

The Power-of-Three Method

How to use the *Power of Three*[™] technique
to become a better “communicator”
and to reduce the time to success.

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Release 4.0

May 2003

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Introduction

Communication is easy. You just start talking to someone. Even two-year olds can do it. Right? Wrong, of course! Communication, specifically giving a speech or presentation - let alone delivering a great speech - is extremely difficult. Some people just have that talent; and you will never be as good as they are. Right? Wrong again, I'm afraid.

Communication is a skill like many others. And preparing and giving presentations is a fantastic tool to improve our overall communication skills. The basic premise of this booklet is that any "communication session" in business life, be it a first contact phone call, a contract negotiation or an actual business presentation in front of an audience can benefit from the use of a number of basic tools outlined in this booklet. I believe that there is no magic behind a great communicator or a great presentation: It comes down to experience and the proper use of the tools at hand. After all, we were not born with an innate ability to eat with a spoon, tie our shoelaces, read, ride our bikes or operate our computer keyboards. The first time we tried, we did not do very well. But did we give up in early child hood when we had egg on our faces for the first time? Or when we fell off ours bikes? Or did we keep trying until we had an intuitive grasp of the skill? Get the point? If you think that I am on to something here, read on. Giving you a method to improve your public speaking skills is what this book is all about. The method is called Power-of-Three and it is based on my real-life experience as a teacher, writer and public speaker.

Selling and marketing complex products requires a huge amount of inter-personal communication: Phone calls, meetings, memos, discussions, presentations, speeches, and negotiations. Unfortunately, most of us have never have had a formal education in rhetoric concepts, communication or speech writing. So the fact is, most of the 100's of millions of phone calls made, meetings held, memos written, discussions organized, presentations given, and speeches delivered every year are not very efficient and also, for the most part, they are really, really boring. The exciting part, at least in our jobs, is getting to the contract negotiation stage. Let's talk about money here! How big is your budget? When can we start the project? Speeding up the time to negotiation, and therefore the time to money, by cutting through the clutter of useless and redundant communication is what the Power-of-Three is all about.

This booklet is intended for sales and marketing professionals. It is based on my 20-year experience in selling, marketing and managing in the global software and services industry, almost 8 of them with high-tech companies in the Silicon Valley. It summarizes the knowledge obtained in hundreds of sales calls, sales training sessions given, and key-note presentations held, as well as from the dozens of communication classes I have attended. Over the years, I have also read a very large number of books covering topics such as sales methodology, High-Tech marketing, technology adoption cycles, creative writing and speaking. I have not included the complete list of books I have read, but I will mention some key books that you simply **HAVE TO READ**, if you want to improve your communication skills in sales and marketing.

Caution: *This is not a sales methodology a la Miller-Heymann or Strategic Value Selling. It is simply a collection of tips and tricks that I believe can be useful in your daily practice of communication.*

This booklet provides an overview of how to make best use of your time, and of that of your clients in sales meetings, presentations, seminars and other opportunities to communicate the value proposition of your company.

Please take the time to review this material. It will save you several weeks of reading other books, which are extremely repetitive anyway. Nothing in this book should come as a surprise to you, you are probably using most of the described techniques already, albeit intuitively. After all, good communication is just based on common sense. So if anything in this book does not appeal to your common sense, feel free to substitute your own style, and your own examples.

Good Luck. Success. And fun.
Give me feedback. I would love to hear from you

Kind Regards

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May 2003

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Recommended Reading

Out of the books I have read, I highly recommend the following selection. You don't have to read these books in order to understand the Power-Of-Three. This list is intended to give you an overview of where the ideas in this book are coming from.

Title	Author	Content
Crossing the Chasm Marketing and Selling High-Tech Products to Mainstream Customers	Geoffrey A. Moore and Regis McKenna	The classic. This book describes the definitive methodology for defining a high technology marketing strategy. A bible in the industry. If you don't know this book you are simply not informed. Any other books by Geoffrey Moore are good too, but highly repetitive of the main themes discussed here.
Marketing Warfare	Al Ries and Jack Trout.	Another classic. If you want to understand marketing, read this book. It gives examples on how to develop a marketing strategy. Since you have to employ marketing techniques in every customer situation, this will give you a good approach on how to structure your approach. Jack Trout has also written "the power of simplicity" which has been very inspirational to me.
Enterprise One to One Tools for competing in the Interactive Age	Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, PH.D	A great book. It describes the challenges every one of your customers and prospects has in moving into the interactive age. It is these challenges that drive new technology adoption, creating the market for our products and services.

Getting Started

In this section you will find explanations for some basic concepts you will need to succeed. One of the more important concepts in speech development is the composition of the “elevator pitch”. It is always the first thing you should develop, before you begin torturing your keyboard with concepts, facts and phrases. Even before your “cut-and-waste” battle with PowerPoint begins. First you will find the explanation of what an elevator pitch is. Once you have reviewed that, I will give you an overview of the Power-of-Three method, so you can decide if you wish to read on. Before you decide to put this booklet aside, however, take a quick look at the Return-on-Investment section. It might open your eyes about the benefits of delivering better, more powerful speeches and messages in sales and marketing situations. Let’s go.

The Elevator Pitch

Elevator Pitch. You have probably heard this phrase before and have wondered what it is all about. An elevator pitch is the technical term for a situation where you have a maximum of three minutes to get your message across to your audience. You might think that you are not in elevators often enough to make use of this technique. If you study books about speech writing, however, you will quickly find out that you rarely have more than three minutes to get your point made. Even in a 60-minute speech, you have to capture your audience’s attention in less than 3 minutes, and then keep delivering the goods in small chunks. In order to give the people trying to understand your message a fair chance of taking some meaning from what you’re saying. This book is an attempt to describe some of the secrets and tricks power-speakers use to achieve maximum impact in their delivery of content.

Quote: *„Show them the fish, hit them with the fish, show them the fish“*
(unknown)

The above quote is the key thing to remember when writing or delivering presentation or speeches, or even when writing a report, memo or email. You want to follow this simple guideline:

- (A) Tell your audience what you intend to say.
- (B) Deliver the content.
- (C) Summarize your delivery to close the loop.

This three-step approach is the key ingredient to the Power-of-Three approach. Use it. It will help you. Another way of remembering the rule is: (A) Tell them what you are going to tell them, (B) tell them, (C) tell them what you told them.

Here is an example:

„I have been asked to explain the role of a marketing evangelist to you, the sales and marketing professionals at COMPANY (A). (B) The role of an evangelist is to be the best-informed, most exciting communicator in his or her area of focus. Evangelists deliver a message in such a way, that an audience simply can't avoid being "pulled-in", and are hopefully compelled to take action. It sounds simple, but it is not. Being a good evangelist is one of the most demanding jobs in the world. (C) I hope this has given you an overview of this important new function at COMPANY. Now, when you listen to a speech in the future, you should be able to tell the difference between an evangelist, and a person simply holding a speech. Thank you very much.“

When you review the above example, I would like you to take away the following main points:

- I have identified my audience, the sales and marketing professionals at COMPANY. It is important that you decide what audience you want to reach with your message. You cannot be all things to all people. Neither can your message. Focus. Be sharp like a knife in your delivery. Remember: *A knife held sideways does not cut the custard.* All you get is a mess, not a message.
- I have given the audience a method for evaluating the quality of the message. An evangelist is supposed to “pull-in” the audience. If the speaker fails to do that, he is not an evangelist. The message defines itself, becomes recursive and reinforces its content.
- I have given you, the audience, a call to action. Evaluate speeches you hear in the future based on the “Pull-In” principle. Know the difference between delivering a message and reading off power-point slides or reciting some one else's ideas.

