



PREPARING YOUR
AGENDA

Guide On Public Speaking & Presentation



OLIVER MEDILL

Have you ever been asked to speak in front of an audience and didn't know where to start? Or maybe the thought of it has frozen you in your tracks?

Having worked for many years in the area of presenting, keynote speaking and running workshops, I still find myself amazed at the one enormous mistake most people make, when they are looking to communicate a clear message.

The lack of planning and preparation... for several reasons

We have all heard the adage 'if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.'

It is blatantly sage advice.

So, if not preparing is such an obvious error...

Why do so few people actually do the work?!

So often when people put their speeches together, there seems to be a resistance to put the hours in when it comes to planning and preparation.

To counter this most dire of mistakes, over the years I have gradually built up a SIX STEP PLANNING PROCESS that makes the all-important shift from 'self' to 'audience' and ensures that you plan in the right way, every time, from your audience's perspective.

It's called A.G.E.N.D.A

AGENDA

THE SIX STEP PLANNING PROCESS

AUDIENCE

Understanding your audience and doing the necessary preparation through your audience's eyes is a critical factor in making sure that your message lands as it should.

GOAL

Ask yourself about what goals are going to make this audience think, know, feel and do differently as a result of your message.

ELEMENTS

1. Structure.

Unless you have a message that is structured in a way that is easy to follow, it will not land as well as you want it to.

2. Visual aids.

Whether or not visual aids are needed is a big decision. Bigger still, is to remember that YOU are the most important visual aid when communicating a message.

NATURAL

Once you have prepared your message, you need to rehearse it, until it becomes automatic. It is only then that you can give your own natural style to the message and the magic happens.

DELIVER

Having done all the work, remember to enjoy yourself as you deliver the message. We are born communicators, but our survival instincts can turn this experience from a privilege to a penance unless we are consciously aware of it.

ANALYSE

Statistically, over 90% of business pitches and presentations do not get reviewed afterwards. The discipline of analysing what went well, what didn't and what to change for next time is the only thing that will ensure you improve next time.

STEP 01

AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Step into your audience's shoes

A wonderful visual definition of empathy is 'the art of putting yourself into another's shoes'.

It's a great mental image, but quite often presents a significant challenge when people look to move from theory to practice. Of course, we all 'get it' – but how do we actually do that? **How** do you put yourself into someone else's shoes?

If you asked a group of people looking at the same view what they saw, would they all say the same thing? Would they see exactly what you saw? Naturally, they wouldn't.

In the same way, we as individuals describe **our** view of the world **through our own lens**. And it's the same with most people wishing to impart expert knowledge and advice to an audience.

They tend to project **their** view of the problems and challenges onto their audience through their lens of experience, without necessarily seeing the world from their audience's view.

■ THE ANSWER?

Getting into the habit of planning through the eyes of your audience is critical and needs discipline.

The phrase 'know your audience' sets every prospective public speaker nodding in agreement; it makes perfect sense to research a prospective audience from their perspective, rather than the speaker's.

■ AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Ask yourself the following questions about your prospective audience: -

■ WHY WOULD THEY LISTEN TO ME?

This is one of the most important questions to ask yourself from an audience perspective and once again it's all about positioning. Of course, **you** will know what you bring to the party, but building credibility and rapport at the start of your speech or presentation is **as** important as the subject matter itself.

So, depending upon your audience's age, experience etc, you need to remember to tell them why you are qualified to stand there, in as relevant a way - and as fast - as possible.

■ WHY IS MY SUBJECT RELEVANT TO THEM? WHAT ARE THEIR CHALLENGES - AND THEREFORE WHAT SOLUTION DO I OFFER THEM?

A priceless question to ask yourself when looking to position your subject matter for your audience at the start of your speech. Remember, your audience's challenges are emotional for them and emotions sit in the decision-making part of the brain.

What is meant by this?

The first step is to put yourself in your audience's shoes and consider what their challenges are. This will obviously depend upon the industry and/or sector in which you work. To take a topical example, your focus area might be public speaking. Your target audience, therefore, would consist of coaches, teachers, mentors, people in sales, marketing advertising, small business owners, people who want to 'go it alone', sole traders and entrepreneurs, amongst others.

Your goal would be to understand the challenges that these people face in communicating their knowledge to the world and then to provide solutions to those challenges. In fact, you would have to dig under the surface to find out exactly what these issues were likely to be.

In other words, you would have to put yourself in the shoes of your audience and diagnose their 'Pain' - and that's the first step.

STEP 01

AUDIENCE RESEARCH CONT.

■ WHAT WILL THEY GET OUT OF MY MATERIAL?

This question is one of my favourites, because whilst it will be perfectly obvious to you that your content and knowledge is precious, the value of your material should always be seen through your audience's eyes – there are almost always assumptions that we make as speakers, that second-guess our audiences' understanding.

Find an unbiased person to be your guinea-pig and ask them to hold up their hand every time something is not clear. You may be surprised at the result.

