

4 Steps to a Pitch Perfect Presentation (From a World Class Public Speaker)

Long before modern media changed the face of mass communication, millennia before the invention of Gutenberg's printing press; orators were the primary motivators of change within society.



From famed rhetoricians like Plato and Cicero to the tribal elders of indigenous societies, every culture throughout history has been shaped to some extent by individuals that could deliver amazing speeches.

Despite the sheer diversity and volume of digital noise that we find in the world today, public speaking is still an indispensable skill for any person looking to draw attention and incite action. A study from cloud-based presentation platform *Prezi* revealed that [70% of employed Americans](#) believe that presentation skills are a critical factor in determining career success.

That being said, 20% of these respondents indicated that they'd do almost anything to escape the responsibility of actually delivering on a potentially career-defining presentation. At the [Expat Money Show](#), we recently spoke to a man who once ranked amongst this list of countryside [glossophobes](#).

Dustin Matthews is a communications guru who has helped guide marketing strategies at some of the world's most recognizable private brands; he is also the founder of a radical new training and education company called *The Speaking Empire*.

In our engrossing interview with Dustin, we got an inside look into the transformational presentation skills which took him from completely unwilling public speaker to becoming one of the business world's most effective closers.

Here are some key points we touched upon in our conversation.

1. Setting the Stage

The art of presentation is very much the art of conversation. The same principles which allow you to excel in your one-on-one interactions will help you persuade audiences numbering in the thousands, as long as you can reliably scale up your skills.

With this in mind, think about how you would go about approaching a complete stranger with an idea or investment proposal. Would you launch right into a sales pitch without any sort of pre-amble or introduction? If you have any interpersonal nous whatsoever, the answer is probably not.



If you're a savvy operator, you'd likely look to leverage your personal connections to get an introduction and if that isn't possible you'd make that introduction yourself in the most appealing manner possible.

This is a process known as pre-framing. Just like a picture frame defines the boundaries of a painting telling you what it can and cannot contain, so does a conversational frame. A strong introduction gives uninitiated listeners a keen insight into what you do and who you are (or who you're not), this in turn lets them know what they can expect from the conversation that follows.

Applying this idea to a presentation setting is fairly simple.

Before you launch into your best sales patter, make sure to get a strong introduction from a respected colleague or even a famous face if you can swing it.

2. Narrative Structure

Certain storytelling techniques are ingrained in everyone's psyche whether we realize it or not. Anyone familiar with the works of [Joseph Campbell](#) will recognize this idea in the universal concept of the monomyth, or the hero's journey. Even if you haven't read Campbell's book (you should), you will have seen countless examples of this journey illustrated in popular fiction ranging from *Star Wars* to *To Kill a Mockingbird*.