Speech preparation template

Print the following table and check off the items during your preparation for speeches and other forms of inter-personal communication:

Question to ask yourself when preparing your speech	Done?
Do I know my audience? What do they care about? What problems do they have? How much time do they have? What do they want to get out of the speech? Who are the decision makers in the audience? Do I have the relevant content?	
How will the audience evaluate the quality of the message? Is there an evaluation form? If there is, have you reviewed it? How will you follow up to ensure the message was understood?	
What is your call to action? Approval of a concept? Obtaining a business card? Learning more about the problems of the customer? Setting the time for the follow up meeting? Closing the deal?	

You will be amazed how a simple tool like the above can help you improve. If you use it, that is.

Power-of-Three

You might have wondered why this book has the title Power-of-Three. Here is why. The number of three is very powerful when it comes to speech making. T.H.R.E.E. is also an acronym for 5 of the most important aspects of a great speech. Every speech should use at least three of these factors. To achieve maximum “punch“, make sure you don’t skip a single one.

T iming	Timing is one of the most important factors in speech making. How often have you heard a joke told badly because the timing was off? Watch your timing. Start on time. Pace yourself. Pause to let the audience digest. Never run over. Always allow time for questions.
H umor	Humor is the factor that draws your audience to you as a human being, as opposed to a speech-making robot. Have a repertoire of relevant anecdotes and politically-correct puns or jokes at your disposal to function as ice-breakers.
R epetition	If you have a main message for your speech, repeat it often. Remember the famous Cato of Rome who drove Rome towards the destruction of Carthage by closing every speech he made at the senate with the line „By the way, I believe Carthage ought to be demolished.“
E xamples	Use examples and comparisons wherever possible. The more complex the topic of the speech is the more simple examples are indispensable. Nothing sells better than an example.
E motion	Get into the topic. Add a personal flavor. Make sure the audience knows that you are passionate about your subject. You are well prepared, and want to leave a lasting impression. If you don’t care about the topic, don’t give the speech and find someone else, who does.

Every good speech I have ever heard, has had at least three of the above concepts covered. Great speakers don’t miss out any one of them. Later chapters will explain and give examples for each of the five ideas in detail.

Three is also a great number when it comes to remembering the most important points to deliver at the various stages of the communication process. For example, here is how you structure your delivery for a sales presentation:

Position yourself:	Build credibility for your personal competence on the subject and your role in the meeting. Establish rapport with the attendees in the room. Tell them who you are and why you are here.
Position the company:	Build credibility and trust for COMPANY, the company you represent. This goal can be best accomplished by examples and case studies relevant to the customer. A customer in banking probably does not care about our success in Health Care, and vice versa.
Position the solution:	Build credibility for your speech by explaining how you intend to identify a solution to a current problem the customer is facing. Give a specific example of how COMPANY has done this in the past. If you don't know the customer's problem yet, identify a plan for finding out more about the customer. Remember: It is the solution to a problem you are selling, not a piece of software or a professional services project.

Sample introduction for a sales call

You can use the following example as a template for developing your script for cold calls, or for first contact meetings with prospects. Feel free to modify this example to your style. Never underestimate the power of preparation. You might think you know your subject. Think again. There is always room for improvement, for more clarity, for more simplicity. Even great actors like Robert DeNiro spend months on preparing for a role. Reading the script alone will not get you the Oscar. Practice. Read the script aloud, play possible responses back in your head. Nobody is good at memorizing by reading, unless they have perfect photographic memory. The best - and scientifically proven - method for memorization is physical activity: by moving your lips, by typing, by writing with a pen. Physically engaging your body helps you learn by stimulating new neural connections in your brain. This does not happen when you simply read. You will understand, but you will not memorize. Moving your eyeballs around is simply not enough. So type, talk, or walk around the block while you are learning your script. Trust me, it really works.

Positioning yourself

„Good _____. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak to you. My name is _____, and I am responsible for _____. I have been with COMPANY for _____, months/years. I have been in the industry for _____, months/years and have developed a special expertise in _____, which has helped me greatly in preparing for this meeting. I will be the host today and I will do my best to make sure we have a productive meeting. _____ will try to address all of your questions at the end of the meeting, or by the end of the week.

Positioning COMPANY

Let me summarize why I believe COMPANY is the right choice for working with you. COMPANY has been in this business for more than 3 decades. We have built an outstanding, blue-chip customer base that have stayed with us for decades. And the simple reason for this commitment from our customers is our commitment to them. We keep producing the most focused and easy-to-use software solutions in the _____ market. Coupled with the services and partnerships they need to become productive in an absolute minimum of time. But we are also constantly building new, innovative products. More than 20% of our revenues are invested back into Research and Development. For example, we are the recognized market leader in _____, as proven by the recent analyst reports by _____ and _____. I have brought you copies of these studies for your review. In addition, our rapidly growing portfolio of solution partners such as _____, _____ and _____ are giving you broad range of options for choosing the right solution, for the right problem at the right time The fact that these companies are teaming up with us should give you some evidence for the strength of our technology, our services, for the strength of COMPANY as leading provider of software solutions and services for mid-size enterprises in the _____ business.

Positioning the solution

So, why are we here today? We would like to get to know you better, and, in that process identify an opportunity for us to work together. We believe we have done our homework in preparing for this visit. For example, we believe, your situation looks very similar to the _____ and _____ accounts in your industry. In these accounts, we have successfully provided new solution in less than _____ months, thereby meeting or exceeding the customer's expectations. We believe there should be a great fit between your business requirements and our ability to deliver solutions on- time and on-budget. My goal is to obtain your trust and your commitment to a first joint project at the end of this meeting. Thank you again for the invitation. I know your time is precious. We will try to return your investment. In this meeting. But also in the relationship we hope to build (expand). I would like to invite the first speaker to the podium please. _____ will give an overview of the information discovery process so far.

How to prepare your slides / foils

Here are some simple rules for setting up presentation foils. Guess what, there are only three rules. I call this the “*short-speech, long-drink*” method.

