



## **AN IGNITE WHITE PAPER**

***Public Speaking – It need not be feared!***

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**Public Speaking:**

***It need not be feared!***

*“According to most studies, the number one fear of human beings is speaking in public and the second one is death. This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you’re better off in the casket than doing the eulogy!” ~ Jerry Seinfeld*

Some people have a natural talent for public speaking, however most individuals struggle or are uncomfortable when asked to stand in front of an audience, deliver a presentation or make an impromptu comment in a meeting. For many, the fear causes shaky knees, sweaty palms or butterflies in the stomach!

Whether working alone or with a larger number of people, it’s inevitable that everyone will be asked to speak in front a group at some point in their career. And, to be a leader or achieve success in both one’s professional or personal life, speaking in front of groups, both large and small, is virtually unavoidable.

It’s quite common for our Ignite clients to request training and development on professional presentation skills for their business teams. The need for improving communication for both internal and external presentations (client meetings, product launches, sales pitches, team events, key note addresses, etc.) is always in high demand.



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Recognizing these needs, Ignite has developed a customized presentation skills course called:

### **“The Performer Series: Prepare – Produce – Present”**

The Performer Series (a 3-day program conducted over the course of several weeks) gives participants the tools to develop and perform an entertaining and informative business presentation. Through interactive discovery techniques, participants experience a presentation from the opening icebreaker, to content delivery, to managing questions, to effectively using visual aids for both in-person or webinar delivery. In order for participants to get the most value from the course, they are asked to bring a presentation subject of their choice and are video taped, voice-recorded and critiqued on their platform skills using their own program content.

**The Performer Series focuses on a three-step framework for creating and delivering effective presentations:**

## **1. PREPARATION**

Whether you are speaking for in front of 5 people or 500, for 5 minutes or 50, preparation is a key component in delivering professional and impactful presentations. It's important that you consider your:

### **Audience**

- Who is attending? (Names, roles and background).
- What is their familiarity with the topic? (Experts or students?)
- Where and how will they be seated during your presentation? (Conference room, auditorium, etc.)

### **Topic**

- Why are you speaking on this subject? (What's your expertise?)
- Why should the audience listen to you? (What's in it for them? What is their current “pain”?)
- How much time do you have to present?

### **Content**

- What is your overall objective?
- What are your key points?
- What is the best delivery style? (Microphone, podium, informal discussion, etc.)

## **2. PRODUCE**

The content or “meat” of your presentation is critically important. To best organize yourself, think of your content in three stages:

### **Introduction**

What are you going to tell the audience?

- Grab their attention (quote, story, statistic, question, visual, etc.).
- Identify their “pain” or why they should listen to you. (Save time, money, frustration, etc.)
- Clearly state your objectives. (What do you want the audience to learn, know or do after listening to your message?)



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## Message

State your message and make your main points clear and concise.

- Make only 1-4 key points. (Less is more.)
- Enumerate your key points. (“First... second...third...”)
- Support your key points with facts, examples, illustrations, testimonials, etc.

## Closing

Repeat your message and make your ending powerful and memorable.

- Summarize and repeat your key points.
- Repeat what’s in it for them or how to cure their current “pain” (Time, money, frustration, etc.)
- State your call to action. (What do you want the audience to do next?)

## Visual Aids (Power Point)

- Use large, easy-to-read fonts.
- Include 2-5 ideas per slide using bullets and key phrases (instead of full sentences and paragraphs).
- Don’t over do it with too many slides; use a variety of text, photos, graphs, etc.
- Speak and look at the audience. Don’t read the slides or face screen.
- Use a remote mouse so you are not tied to the laptop. Press “B” on your keyboard to divert attention away from the screen.

- Always prepare professional handouts (as support information) to leave with the audience. In case your power point or LCD projector malfunctions, you’ll be glad you had them for backup.

## 3. PRESENT

After preparing and producing the content of your presentation, consider the following points as you actually deliver your presentation:

- Practice your opening and closing sentences and deliver them with passion and conviction! (These are your first and lasting impressions!)
- Rehearse and time each part of your presentation with someone who will give constructive feedback on your body language, tone, pace, clarity, etc.
- Be prepared with “must knows” just in case you have less time to present than originally planned.
- Anticipate any questions, comments or objections the audience may have.

These techniques may not completely eliminate the jitters over public speaking however, if you incorporate just a few tips as you **Prepare, Produce and Present**, your confidence will soar and your presentation is sure to be an effective one.

Interested in learning more about The Performer Series and other training and development solutions for your team? Please call 781-979-5460 or visit our website ([www.weigniteit.com](http://www.weigniteit.com)).

