

Some Tips for Your Presentation

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1. Buy a book about rhetoric.
 - a. Reading one article on rhetoric will not make you a good speaker.
In order to be a good speaker you must immerse yourself in the study of rhetoric. The best way to be a good speaker is to buy yourself a book about rhetoric. With a good book of rhetoric, you will be a much better speaker.
 - b. This is the book on rhetoric that launched all of the others.
 - i. I'm not saying that because I have anything against all the others that launched before it.
 - ii. It's really an honor to be here.
 - iii. I'm not saying that because I agree with her.
 1. I'm not saying that because she's my ex-wife.
 2. I'm not above using my ex-wife's book.
 3. I had considered using another book to spite her.
 4. We made a lot of money from that textbook.
 5. I kept a copy of her book beneath my pillow for a year.
 6. It is really the book on rhetoric that launched all the others.
 - c. There are many fine books on rhetoric.
 - i. It only matters that you choose one.
 - ii. The book should look sharp.

- iii. You probably won't learn anything from the book, but it will help to own it.
- iv. I advise against reading too much in this book.
- v. You may be able to get away with reading nothing in this book.
- vi. Put the book on your shelf in the Business section.
- vii. Maybe in the Rhetoric section, but I doubt you have one.
- viii. If you do it is likely very small.
- ix. Maybe next to that Enron book.
- x. Don't be afraid to mark a few pages.
 - 1. I would advise writing in the margins with a pen. Try a pencil.
 - 2. That way if you change your mind you can go back and correct your original musings.
 - 3. Not so many things in life are as easily corrected as penciled musings in the margins of a book on Rhetoric.
 - 4. You will need good lighting and a comfortable chair.
 - 5. You will have already done the dishes and walked the dog.
 - 6. Make sure it's not *Survivor* night, or *Sopranos* night.

2. Content is king.

- a. When my ex-wife began to work on her book she would hide pages around the house, sliding them between the pages of other books, folding them into cereal boxes, under her pillow.
 - b. I told her to keep the pages in the refrigerator because that would protect the pages from a fire.
3. Slow and clear.
- a. A clear presentation is a good presentation.
 - b. If you are not being clear, try slowing down and speaking more loudly so that your audience understands every word.
 - c. Sometimes it helps to scream at them.
 - d. If your audience is not paying attention to you being slow and clear will not help you.
4. A good presentation has a climax
- a. A climax to a bad day can be as simple as a home cooked meal.
 - b. You may cook the meal yourself, or perhaps your life partner will do it for you.
 - c. Cooking together is one way to stay together.
 - d. Perhaps you will try a restaurant.
 - e. Your presentation should follow the rules of good storytelling. Your presentation should have a protagonist. You should name him Chaz. Early on make a decision about what Chaz wants. For example, maybe Chaz just wants to make love last. Maybe Chaz married his college sweetheart. Maybe Chaz was a little young in retrospect. Maybe Chaz would like to be able to retire early so in

conflict with his goal to make love last Chaz works all day and all night sleeping standing up some nights propped against the microwave full of burnt popcorn in a bag.

- f. The CEO hates the smell of popcorn. He will fire you for popping it.
- g. After you've decided on a hero for your presentation put some obstacles in the way. Make Chaz miss his train. Maybe Chaz can't find his keys because they're in the damn baby stroller again covered in baby shit and piss and McNuggets.
- h. Once your hero overcomes these obstacles, he will be the hero of your presentation. Your presentation should, at its conclusion, win the big game, slay the dragon, destroy the Death Star.

5. Humor is permitted.

- a. As is a certain amount of sexual tension in the workplace.
 - i. I am a member of an old boy's club.
 - ii. My old boys and I get together and talk shop.
- b. If you are a man, do not wear undershirts. Unbutton more than enough buttons. Do something with your hair.
 - i. Options for your hair include: shaggy, short and neat, long (pony tail optional but not recommended).
 - ii. Use something in your hair to make it smell nice.
 - iii. Use something shiny that smells nice in your hair.
- c. Shine your shoes.
- d. Help co-workers try on dresses.

- e. Don't be afraid to harass your coworkers if you can pull it off with sass.
 - i. You are only sassing.
 - ii. People will like you.
- f. On some days wear a suit, but no tie.

6. Workplace Tips

- a. Make sure there is enough work to keep everyone busy. A recent study found that many workers spend most of their day on the internet or socializing or trying to get laid or sabotaging office equipment or pretending to read the Wall Street Journal in a stall in the bathroom but are instead masturbating with one hand while Blackberrying with the other hand. The study found that coworkers do not do these things out of malice. They do them because they have too much time on their hands. If your coworkers are not busy enough, organize social activities for them. Try an afternoon open bar or a themed party. Halloween in July, Christmas in January. Key party.
- b. "Idle hands make the devil's work."
- c. The CEO of a company is having an affair with a waitress he met at a fundraiser.
- d. The CEO's assistant is having an affair with Chaz in finance.
- e. Chaz broke off an affair with Denise in Marketing to have an affair with the CEO's assistant.