Rule	Description
One slide for about every 3 minutes of time available.	This includes “dead” slides such as the title and “thank you” slide at the end of the presentation. For a 30-minute presentation, no more than 10 slides. Period. If you exceed this number, and I know you will, you will always be slave to the machine and won’t have time to pull the audience in. Sometimes there will be less time that you expected, or you will be giving someone else’s presentation. In that case, for goodness’ sake, don’t read the slides. Summarize the main points on every slide, and move on. Have the courage to skip.
No more than 3 points on each slide	One key message per slide is perfect, Two points is good, but can be confusing. Three is the maximum anyone can absorb on a slide in the 3 minutes you have before you move on to the next subject. Use the mental knife. Cut. Cut. Cut. Less is more. Trust me.
Three sections to every presentation. Remember THREE ICE cubes for a Long-Drink. (You can treat your customer to one of these after you close the deal.) <i>Note: There are great non-alcoholic long drinks as well.</i>	ICE. Introduction, Content, End. Use a split of 10/80/10 for these parts. Never leave out any one part. In the introduction, set the expectation of what you will say (Show them the fish). THREE. In the Content section, deliver the message with the Power-of-Three. Timing, Humor, Repetition, Emotion and Examples. (Hit them with the fish). Close the presentation properly with a summary of the key take-away points and with a call to action. (Show them the fish)

Power-of-Three ROI Model

In the following two sections, I will drill down into the detailed aspects of the Power-of-Three method. **This is the beef of the book.** I encourage you strongly to use these tips. You can save a lot of time and money. For yourself, for COMPANY, and for your customer, **by minimizing the time you spend to explain our message** to your customers. If you don't believe that being a better speaker can help the company make more profit, just look at the following ROI calculation example.

ROI Calculation of the Power-of-Three Method

Regular Sales Cycle	Briefing cost	Total briefing cost for obtaining project
12 weeks. 1 initial phone-call, 2 follow-up calls to get appointment, 1 initial customer briefing, 2 follow-on briefings, 1 closing briefing for the average project (50,000 Euro) TOTAL: 7 briefings	1000 EURO, the cost of an average person day used up to prepare and deliver a briefing.	7000 EURO (7 x 1000 = 7000 Euro)
Power-of-Three Sales Cycle	Briefing cost	Total briefing cost for obtaining project
Ten weeks. 1 initial phone call, 1 follow-up call to get appointment, 1 initial customer briefing, 1 follow-on briefing, 1 closing briefing for first project. (50,000 Euro) TOTAL: 5 briefings	Same as above, but by delivering a more consistent, more powerful message you have saved two meetings, and also, two weeks in lag time. You are saving time and money.	5000 EURO (5 x 1000 = 5000 Euro) Savings per project: - 2 weeks in time - 2000 Euro

Explanation of the ROI Model

If your unit has to achieve 100 project starts per year (applies to end customer or partner sales force) the following sample ROI calculation applies:

Briefing Cost

Normal Sales Cycle

100 projects x 7000 EURO cost	=	700,000 EURO
100 projects x 50,000 EURO revenue	=	5 Million EURO

Wait time

Normal Sales Cycle

100 projects x 12 weeks wait time	=	1200 working weeks
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Summary:

- 14% percent of the revenue has been spent in briefing cost.
 - Even if you close all 100 deals that year, deals never close in the same quarter that they were initiated.
-

Power-of-Three Sales Cycle Briefing Cost

100 projects x 5000 EURO cost	=	500,000 EURO
100 projects x 50,000 EURO revenue	=	5 Million EURO

Normal Sales Cycle wait time

100 projects x 10 weeks wait time	=	1000 working weeks
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Summary:

- Only 10% percent of the revenue has been spent in briefing cost.
This is a 4% percent profitability increase on the project.
- Deals can close in the same quarter they were started in. The additional 200 virtual working weeks can be used to close an additional 20 deals.
20 x 50,000 Euro = 1 Million EURO additional revenue per year.
This is a 20% percent productivity increase for the team.

By learning and consistently applying the Power-of-Three technique during sales meetings, your team can potentially achieve a:

***4% increase in profitability and
20 % increase in productivity!!***

Power-of Three Components

As mentioned in the first chapter, the Power-Of-Three speech-making and communication method consists of the elements timing, humor, repetition, examples and emotion. In this chapter, you will find a detailed explanation as well as examples for each component.

Timing

„Timing is everything“

The first and most important thing in speeches is timing. It begins with simple things like arriving with plenty of time to prepare and set up for the presentation. You want to check out the room, seating, Audio-Visual arrangements and lighting before the first guests arrive in the room. Request reasonable corrections you feel are important to provide a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere in the room. Here are some other important things to watch out for.

1. **Time overruns of previous speakers.** Be prepared to shorten your presentation by up to 50% if a previous speaker has taken up your time. Don't be stubborn about showing every slide. Don't insist on your time allocation. Work with the host to find an appropriate compromise. The most important thing is that your audience does not get held up longer than they had planned for. Get used to this kind of flexibility, this is the real world.
2. **Unavailability of speakers.** Be prepared to stretch your presentation by up to 50% if the subsequent speaker is delayed or unavailable. Your audience will appreciate if you can fill in for a colleague or bridge the gap between presentations with useful content. Points 1 and 2 combined mean that for a 30 minute presentation you are prepared to give the content of the presentation in 15 or in 45 minutes, depending on your time slot.
3. **Reliability of timing.** If you have 30 minutes allocated, use no more than 25 minutes for the content. Make sure you have at least 5 minutes to close the presentation with a question and answer session. Start on time, and finish on time. This is unbelievably important for leaving the impression that you are taking the agenda seriously. There is nothing worse that a speech that starts late, is longer than anticipated and then leaves no time whatsoever for feedback or questions. Don't do it.
4. **Timing as a rhetoric tool.** Timing can be a powerful tool for delivering content. Think about what message you want to deliver at what time of the presentation. Audiences usually remember the end of a movie, but not the beginning. You might want to save some important messages for the end of the presentation. When telling jokes, timing is of the essence. Watch some of the professionals on television do this. It is often a creative pause, which

makes the point. Example: *“Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to the other side! Why did the chicken cross the play ground? To get to the other slide!”* Imagine these simple kid’s jokes without a 3 second pause between question and answer. See? Use the same technique to deliver content in your presentations. Set up a question. Pause. Deliver the answer. Engage the audience by making a specific stop in the presentation, changing your position on the stage, and beginning again. Take your time. Take into account that you are probably nervous when you are on stage. You will speak more quickly and you will think that more is better. It is not. Deliver a point. (Count 21, 22, 23 in your mind). Continue with the speech. This will do wonders for your delivery style.

5. **Timing of your visuals.** Spend at least 3 Minutes on a visual. You can spend more, but the rule of thumb is to have a maximum of one slide / visual for each 3 minutes of time allocated. Most people think this is not enough and often produce 60 slides for 60 minutes. Remember that this is a speech, not a movie on fast forward. Audiences need to adjust, and take in the content of the slide. If the slide is overloaded with content, the listeners will become readers. And you will fail as a speaker. That is why presentation slides should be visualization aids, not scripts of the presentation. If you need a script, use a script. It gives you something to hold on to and it looks quite professional. Remember though, that the best speakers memorize their content, and do not require visuals at all.

Humor

„You are human“

What is humor? Is it the ability to laugh? Or is it the ability to make others laugh? Why do we laugh in the first place? Laughter is a common thread of human behavior across cultures, nations, social status and professions. The experts differ in their opinions about the origins and purpose of laughter and humor. Just ask 10 people, and you will probably get 11 answers to this question. But one thing seems to be clear: Laughter and use of humor have the capacity to release tension. Some people say that laughter is actually the best way to deal with stress and pressure. And giving a speech puts pressure on the speaker as well as the audience. This tension can actually be used as a tool in the presentation. Let’s look at a typical situation, and record some of the tension points in a table:

Speaker Pressure

Will I be accepted?
 What if I make a mistake?
 My boss is in the audience!
 What if I can't answer the question?

