



FEARLESS PRESENTATIONS[®]

MINI COURSE

Catchy Presentation Titles
Are the Start of a Great Presentation



INTRODUCTION

"If you start with a great title, the presentation almost writes itself."

TERMS

A **presentation** is the process of presenting a topic to an audience. It is typically a demonstration, introduction, lecture, or speech meant to inform, persuade, inspire, motivate, or to build good will or to present a new idea or product

Introduction

Catchy presentation titles are important when you begin to design a great presentation. Your audience will determine whether your presentation is worthy of their time almost instantly.

In most cases, they make that determination based entirely on the title of the speech. In this session, I'm going to show you a quick and easy way to come up with a great title for your presentation.

If you do this well, it will actually make your audience want to pay attention to your speech. I always say in class, "If you start with a great title, the presentation almost writes itself."

LESSON 1 / A Catchy Presentation Title is Important for Audience Satisfaction

"Every Audience member has this inner monologue."

A Catchy Presentation Title is Important for Audience Satisfaction

Think about the last time you went to a conference that has multiple breakout sessions going at the same time. If you are like most people, you first scanned the list of titles. Almost instantly, you eliminated a few based solely on the topic or title.

The titles that you looked at created an impression of the speech. Once you narrowed down your choices, only then do you move on to the description, etc. In that instant where you were scanning the titles, though, you probably had this inner monologue going. "Hhhmmmm... Nope. Not worth my time. Nope. Sounds boring. Nope. That one is unrelated to anything of interest to me. Aaahhh... That one might be okay."

One of the real, closely-held, public speaking secrets is that every audience member has this inner monologue. This inner monologue occurs before every single meeting and every single presentation that we attend. In most cases, just as when we looked at the breakout session list, the answer we receive is, "Nope. This seems like a waste of my time."

Examples of Presentation Titles that Make People Yawn

Here are a few titles that tell the audience that your presentation will be a snoozefest.

- Quarterly Financial Report
- Software Update
- Project Report
- Goals for 20__ [Fill in Your Own Year]
- Why We Need to Make Changes in Our Internal Processes

LESSON 2 / Presentation Title Generator

“By forcing yourself to make your title into a complete sentence. You will narrow the topic down dramatically.”

Presentation Title Generator

Follow this step-by-step approach, and your audience will want to hear you speak. Create a One-Sentence Statement of What Your Topic is About.

Step number one is to turn your idea into a complete sentence. Your first iteration of a title should have a subject, a verb, adjectives, and adverbs. When most presenters start creating their presentations, they often use sentence fragments as a way to remember what they want to cover. These are presenter cheat-notes. They aren't very helpful to the audience, though. Instead, your title (and your bullet points) should be really easy for the audience to read and understand.

Make sure your bullet points are easy to understand
For instance, the titles above would change to the following:

- We Exceeded Our Corporate Goals and Increased Profit Last Quarter.
- The New Software Update Closed a Few Security Risks for Our Customers.
- The ABC Building Project is Behind Schedule.
- We Will Increase Revenue by \$200,000 by Focusing on Repeat Business.
- Department Heads Need to Communicate Team Activities Better.

Just by forcing yourself to make your title into a complete sentence, you will narrow the topic down dramatically. If you look at the difference between the first list and the second, the second is more interesting already.

LESSON 3 / Identify Why the Audience Would Care About this Topic?

"This style has a dry sense of humor that can be very calming."

Identify Why the Audience Would Care About this Topic?

Step number two is to identify the "why." A good way to do this is to read out loud the sentence that you just created. Then ask yourself, "If I were sitting in the audience, why would I care about this? What is in this for me?" By the way, if the answers to those questions are, "I wouldn't," and "Not much," then cancel your speech. You are really just wasting everyone's time.

Make the audience care by defining their why. However, for the sentences above, the following might be good answers:

Your Quarterly Bonus Has Increased.

Your Customers are Less Likely to Experience a Data Breach.

If we Adjust Our Plan, We Can Get Back on Schedule without Incurring Overruns.

Your Commissions Will Also Increase.

You Can Reduce Your Overall Department Costs.

Although we like to think that department heads care deeply about company revenue and profit, in reality, most of us are pretty self-centered.

However, the department heads care very deeply about their bonuses. Outside of the tech folks, no one really cares about website security. However, if a company has a data breach, the entire company will have new challenges to deal with.

Compare the Two Titles

Originally, we had, "Quarterly Financial Report." We ended up with, "We Exceeded Our Corporate Goals and Increased Profit Last Quarter, So Your Quarterly Bonus Has Also Increased." Which would you rather sit through? Guess what? Your audience thinks the same way. So, if you want to catch the attention of your audience right away, realize that catch presentation titles can help.