- f. Denise caught Chaz with his face covered in cake engaged in relations with Missy from the Compliance group.
- g. Missy has fucked the CEO, but I wouldn't call that an affair.
- h. An office Halloween party any time of the year is a good morale booster and will keep your employees from going out for coffee or destroying the photocopiers.
- i. Require employees to wear costumes on "casual Friday."

7. Halloween Costume Ideas

- a. Sexy Nurse
- b. Sexy Construction Worker
- c. Sexy Zombie
- d. Sexy Doctor
- e. Ombudsman
- f. Sexy Ombudsman
- g. Our last Halloween together we wanted to make a splash at the Halloween party. It is good to make a splash. We drove all day searching for yellow playground balls, going to all the toy stores, bouncing balls, looking for yellow playground balls. We intended to cut mouths out of the playground balls and go to the Halloween party as Mr. and Mrs. Pac-Man. We bought a red bow for Mrs. Pac-Man's head. We couldn't find yellow playground balls so settled on pink and spray-painted them yellow in the basement. This was a

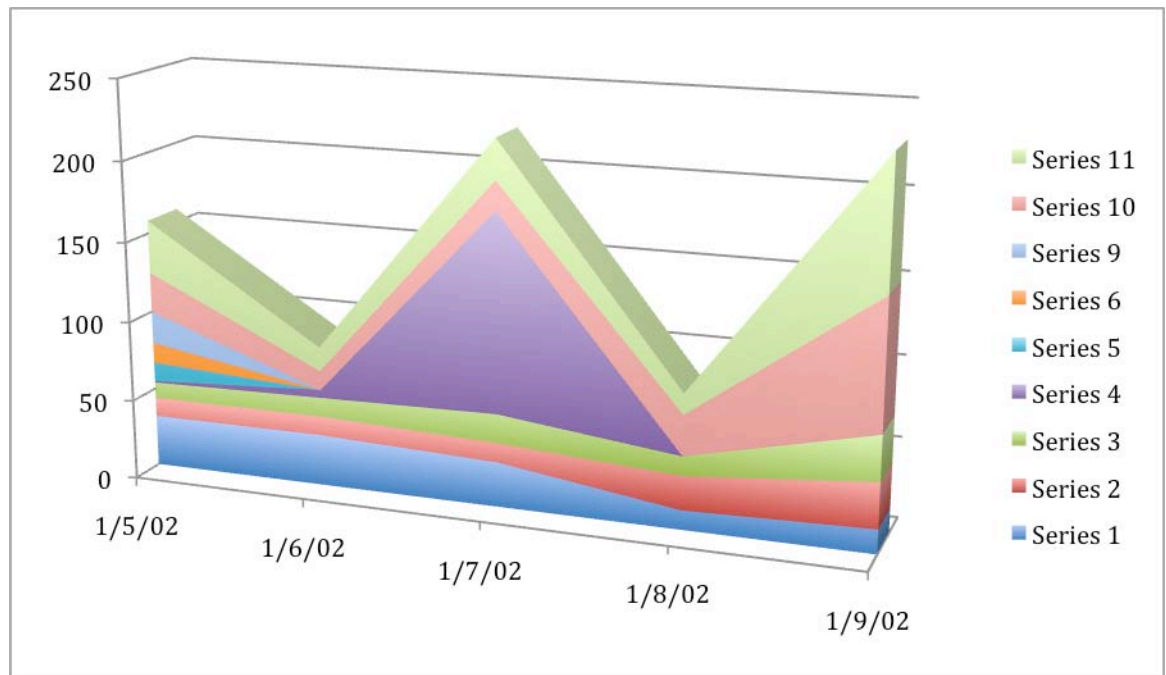
disaster. We went instead as ourselves but pretended to be happy.

There were only four other couples at the Halloween party.