They have probably
 heard this before

I have never done
 this speech before

Audience Pressure

Will I fall asleep?
 What if I don't understand?
 My employee is the speaker!
 What if everyone here thinks
 my question was stupid?

I have heard all this before,
 why am I here?

I have much more urgent things to do!

It might come as a surprise to some of you that there is tension in the audience as well. Now let's take a look how you can use this tension to add some humor to the presentation and relieve the pressure.

Pressure Point

Speaker:
 Will I be accepted?

**Potential to relieve the
 pressure through use of humor**

„My biggest nightmare is that I'm speaking in front of a 100 experts who all know this subject better than I do. And nobody is asking any questions, they just take notes and look somewhere between amused and grim. In the real world, it usually works out well. There are no rooms full of experts, and the experts that are present usually help out with clarifying questions. So when we come to the Q&A section, I count on you experts to chime in with some additional clarifying questions. In other words, you have just been signed up as part of the presentation team, welcome. “

Audience:
 Will I fall asleep?

„Many of you probably see several presentations per week. And you have probably nodded off in some presentations during your career as listener. I know I have. Well, I'll do my best to keep you alert. And in case that is not sufficient, we have also teamed up with a California based start-up company that has installed snore detectors in the auditorium. So if you happen to wake up to the sound of a siren, don't be alarmed, just keep listening to the presentation.“

Speaker:

What if I make a mistake?

“I have a special challenge for you. I have hidden 3 mistakes in this presentation. The person in the audience that identifies all three mistakes wins a big prize. Of course, I’m kidding. But I would really like to hear from you when you think there is something in this show that you disagree with. Maybe it’s a mistake I made, maybe it’s a simple difference of opinion. We’ll discuss it openly, and if we can’t, there are professional boxing referees standing by in the lobby. So feel free to chime in with objections, any time, or hold your questions until the end.”

Let’s stop here with the examples. As you can see, there are ways of identifying the biggest tension points in your speech, and coming up with a little paragraph that addresses that tension with a bit of humor. You don’t have to be funny, just don’t take yourself too seriously with your presentation. There is no room in this booklet to explain all the ways you can use humor to relieve tension. As you begin inserting this important technique into your presentation style, please watch out for these rules.

Rules for using Humor

- Stay close to your personal style, don’t try to use a kind of humor that you would not use normally.
- Keep eye contact with your audience if you can, if they begin feeling uncomfortable with your use of jokes, adjust your style of delivery, or scale back the use of humor.
- Stay away from politically incorrect jokes (no minorities, religions, etc.)
- If you make a joke, and your audience fails to laugh, take it in stride („Oh, well, that one did not work“). Often, that in itself is enough to break the ice.
- Keep on trying over time. Even if it does not seem to work for you in your first 5 - 10 presentations. The more you get used to using humor in presentations, the more at ease you will become, and the better results you will obtain.

Repetition

„Most people don't get it the first time“

If you have something to say, say it. If you decide to say it, make sure the message has been received. Don't get up on the podium without first deciding what the key „take-away“ point of the presentation is going to be. Examples of what you can say to yourself before you begin to speak include:

- Everyone in the audience will have understood that we are the market leader in this space
- Everyone will have understood that I want them to sign up to the early adopter program for X
- Everyone will have understood we have had a change in policy and what the effects of this new policy are.

This is a hard exercise, especially when you have a 60-minute time slot. Repetition is a great tool to make sure your audience gets the point. Here are some specific tips:

Tips for using repetition

1. Use a title and a subtitle of your presentation. The title is often pre-determined by the organization hosting the event, for example: „Solutions for the E-Banking Industry“. This is very generic. You can give the presentation a specific spin by giving it a subtitle, which should relate to the key „take-away“ of your pitch. You could use, for example, „Better return on investment through cutting-edge technology“. Now everyone has seen the key point of the whole presentation at least one time. Make sure they hear about this at every opportunity.
2. Using Definitions. One of the best ways to repeat a message is to use definitions. Here is an example on how you can „hammer in“ the Return on Investment message:

EXAMPLE: „Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this opportunity to speak. I know how busy you all are, and I really appreciate this opportunity to reach you. I will do my best to deliver my speech on time. And I will focus on giving you something for your time invested in coming here to listen to this speech. -PAUSE-- Ah, investment. A key concept these days. Investment Banking, Investor Relationships, Return on Investment. Actually, this brings me to the topic of my presentation, increasing your return on investment. The official title for this slot was „Solutions for the E-Banking Industry“. I thought this was a bit too broad a definition, so I decided to sharpen the focus of the presentation. I will speak about how our customers are getting to their goals more quickly and at reduced cost through the use of cutting edge technology. This process of achieving your goals on time and on money is what is sometimes referred to as “Return on Investment” or (ROI). If you get there, you have great ROI, or more simply, a solution to your problem. In other words, just getting to the goal simply is really not enough. The cost and effort has to be justified. The end only justifies the means, if your expectations are met. And that’s what great success stories are all about. So, Return on Investment, is what I will explore in the remaining 29 minutes of my talk.,,

It might seem to you that the ROI theme was taken over the top in this example. You might think, that it was mentioned too often. But this is what it needs to feel like: To you, it **MUST** seem like you are too simplistic and too repetitive in your talk. Only then you have a chance that your message will be understood.

3. A third key element of repetition is the summary at the beginning of the presentation (show them the fish). For every presentation, no matter if you have 10 minutes or 60 minutes, be sure to deliver a condensed version of your content right after your introduction. This sets the expectations for the audience and makes sure that all attention gets focused on the prepared content. If someone is in the room for the wrong reason, now is their time to leave, or to make peace with the content. If you don't set up your content, there is too big a chance that someone will be disappointed about your talk. In the executive summary, don't give too much detail, just tell the audience how long they will hear about certain aspects. It is also important that you explain your presentation methodology, for example if you will allow questions during the presentation, and if you will use special tools such as video clips. Here is an example of an executive summary. The topic of the talk is about the same subject as in point 2.

EXAMPLE: „Please allow me to give you a brief overview of the content of the presentation. In the first 5 minutes, I will give you an overview of the type of projects we will explore in this talk. We'll hear about a new retail banking solution, a new solution for the back office, and a new solution for internet banking. All of these three solutions have one thing in common: Using cutting-edge technology. Then, I will spend about 20 minutes exploring each of these cases in detail. Where these companies came from, what their criteria were, how long it took to get to the solution and how they measured their success. I will then show a short video of the managers of these projects in which they explain some of the key lessons learnt in the projects. After that, I will attempt to summarize the session and give you an opportunity to ask questions. Without further ado, let's begin with the first section, the project overview“.

I hope you are getting the gist of this technique by reading the above example. Don't be afraid to be blunt and simple in your delivery. You are not being paid for being sophisticated, or for using complicated language. Your job is to get the message across. Using repetition is a great way to get this done.

