the presentation of information doesn’t have to be in a linear format, one slide after another. By incorporating techniques used by Relational Presentation expert Robert Lane, educators can simulate the delivery process of business presentations and have any information they want at their fingertips, virtually at any time, by creating a network of presentations. After creating a variety of PowerPoint presentations and custom shows, information can be presented in a non-linear format by creating menu slides and using hyperlinks to access the shows / information they need. All it takes is time and desire.



In conclusion, to be successful in improving the quality of presentations, from the teachers in the classroom to the administrators in the district office and beyond, educators will need to adopt the following mindsets:

- Ultimately, all presentations are about persuasion and selling
- Educators are sales people
- Relate to your audience
- Match the presentation to the audience
- Presentations are “right brain” activities; think like a designer and be creative
- Create visual slides that inspire a conversation with an audience
- Use text appropriately / repurpose bullet points to foster understanding
- Incorporate storytelling and humor

To become consistently successful presenters, all educators must become masters of Ballroom, Boardroom and Classroom Presentations. By following the precepts found in this whitepaper, you’ll well be on the way to designing and delivering your... **“Presentations That Sing.”**

For further information concerning concepts discussed in this white paper, refer to the following resources:

Slide:ology by Nancy Duarte

Resonate by Nancy Duarte

Presentation Zen by Garr Reynolds

Presentation Design Zen by Garr Reynolds

Speaking PowerPoint by Bruce Gabrielle

Advanced Presentations by Design by Dr. Andrew Abela

Say It With Charts by Gene Zelazny

Relational Presentations by Robert Lane

The Visual Slide Revolution by David Paradi