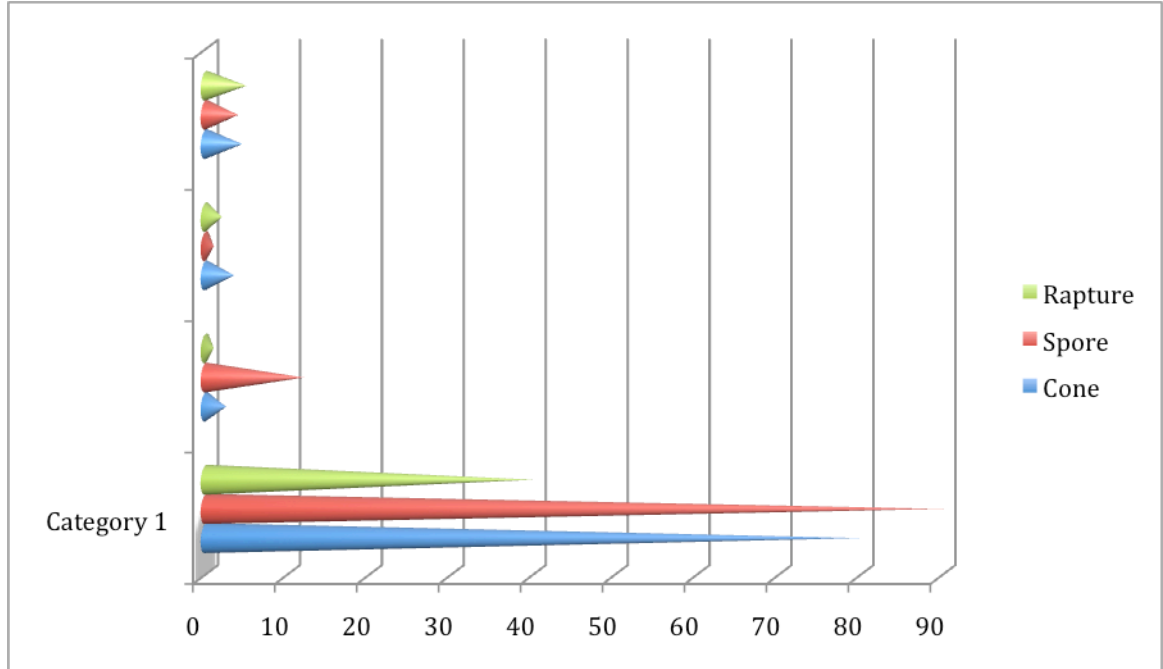
- h. They had rented a frozen margarita machine.
- i. Sexy Police Officer
- j. Sexy Parole Officer
- k. Sexy Security Guard
- l. Sexy Prison Guard
- m. Sexy Clerk
- n. Lawyer

8. Slide design.

- a. Slides should be clear and colorful. A picture is worth a thousand words. Do something wonderful with slides. Make it new.
- b. Use the following charts in your slides:



Wizard's Hat, Five Days From Back in '02. See also: Rainbows, Unicorn.



Rapture, Spore, Cone. Spore, Cone. Rapture. See also: Unicorn.

9. Unicorns and Rainbows

a. Unicorns and Rainbows is what I call splash in your presentation.

Don't be afraid to use a few unicorns and rainbows: the two go naturally together and will lighten the heavy hearts and minds of those watching your presentation.

b. Unicorns and rainbows are not metaphors.

i. Use literal unicorns.

ii. Use literal rainbows.

iii. Unicorns should be wielding swords and performing majestic acts.

- iv. Rainbows should be colorful and end at a gleaming pot of gold coins. Reserve rainbows for your final slides. The end of every presentation should be gold.
- c. Make sure it is too warm in the room in which you are giving your presentation.
 - i. This will make people uncomfortable.
 - ii. They will be that much more appreciative of you when you let them go home.
- d. Some of the people watching your presentation will be late home tonight. They will tell their partner that they had to work late again and shake their heads and complain vaguely about their bosses. They will not be late because of work. They will leave this presentation and drive out of the parking lot going the wrong way and drive out beyond the suburbs to where the rows of grey and beige sided houses fade into farmland and woods. They will drive and fantasize about how they will keep driving until they reach the ocean where they will strip out of their business casual clothes and dive first into the cold, pounding surf and swim out to sea, never to be heard from again. They will not make it this far. Instead they will stop at the 7-Eleven and buy coffee and a six pack of Bud Light and wind around the serpentine suburban roads, drinking the six pack, drinking the coffee, peeing in the dark on somebody's mailbox.
- e. Add pizzazz to your presentation with sound effects and animation! Everybody likes a little sizzle.

10. Technology.

- a. When you are home in bed and your wife is asleep next to you, you will tiptoe into the kitchen for a drink and snack and you will go online and you will see the woman from graphic design on the instant messenger and you will start to instant message with her and you will begin to flirt. Before you know it you will be doing this every night. Sitting at the computer waiting for her to come online. You will see her at work every day and nod to her and she will smile back at you this secret smile but you will never say anything. You are secret instant message lovers.
- b. A digital projector is a must-have.
- c. Be sure to remember a power strip. Don't be surprised if the location of your presentation doesn't have open internet access. I cannot emphasize this enough: do not rely on the internet. Have everything you need saved on your hard drive and backed up.

11. Don't apologize.

- a. Remember that no matter how terrible your presentation or how badly you have wrecked things irreversibly at home you must be proud of your work. You've given it your all, and that's really all anybody can ask of you.
- b. Remember to thank everybody involved.

Matthew Kirkpatrick's short story collection, *Light Without Heat*, is forthcoming from FC2.

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