4. A fourth element of repetition is the summary at the end of each section of the presentation. (Hit them with the fish). This element is similar to point #3 in this section. I mention it here, because it is often forgotten. The key to success here is to make the audience understand that you have just delivered a point. This is just like watching a soccer game. A lot of people just watch the game with half of their attention, sometimes even with the sound turned off. That's what replays are all about. They show you the key scenes again, usually in slow motion and from multiple angles. This is what

modern audiences are used to. Replay, multiple angles, slow motion, close up's and analysis of the situation by an expert. Be aware of this, and your presentation will improve by at least 10% instantaneously. Here is an example of a segment summary:

EXAMPLE: „Now, let's take a quick look at the example we have explored in the past 5 minutes. The key things I remembered when first hearing about this projects were: (1) they started from scratch, (2) they had 6 months to finish the project, (3) the project paid for itself within 6 weeks of production. Now that is what I call great Return on Investment. Let's take a look at the next project and see if it had anything in common with the first example. „

5. The fifth and final element of repetition is the close of the speech (show them the fish). As you might guess, I just want you to make sure you tie up all the loose ends, mention some points you might have forgotten and entice the audience to do precisely what you want them to do next. Here is an example for a close with a specific call to action.

EXAMPLE: „Well, it seems like we have come to the end of the presentation. And, it seems like we have not even run over the allocated time slot. It was my goal, to give you 3 examples of companies that have achieved great return on investment with using cutting edge technology. You have even heard from these companies directly. I hope this should have given you some new thoughts and ideas for your own projects and companies. Now, I'd like to invite your questions and bring your attention to the fact that we have a „meet the experts“ session planned for this evening, where we can go into much more detail. Your questions please, yes, the lady in the 2nd row: Would you please state your name, company and question?“

It is important that you finish your presentation with a proper close that brings the audience back to your original topic, in this case the ROI examples. It is also important, to always let your audience know what you expect them to do next. Here is a list of things you could ask them to do. Please pick at least one of these things, but no more than 2 actions to close your speech.

Calls to Action (Example List)

- Please make sure to fill in the session evaluation forms. This is to ensure we can deliver better the best content, using the best speakers available. It is really important to me. Thanks in advance.
- Please feel free to take a copy of the white paper (presentation copy) we have made available to you at the exit of this room. There is a specific email address included in the white paper that you can use to reach me. I'd really like to hear from you. Thanks and have a great day.
- If this speech got you interested in more information, please make sure you visit one of the other sessions that focus on similar topics. We have made available to you a list of sessions that add more information. Pick up a copy of the list as you exit the room.
- Thanks for listening, I would like to talk to some of you personally today at our booth, at the meet the expert session, at the company dinner, at the coffee stand in hall 3 between 2 and 3, etc.

As you see, it is not that hard to come up with a specific call to action. It is just important that you pick one, and appeal to the audience to do something, as a result of your presentation. If you have a product, a study, a paper that you can give them at the end of the presentation, make sure you don't forget to point that out to your audience.

Examples

„A picture is worth a thousand words“

Everyone will agree that examples are a great way to hammer in a point. Here are some key tips and tricks with regards to examples. When you go about this, don't be afraid to be simple. Use real world examples. Use short sentences. You are working in an industry full of complexity. Set an example with your presentation style and stay away from complicated language. If you use an industry term, make sure to illustrate your meaning with examples.

1. Use of examples to define a concept (show them the fish).
Often, you will be tasked to define a new concept in your speech. For example the use of a new tool. Or a new approach to succeeding with a project. If you have a new concept to define, be sure to choose a real world example to explain the significance of the concept. For example: Using Object Oriented Computing.
EXAMPLE: „Object-oriented computing is the best approach to model the real world. After all, we are all familiar how appliances work. Radios are a good example. Every Radio has at least 3 controls: One for switching the radio on or off. One for choosing the station you want to listen to, and one to control the volume of the music. Those are the most important controls. Each of these controls can be used in a number of different ways. The on button is pushed, the station control is a sliding lever, and the volume

control is a rotating dial. Or any combination of the above. Object Oriented Computing just uses the same way of looking at the world, and provides an approach for writing software that models the real world. An object in software defines the object that should be manipulated, for example a bank account, and then provides the controls and actions through which you can control the object. For example the ways you can open and close an account, how you can go to the various sub-sets of the account such as checking, savings and stock portfolio, and how you can control the amount of money allocated to each one of them. These controls are called interfaces in OO computing. The manipulation of the interfaces is done with so called methods. So if you understand the real world, you already understand the concept of object oriented computing. The rest is a matter of reading the right books, and lots and lots of experience.“

2. Use of examples to prove a point (hit them with the fish)
In many presentations, not only do you have to clearly explain a concept, but you have to prove your point with an example. If you go up on stage and explain that your company is the best in the world, you better be prepared to give some examples of situations where this can be proven. Never put any statement on a slide that cannot be backed up by data. For example: *COMPANY leads the market in mission-critical transaction processing. (CLAIM). No other company has accounts that run software capable of supporting 300 million transactions per day on a single database system, while keeping the system running for years at a time without failure or need to reconfigure the system. That's what I call leadership (PROOF). By the way, this is according to the folks at Chase Manhattan Bank (Source of Proof). Always remember the flow of: CLAIM, PROOF, SOURCE OF PROOF.*

3. Use of examples to re-enforce a message (show them the fish).
Once you have introduced a concept, proved that it works, you need to constantly reinforce the concept or the message. The best way to do this, as you might guess, is through the use of examples. *EXAMPLE: Object-oriented computing is the best thing since sliced bread (CLAIM). At least when it comes to the 24 thousand attendees at Java ONE in San Francisco in June 2000. (PROOF). EXAMPLE: „Object-Oriented Computing can really improve your return on investment. (CLAIM) Just ask the folks at CUSTOMER who saved at least 90% of programming effort by using the key concepts of re-use in their programming project. Instead of writing 100.000 lines of java code by hand, they generated 10.000 lines of PRODUCT, which was easier to maintain and much easier to re-use. (PROOF).“*

Emotion

„You are allowed to have an opinion, as long as you don't insult anyone“
Research on communication effectiveness shows that up to 80% percent of communication is non-verbal. This might seem like an unbelievably high number. For purpose of this section, let's assume this rule is true. Let's drill down on some techniques that focus on the emotional message contained in your presentation. One could call this the BLT model of presentation, with BLT being an abbreviation for being Believable (do you have facts to back up your claims), Likeable (do you get your content across to the audience with a certain charm) and Trusted (do you seem to know what you are talking about.) Here are 10 factors that can help you leverage emotional connection to your audience.