It's also a brilliant question to ask yourself with regard to the start of your speech and positioning your subject matter.

■ WHY THEM AND WHY NOW?

More positioning here too, in that whilst the relevance and timing of your speech or presentation to your audience is crystal clear to you, it needs spelling out to them, and preferably near the beginning.

■ WHAT ARE THEIR KEY ISSUES?

This is once again driven by the context of the situation. However, as with the previous two questions, even if you do not have all the information you require, you can always ask the audience to gain clarity, with a 'I'm curious – can I get a show of hands if...' or a 'raise your hands if I'm right in thinking that...' question.

■ WHAT DO WE HAVE IN COMMON?

This is generally an easier question to either answer or find out. You will normally be making a speech in a certain place at a certain time for a reason. From that, it's a matter of simply asking yourself where the crossover lies between you and your audience.

■ WHAT ARE THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESENTATION OR SPEECH?

The critical point to make here is that most speeches and presentations are ill-prepared and rarely come from the perspective of the audience – its normally speaker focussed, which should give you a huge advantage before you even open your mouth.

■ WHAT IS AT STAKE?

An opportunity for you to help, guide, instruct, inspire and most importantly, to build trust.

■ WHAT MATERIAL SHOULD I GATHER AS A RESULT?

As mentioned, most speakers will not do enough due diligence on each specific audience and as a result, the content delivered can be a hit and miss affair.

So much information is now readily available online – LinkedIn profiles which are written by the individuals themselves, will give endless clues as to their preferences. Much will depend upon the accuracy of your audience analysis – that's to say, how accurately you have assessed their age/interest level/knowledge of your subject/likelihood to buy into you and your topic etc.

Once you have done this, you will be in a much better position to collate content that is relevant to their needs.

WORKSHEET



Why would they listen to me?



Why is my subject relevant to them? What are their challenges?
Therefore what solution do I offer them?



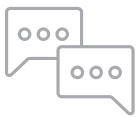
Why them and why now?



What are their key issues?



What do we have in common?



What are their expectations of the presentation or speech?



What are their expectations of the presentation or speech?



What material should I gather as a result?

STEP 02

GOAL

The power of setting audience-focussed objectives is a game-changer for how you are seen by your audience.

When preparing to write this E-book, I asked 100 separate people about how they go about preparing for a speech, presentation or pitch.

You might be surprised to know that over 70 of them of them revealed that they don't consciously set an objective at all. They just sit in front of their laptops; slowly piecing together content that they know and that they feel will be appropriate for the requested topic.

Even those who do consciously set an objective will almost always do so from **their own perspective** – i.e. – ‘what do **I** want to achieve from this?’

It stands to reason, right? It's my message, so it's my objective – what's wrong with that?

The challenge with this is clear: in the same way that we project our view of the world onto the world and expect everyone to see things the way we do, so the same principle thrives here.

The audience doesn't care what you want to say. They only really care about what is going to matter to them.

If you truly want to reach and to engage your audience, the rules for setting your objective must change.

Instead of asking yourself the traditional ‘what do I want to get out of this?’, the suggestion is to put yourself into your audience's seats and to design your message around specific objectives that you have set with them in mind.

Here are some questions that you will find very helpful, if you want to make sure your planning has a focus that will put your audience centre stage, because every part of your communication will have been designed through your audience's eyes.

- 1. What do I want my audience to think?
- 2. Why is that?
- 3. What do I want my audience to know?
- 4. Why is that?
- 5. What do I want my audience to feel?
- 6. Why is that?
- 7. What do I want my audience to do differently as a result?
- 8. Why is that?

The first questions around ‘think’ and ‘know’, are intended to provoke interest and new insights for your audience. Your content has to be interesting and it has to be thought provoking. They are both what we call rational motivators.

The following questions move from the rational motivators of thought and knowledge, to the emotional drivers – ‘feel’ and ‘do differently’ - of change and action.

Our limbic - or emotional – brain controls decision-making. If you can influence and stimulate your audience's emotions, new decisions and therefore new actions can and will follow.



WORKSHEET



What do I want my audience to think?

Why is that?



What do I want my audience to know?

Why is that?



What do I want my audience to feel?

Why is that?



What do I want my audience to do differently as a result?

Why is that?

STEP 03

ELEMENTS

1. Structure

Imagine the confidence that is generated by the knowledge that you can't get lost!

A really helpful way of looking at this is to think about the TV news.

Firstly, the headlines.

Secondly, reviewing each headline in turn.

Thirdly, summarising the elements covered.

The structure used represents a fantastic way of making sure that the material is concise, hierarchical and above all, memorable.

Two key strategies are used:

1. The law of Primacy and Recency
2. Repetition

■ PRIMACY AND RECENCY

There's a much used phrase in the speaking fraternity, which goes as follows: *'Start strong, finish stronger.'*

As humans we remember what is said at the start and we remember what is said at the end more than we remember what is said in the middle. Therefore, it is very important to make sure that what you say at the start of your speech is important (instead of 'fluff and bluster').

