



Ten Essential Keys for Persuasive, Passionate and Polished Presenters

1. **Don't apologize.** It takes away from your credibility as an expert. Remember, the audience has no idea what you're going to say. If you mess up, skip a part of your program, or forget to share a specific point, it's okay. Circle back if you need to add your comment, but otherwise, let it go.
2. **Use a conversational tone.** Talk to the audience from the front of the room in the same tone of voice you would use if you were chatting with them after your program. Use vocal variety instead of "presenter voice." Remember, sometimes the most powerful points are made with a softer voice.
3. **Don't scan – connect.** See your audience members as individuals – as your friends, soon-to-be friends, and valuable connections. Don't look above their heads, the audience knows when you are not looking at them and PLEASE don't imagine them in their underwear. That's just wrong. 😊
4. **Follow the 6x4 or 4x6 rule when using PowerPoint.** If you have six bullet points, use no more than four words in each. If you have four bullets, use up to six words. Challenge yourself to stop relying on or using slides altogether. You know message and your audience wants to hear from YOU!
5. **YOU are the main focus of your program, NOT your slides.** Your PowerPoint deck is only there to remind and guide you what to say next. Do not turn your back and read your slides. Glance quietly at your slide as needed and re-establish eye contact before speaking.
6. **Hold your eye contact.** Have a brief, 3-5 second, conversation with one person at a time. Use people's names as much as possible.
7. **Record your talks and WATCH them.** First watch the recording and cover your body so you can see what your head is doing. If it looks like you are watching a tennis match, you are not holding your eye contact. Then watch the recording without sound so you can see how you come across physically. Ask yourself if you are engaging and interesting to watch.
8. **Use purposeful movement.** Too much walking, "dancing," shifting, etc. takes away from your message. Plant yourself in one place for a couple sentences before moving again.
9. **Prepare about twenty-five percent less content** than the time you have allotted. For example, for a 60-minute program, have about 45 minutes' worth of content. You'll be able to speak at a more comfortable pace and leave room for questions, comments and tangents as you go.
10. **BREATHE!** Pause at the end of each sentence. End your sentences with a period and start the next sentence with a "real word" – not "um," "ah," "like," etc. Pausing helps the audience keep up with the points you're making. If you speak too fast, you risk losing your connection with the audience as they try to process the last point you made while you're moving on to the next point.