1. Eye Contact

When you speak, one on one, one on many, or many to many as a part of a panel, you need to use eye contact with your audience. When it's you in front of a small audience, engage the people in the room by looking at one person at a time when you make a point. Don't single out a specific person, unless you want to give them a wake-up call. Make sure everyone gets fair treatment in terms of eye contact. When you speak in front of a camera, work with the camera as if it was your favorite employee or colleague. Smile when you deliver the key messages. It will make the listeners feel at ease. If necessary, practice this in front of a mirror. (TIP: if you have camera anxiety, buy yourself a digital camera and record yourself as often as you speak. This will do wonders for your presentation style.) When you are many to many, for example as part of a panel, look at the fellow speakers when it is their turn. Then when it comes to you making your contribution, look at your predecessor, thank them for the contribution and then carry forward a point they have just made by looking at the audience, and begin your contribution: As my esteemed colleague from Company X has just said ...“. When on a well-lit stage in front of 100's or even 1000's of people, fix on an imaginary listener, and speak to them as if you could clearly see them in the audience. This will take away much of the anxiety about not knowing if your audience is listening or busy falling asleep.

2. Facial expressions

When you are on stage, be aware that your facial expressions are what the audience is perceiving first. They might not understand every word you say, especially in a multi-lingual environment, or when you are not speaking in your native language. But they will surely notice if you are neutral, exited, bored or disgusted with a point you are just making. Practice this in front of a mirror or, even better, in front of a camera as often as you can. Emphasize your expressions, show your attitude related to a point. This will take a long time to refine, but it is a key element of every successful speaker. If you like movies, watch movies with monologues, and study

carefully how great actors like Lawrence Olivier, Kenneth Brannagh or Sean Connery are making use of facial expressions to communicate non-verbally.

3. **Body language**

The next thing people perceive is your body language. When seated, lean forward towards the audience when you make a point. Look up into the audience, when you are reading from a script. Don't fold your arms in front of your chest when you are receiving questions. Don't cross your legs when you are sitting down, as this signals insecurity. Don't raise your arms over your head (only men do this) because this is a sign of being defensive. There are lots of great books written about body language. Buy one, read it, use it, expense it.

4. **Use of hands**

There is a whole language for the deaf that is solely based on the use of hands. Great speakers use their hands extensively. Hands don't belong in your pockets. If you don't know what to do with them, hold on to a script written out on half page cardboard pieces. Remember to number your notes, lest they fall out of your hands and get jumbled. Holding on to the notes stack will give your hands something to do. If you want to pick up ideas what to do with your hands during communication, watch a number of Italian movies. In Italy, use of hands is an indispensable tool for communication.

5. **Tone of voice**

In Chinese, there are entire sets of words that differ only in intonation. The word Ma, can mean up to 7 different things based on intonation, pitch, length, etc. The human brain has an amazing ability to listen for tone of voice. With much a higher degree of accuracy than the average lie-detector test. Although most of you will never give a speech in China, tone of voice is essential, nonetheless. Make sure you spend enough time practicing in front of a camera, tape recorder or with a voice coach to find your natural tone of voice. Stay close to your natural tone, use a microphone if your voice does not carry. Even when you speak with a microphone, project your voice as if you are speaking to an audience of 100's. Avoid the drone of radio announcers. You are an evangelist when you are on stage. To pick up ideas, watch some videos about some real evangelists such as Billy Graham. It is amazing what they can accomplish just with tone of voice and intonation alone.

6. Choice of vocabulary

Target your vocabulary to your audience. You can say the same thing in a number of different ways. When speaking to experts, use expert language. But since you can never be sure who in the audience understands your terminology, you are better off with clear and simple words. Here is a list of words and their simple counterparts that can deliver much better „punch“. Here are some examples of concept simplification

Complicated Concept

Paradigm

Architecture

Development Environment

Middleware

Performance

To leverage

Specification

25% percent

Profit

Revenue

Etc.

Simpler Concept

The approach used..

The component and standards used in the system..

Tools used for development

Software used to integrate the system

The response time of the system

To make the best out of ...

The goals and objectives ..

One quarter..

Bottom Line..

Income..

7. Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions are a great way of getting your audiences attention. These questions only work if you give it enough of a pause between the question asked and the „obvious“ answer delivered. Examples of rhetorical question/answer pairs are:

Why are we here today?

We are here because ...

Is this all there is to success?

Of, course not, we ...

So, now we have all the answers, right?

Wrong. We ...

8. Motion on stage

Some speakers think that the safest place on stage is behind a podium. Well, if you hide behind a podium, you might feel safe, but the audience will think that you are insecure. Before you get on stage, make sure you clarify the range of motion you have without running out of the focus of the spotlights. Demand that there be a range of motion for you. You don't need to pace on the stage like a tiger in a cage, but you want to get into the talk, move towards the audience when receiving questions. Change from side to side to point out things on the slide. Never EVER stand with your back to the audience, unless your name is Miles Davis and you are a famous Jazz Musician.

9. Clothing

Becoming a professional speaker includes careful planning of your outfit. Do the research. What is expected? When speaking at the Microsoft TechEd in the US, wear slacks and a polo shirt, like everyone else there. Don't overdress, don't under dress. When unsure, just ask. If you are not dressed for the occasion, it can be a great effect and ice-breaker to make fun of your outfit, though (see use of humor). Take off your jacket, and roll up your sleeves, for example, when you are speaking in front of an informal crowd. *"I guess I could have skipped the suit"* Or, when underdressed, close the top button of your polo shirt and state: *"I guess Microsoft has sold Office to both of our companies, but we have adopted their dress code too soon."* In short, never forget that you have to look good on stage, but not too good. "Just right" is usually the best thing you can hear when you get feedback from the host of the event.

10. I-We-Statements

This is the **most important aspect** of using emotion in a speech. You were selected to speak, because, obviously, you have something to say. The best way to convince your audience that you are well prepared is the use of I-We-statements. Examples:

Neutral tone (not compelling)

Research shows that 50%

The Company has grown 30% ...

XYZ is the best product...

The topic of today's talk is..

I-We-Statement (compelling)

We have done some research, and we have found that 50%..

I find it amazing that we were able to grow 30% ...

We believe that XYZ is the best product because...

I am here to tell you about

Get the point? So will your audience.

Summary

There are 100's of things to watch out for in each presentation. Nobody is born as a great speaker. It takes a lot of work and a lot of courage to embark on this journey. Keep working on it, pick one or 2 things to focus on for each speech and then use every possible opportunity to speak, record yourself and get feedback from professionals as often as possible. Being a speaker is a job that can be learned, and when well done, can be one of the best jobs on the planet.

Mastering the Q&A session

The Q&A Section can be the key to a successful speech. Sometimes, it is the only thing you are doing, for example when you are giving a press interview. The best way to learn how to handle Q&A is to watch as many court room dramas as possible. The way American lawyers seem to be preparing witnesses for trial (at least on television) is brilliant. You can learn a lot from Perry Mason. Here are some more useful hints that might come in handy next time you are doing Q&A:

Situation

Yes or no question.

Way to handle:

Answer with yes or no, and a very brief annotation of your response. Or decline to answer. Don't ramble.

Example: Q: Will you be profitable this quarter? A: This is company confidential information. I'm sorry I have to decline to comment.

Q: Were you profitable last quarter? A: Yes. We delivered Euro 20 million to the bottom line.

Open ended questions.