The basic format of the monomyth is as follows,

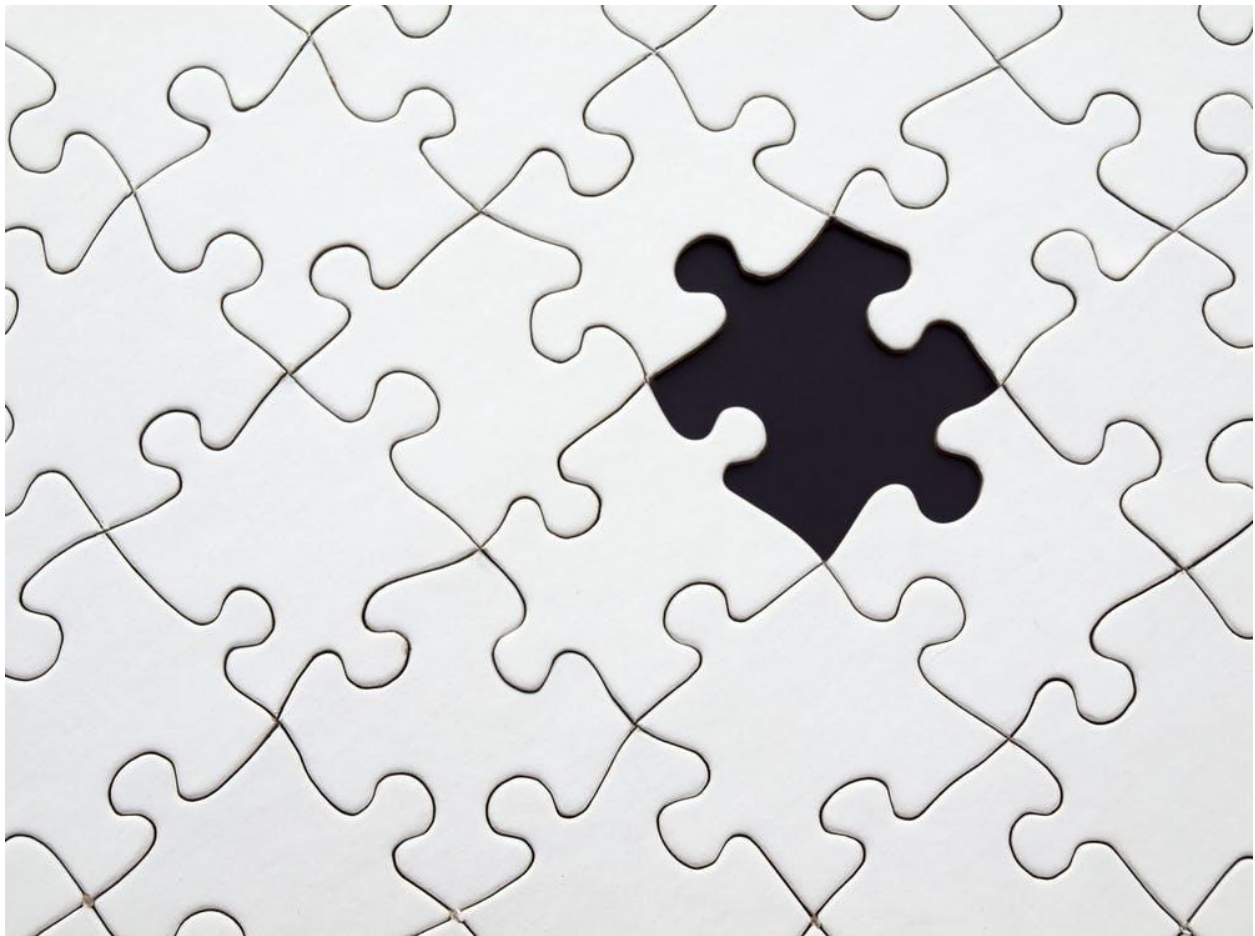
1. In the first stage the hero reluctantly answers a call to adventure caused by some personally related conflict.

2. At the second stage of the journey, the hero gains assistance of certain mentors or assistants, with the support of these allies the protagonist commits to the trials and tribulations of his adventure and thus passes the point of no return.
3. After clearing some minor hurdles, the hero is met by a major obstacle which threatens to derail the purpose of his quest, in this situation he is tested to the limits of his abilities. The hero passes this trial by fire and gains new understanding of his ultimate path to securing his destiny.
4. Having achieved his purpose, the hero returns home triumphant only to be met with a final hurdle which threatens to undo all that he has gained over his journey. The hero conquers this final test to confirm his newfound wisdom, he then returns to his former life a stronger, more complete human being.

For centuries this simple structure has created powerful emotive responses in the hearts and minds of audiences throughout the world. By incorporating these principles into your own presentation, you can create lasting, emotional connections with your listeners.

3. Offer a Solution

People pay money for products and services for one of two reasons. Either they want to avoid unpleasant emotions or they want to pursue pleasurable ones.



If you're going to pitch a solution to your audience, you need to have an in-depth understanding of the pressing challenges your prospects face day in and day out. You need to articulate these challenges in a relatable manner that touches upon the experiences of the audience. Only after you've displayed this sort of understanding can you offer a patented solution for combating this obstacle.

4. Simple Value Statements

Even the most adept salesperson can struggle to transition buyers towards a closing proposition. Often it's because they see the closing process as the final step in a journey, rather than the journey itself.

Don't think the body of your presentation as a prelude to a big, "yes". Instead, design the presentation as a series of small commitments that your audience can very easily sign off on.

These agreements should come in the form of five or six, short, simple value statements. Start with a widely acknowledged industry wisdom that gets your listeners nodding along. While these pearls of knowledge won't turn any skeptics towards your cause, they will get your audience into an agreeable state of mind, thereby clearing the way for bigger agreements down the road.

Once you've completed this step, it's time to deliver on some unique propositions that clearly outline the value your specific products or services could grant to prospects in the audience.

This is the point at which you should offer irrefutable evidence in your favor that's hard to deny. Whether you use a case study or a true anecdote to achieve this goal is immaterial.

The final value statement you deliver should come with a question attached, implicit or explicit. The question is, why wouldn't you buy this product or service in light of everything you've just heard? If you've done your job right, there should be few clear arguments against the idea.

But, Wait There's More!

While these great tips will certainly set you off on the path to career success, why stop with just four? At [The Expat Money Show](#), we're collecting insider knowledge from some of the foremost investors, thought leaders, and all-round influencers in the game.

Check out the rest of our podcast with Dustin to find out more great steps towards presentation mastery then check out some of our other inspiring interviews. Better yet, sign up for the newsletter and get weekly updated content delivered right to your inbox.