Deliver a short answer that is to the point. Don't deliver more than is asked for. Example: Q: What is your strategy for the USA? A: We are rapidly building up a direct and indirect sales force that will focus on our new products. We hope to sign up large partners in the next 6 months, while regaining mind share with our installed base through direct marketing campaigns.

Unclear Questions:

Clarify. Don't answer questions you don't understand.

Example: Q: What can you tell me about the IBM Situation? A: Sorry, I don't understand, could you please restate your question?

Audience questions:

Restate the question for the rest of the audience, then answer.

Hostile questions:

Ask the person to state their name and company. This will discourage further hostile questions. Then defer the answer to an expert. Example: Q: Are you not the company that botched the deal at XYZ bank last month? A: I'm not sure I understand what you are referring to Mr. _____. Could you please state your name and company so our PR team can follow up with you after the presentation.

Multi-part questions:	Try to restate the question. Answer one question at a time. Make sure you don't get more multi-part questions: Example: Q: What is your revenue now, how is it split and what does your work force look like? A: Let me take these one at a time. Our revenue is roughly EURO 600 Million for 2001. We obtain roughly a third of our income from licensing, an other third from maintenance fees, and another third from professional services. About 70% of our employees are focused on technology such as developers, consultants and pre-sales engineers.
Stupid questions:	There are no stupid questions, only stupid answers. And you don't deliver those. Feel free to state this when someone says: „This might sound like a stupid question... “. Say: „Actually, I get this question a lot and it just shows how complex this subject can be. Let's explore this in some detail.“ and so on.
Irrelevant Questions:	Defer to after the presentation. Example: Q: What do you think about the political situation in Nicaragua? A: I don't think this question is relevant to the topic at hand. I'd be happy to discuss this with you off-line over a cup of coffee, if there is time.
Repetitive questions:	Don't answer again in detail. Refer to the answer you already gave. Example: Q: What was your revenue last year? A: As stated before, roughly 600 Million Euro.
Tough questions:	If you don't know the answer, admit it. Defer the answer to an expert or to follow up. This is better than a wrong answer. Example: Q: What is the exact component model for the remote data base interface? A: I cannot answer that question, but if you leave me your business card, I'll try to make sure you have an answer in the next 24/48/72 hours.
No questions:	If the audience fails to ask questions, it could be that your talk was brilliant, or too complex to invite any questions. It will be hard to tell which situation applies. But you must do your best to solicit questions. Handle the situation as follows: “Well, there don't seem to be any questions right now. Maybe you will think of something after the presentation. I will be available for further questions at (Hour/location) as well as through email. I hope you found the talk stimulating and interesting and thanks again for your time.”

Q&A Handling Summary

Questions are one of the best ways to know if your message was understood. If the questions relate to things you mentioned in your talk, you failed to deliver the content clearly. Learn from it and sharpen your delivery for the next opportunity. If you get clarifying questions that drill down into the topics you discussed, you succeeded. If you get no questions from the audience, you probably missed a great opportunity. Make sure you solicit questions by stating up front in your introduction how much you depend on the audience to ask questions at the end. If you get questions, answer them clearly and concisely, and with confidence. Don't waffle, don't make up answers, never belittle any question. Every question is another opportunity to deliver your message.

**Don't be afraid to say you don't have the answer,
but ensure proper follow up.**

Some useful quotes

If you want to become an evangelist now, that's okay. We don't have any job openings at this time anyway. However, you will still you need to improve your communications skills on an ongoing basis in this career. All of the tips I gave on the preceding pages can be used in one-one-discussions, chats, briefings and negotiations as well. As a final tip, I recommend to build up a library of quotations. These come in very handy to break the ice, make an introduction. You don't have to have 100's of quotes, jokes, anecdotes etc at your disposal. One or two are usually enough. Everyone needs to develop their own style. I did not write down all the anecdotes and quotes I am using in my daily practice, because they really are tuned to my own style, and I want you to develop your own path. Which quote I use absolutely depends on the situation, the setup, and the mood I'm in. Here are just some examples, so you get the gist of what I mean.

History and Technology quotes

(1) 2000 years ago, steam power was already known in China. But they only used it to raise the throne of the emperor at major celebrations. So, technology alone is not enough. You need an idea, an application. For example using a steam engine to pump water out of coal mines, to drive a train, etc.

(2) 1000 years ago, Mexico understood and made wheels, but since the early Mexicans had no horses, they used wheels just for toys. It didn't even occur to them that they could revolutionize transportation. So much for re-inventing the wheel.

(3) You might wonder what made the automobile such a big success so quickly. The invention of cheap fuel? The availability of well paved streets? Cheap cars? No, I think it was the automatic starter. Before the automatic starter was invented, cars were for rich people who could afford a chauffeur to get out in front of the car in any weather and get the car started. Nobody in their right mind enjoys cranking up a car in pouring rain. The automatic starter made cars easy to use for anyone. This is the power of ease of use.

(4) When the president of the USA at the beginning of the 20th century saw a telephone for the first time he said: “This is a great invention, I can see a time when every town in America has one.”

(5) The future is already here, it is just unevenly distributed (Paul Saffo, Director of the Institute of the future)

(6) The road to HAL is paved with good inventions (Chris Horak) *Note: HAL is the talking seeing computer in the movie 2001, A Space Odyssey by S. Kubrik.*

Chart: Adoption Cycles for technology

#	Invention	Introduction	Productivity	time lag
1	Photography	1782	1838	(56 years)
2	Nukes	1919	1965	(46 years)
3	Pacemaker	1928	1960	(32 years)
4	Antibiotics	1910	1940	(30 years)
5	Internet connection	1969	2000	(31 years)
6	Instant Coffee	1934	1956	(22 years)

Chart: The 5th age of innovation

	Age	Key characteristics	Benefit
1	Agricultural	Feed more people reliably	Higher Survival rate
2	Industrial	Reliable source of income for families	Longer Life span
3	Services	Job explosion in services (travel, food)	More Wealth
4	Information	Individualists, tribes, shockwaves	Personalized Life style
5	Knowledge	Hyperlinked Society	Individual empowerment

Appendix A - Getting from Vision to Activities.

Sometimes you will be asked to give a vision presentation. Or you might get questions from your prospects and customers about the difference between COMPANY's vision, mission, and strategy. But your job is not only about communicating. It's about succeeding. Most importantly, in your jobs as sales and marketing professionals at COMPANY you will have to work in teams to succeed. **To achieve your objectives, and to achieve the objectives of your customer as well.** It is absolutely important that you define your approach to success, your approach on how to get from a Vision down to Activities. In defining your approach, whether you know it or not, you are following a structured approach using the following elements:

Vision - Mission - Strategy - Objectives - Tasks - Activities
In short: VMS - OTA

Everyone operating successfully in the field does this intuitively.

For example:

- **The Vision** is that your account team will be the preferred Total Business Integration and Application Server provider to the large bank of XXX.
- **The Mission** is to achieve a prototype within 6 weeks and then move on to full implementation of the first project within 3 months.
- **The Strategy** is to team up with BEA WebLogic or IBM WebSphere to combine the strengths of YOUR SOLUTION with the installed base exposure of HP/Sun/IBM in that account.
- **The Objectives (= Goals)** are to get an appointment with the executive management team, to define the architecture and sales approach with the OEM, to achieve all criteria set for the prototype, to prepare a white paper for the management teams of the OEM, COMPANY and the customer, and to review and to deliver a case report of a relevant success story to the account before the executive meeting.
- **The Tasks** are divided up between pre-sales, marketing, sales management and professional services.
- **The Activities** to achieve these tasks are performed and the flow reverses from vision - mission - strategy - objectives - tasks - activities to:

Activities	produce	deliverables to the task force.
Tasks	produce	partial objectives
Objectives	produce	implementation of the strategy
Strategy	produces	results consistent with the mission
Mission	produces	success to validate the vision
Vision	produces	messages to be used in further sales activities

Why am I spending your time on explaining this?

Because I believe that it is essential for your success in sales in marketing to understand these concepts.

The difference between these terms, and other terms such as objectives, goals, tasks and activities is often blurred. Ask 10 people about these terms, and be prepared to get 20 answers. Everyone seems to be confused. But if you are looking for a definition, the following one is as good as any I have seen.

Vision **A compelling statement of purpose for a group of people.** Some of the best organizations on the planet seem to have a clear vision which helps them in finding their missions, strategies, goals etc. This seems to be true for entire nations as well. For example: „The American dream“, as encapsulated in the lyrics of the US national anthem. „The home of the brave and the land of the free“. Every American hears, or sings these words at least about 2 times a month, at school, at the ballpark, in movies, in books etc. Americans are inundated with this vision, and will start a revolution when this key vision is violated, or on the positive side, will put all their effort behind a mission that „fits“ their vision of being American.

Mission **A clear statement of direction for a group of people.** Staying with the framework of the American nation’s vision, there is one historic mission that everyone understands and remembers: The mission to put a man on the moon. This is a key aspect for any mission statement. It must be clear and set a direction for a group of people. Here is how Kennedy started the moon project: „ *I commit this nation, before the end of this decade, to bring a man to the moon, and return him back safely.*“ This is being used as an example because it contains the key elements of a mission statement. It explains who is involved (this nation), it explains what the time frame is (before the end of the decade), it clearly described what to do, but not how to do it (bring a man to the moon) and defines how we will know if we have succeeded (bring him back safely). Can you see how this relates to the main vision of the American people, to be the home of the brave and the land of the free? It was a brave thing to attempt, and a great way to show Russia who is leading the world.

It worked, and America got it done in 1969 after a long, dedicated team effort to achieve close to impossible objectives.

- Strategy** **A methodical approach for accomplishing the mission.** Strategy often gets confused with mission, or objectives. Let's define this in some detail, staying with the mission statement above. Kennedy only said that he wanted a man on the moon. He did not say how. He did not specify the organization to get this done. So here would be the related strategy statement. *In order to fulfill the „man in the moon“ mission, we will build a multi-stage booster rocket capable of lifting a 3-person team of astronauts into orbit. This team will fly to the moon and land in a landing module capable of bringing 2 astronauts to the moon and returning them to the waiting orbiter. Return to earth will be accomplished with a re-entry module that will be detached from the lunar module, re-enter Earth atmosphere, and that will descend on a parachute into the Pacific Ocean where the astronauts will be picked up by a naval vessel.* This strategy statement gives enough detail to set up separate teams to accomplish the mission. A rocket team, with the objective of building a booster rocker. A lunar module team. A re-entry capsule team. A naval search and rescue team. Etc. The difference to the vision statement is that you can clearly understand the methods and tools needed to accomplish the mission.
- Objectives** See goals (Goals and Objectives are too fuzzy to be defined separately). The only thing that could be said about the difference between objectives and goals is that an objective is for multiple teams, and goals are for one team or for individuals. But in real life, these terms get mixed up all the time.
- Goals** **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Targets** to guide teams or individuals towards success. S.M.A.R.T. Setting SMART Goals or Objectives is essential to success. Here is a close to „perfect“ goal statement, relative to the mission and strategy outlined above. *„The Life Support Team is working towards the goal/objective of providing a fully tested life support system for 3 astronauts (SPECIFIC), that will weigh less than 2000 pounds and will be capable of supporting them on a 20 day return trip to the moon (MEASURABLE), by June 1966 (TARGETED). We will assemble a team of 20 experts headed by John Doe by January 1965 and will work with the resources at NASA research and Lockheed Martin to accomplish this goal with a budget of less than 50 Million US\$ (Achievable and Relevant).* It is important to work through the SMART acronym when setting goals, and don't forget to share the

goals of the individual teams to ensure overall coordination and communication.

Tasks **A clearly defined set of activities that contribute a specific subset of the team's goals.** The next thing in the process of turning vision into execution is the setting up of tasks. Tasks are different from activities, as a task groups certain activities together. The expression of task force brings this to a point. For example, in the goal of setting up a life support system, there would have been the specific task force around safety of the equipment. The safety task force would have to ensure that everything on the life support system is tested for reliability and that every system is at least twice redundant, i.e. the ability to survive 2 major failures in the system. Of course there could be 100's of activities that are necessary to achieve the task. This brings us to the last step, the definition of specific activities.

Activities **An subset of a task that leads to the delivery of a specific result or output.** The keyword for success is the definition of the output of an activity. For example the instruction „Call Jim by Friday“ is not a proper activity description. Instead, the instruction should read „Ensure that Jim has received all information he needs to accomplish his goals on a weekly basis.“ Other activity descriptions might read: „Perform weekly stress testing of all components to get within 99% reliability of each component“. Or, „perform weekly, face to face status meeting to ensure communication gaps are closed and all reports are complete to 99% percent“. In all of the above, never forget that any activity must be defined within the framework of the overall vision, mission, strategy, and goals, to be effective.

While it might seem like overkill to engage in such academic definitions, practical experience has shown that most people constantly mix up the usage of the terms vision, mission, strategy, goals/objectives, tasks and activities. This confusion can lead to an unnecessary amount of misdirection and double work in the team. Each team lead or manager should spend at least 20% of their time to clarify the teams path from vision to activities on a weekly basis.

In Closing

For a speaker and communicator, and therefore for anyone in Sales and Marketing that has customer contact, it becomes a mission-critical element of the job to understand and communicate the company's vision, mission, and strategy, to help the account teams to build their Objectives, Tasks and Activities based on the Vision, Mission and Strategy of the customer. This is where the loop closes. I cannot emphasize enough how essential this concept is to success in high-tech sales and marketing.

Only if you are 100% clear about your customers vision to activity path, can you speak competently to their company about, and on behalf of your company COMPANY. At the end of the day, we all have to be evangelists. Not only as passionate subject matter experts, but also as representative of the „heart and soul“ of COMPANY. Acting as ambassadors for driving a positive value perception about the company you work for at every opportunity.

I hope this brochure has added some value to you, by giving you a broad introduction into public speaking, and by making it relevant to our company's vision. If you like this booklet, I'd like to hear from you about suggestions for further improvement. If you did not like it, I absolutely deserve to hear from you immediately, so I can improve the next release.

Good luck and have fun and success in your assignment

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