I have various options that always work to start strong.

I call this bag of tricks the **'Smart Start'**:

- A strong and *relevant* quote
- A relevant anecdote
- Ask your audience a question
- Ask the audience to do something

- Use a relevantly topical, real, dramatic or funny situation

- Refer to a topical or current event that is *relevant* to your topic

- You can do something dramatic – but make sure you explain your reasons quickly afterwards. One of my recent examples was a financial controller who was about to deliver the last quarter's results, and who recited a poem before beginning. The relevance of the poem was all the audience could talk about afterwards.

As you can see from the list, there are many ways in which to grab the audience's attention, and to make what you are about to say both memorable and interesting, whatever your profession or topic.

The only point to reinforce here is relevance.

Whatever your choice of creative opening, it *has* to reflect the topic that you are about to discuss.

The end is much easier to remember; we all know instinctively that the end of the speech needs to contain a key message or a call to action, even if it's because it's the end! Even here, it's very surprising how often people will squander this opportunity and will 'tail off' rather than finish with a memorable 'bang'.

■ REPETITION

One of the main reasons that we remember the words of our favourite childhood nursery rhymes, not to mention our 'times tables' from our early maths lessons, is because of the endless repetition that we used – either voluntarily in the case of the rhymes or under duress in the case of the maths!

You may well have heard of the 'tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them' structure and the efficacy of this is borne out by the repetition.

It just works!

WORKSHEET

LINE UP

STRUCTURE YOUR SPEECH

(i) Icebreaker: **“The Smart Start”**

(ii) Subject:

THE SET UP

(iii) Headline 1:

(iv) Headline 2:

(v) Headline 3:

THE MAIN EVENT

(vi) Story 1:

(vii) Story 2:

(viii) Story 3:

THE DEBRIEF

(ix) Recap 1:

(x) Recap 2:

(xi) Recap 3:

(xii) Conclusion / Call to Action, **Don't forget to finish stronger:**

STEP 03

ELEMENTS

2. Visual Aids

The challenge with visuals

■ COMPLEX V SIMPLE

Today's business community, almost without exception, favours the complex over the simple.

"we do really important, difficult, serious work, and our visuals need to reflect that".

There is a violent bias against images, as they are seen as 'touchy-feely', 'lightweight' and altogether an inferior form of communication.

This culture once again, has grown from our evolution from children to adults.

As children, we start with picture books and move on to books with a few illustrations, before finally arriving at solid text. People who read books are seen as intellectually superior to those who merely watch television, just as broadsheets (mainly text) are widely seen as being 'for the thinking man or woman', whereas the tabloid papers, rich with big type and images, together with their readership are generally cast in a less intellectual light.

Culturally, it therefore stands to reason that pictures are out and text is in.

Serious people read text.

End of.

Or not? The challenge with cultural conditioning is that people never challenge it. As a result, complex data is the accepted way forward.

■ BULLETS KILL

Many people fall into the trap of using busy textual slides and they forget that visual aids are there to support us as speakers, rather than to be the entire focus itself. After all, if it were all about the visual aids why not just send the presentation to the audience via email?!

This having been said, there are naturally times when information can be shared which supports your verbal communication.

The trick is to make sure that your visual aids are just there to back you up and not the other way around.

Do try and buck the trend – It stands to reason that if your slides are busy or hard to read or over complicated, they will detract from your presentation rather than adding to it.

It does mean that you have to put in the work, to translate the complex to the simple. Be brutal – try and think of one idea for one slide.

The reason?

You are the main visual aid.

That's it.

The key points here are that a visual aid should be: -

a) Visual

This may seem an obvious statement, but as mentioned, we seem to be conditioned by what everyone else does, to interpret visuals as a mass of text and bullet points.

The cliché 'A picture paints a thousand words' is not a cliché by accident.

The more you can replace text and bullet points with images, around which you can talk, the more memorable your communication will be.

The visual cortex of the brain takes up twice as much as any of the other senses. We are visual animals.

Science tells us that images are processed using long-term memory, whereas text is processed using short-term memory.

One study showed that as little as **10%** of text was remembered **3 DAYS AFTERWARDS**, whereas upwards of **65%** was remembered of the visual information.

STEP 03

ELEMENTS CONT.

b) An aid.

That is to say, an aid for your audience, not just for you! Most of the time, I see people producing some form of bullet pointed data as a prompt for themselves, without thinking about the value of what they are projecting for the people they are talking to.

Have a think about using an image to turn the complex into the simple i.e. to explain a complex idea with a simple image.

Get touchy-feely

There is nothing as alluring as a physical product. Or a demonstration using a physical product.

For example – during the heights of the coronavirus pandemic, one of the most popular videos on social media was Robert Isaacs' use of a bucket and a plastic bottle to explain how the virus needed to be contained in order for the NHS to work efficiently. The complexity of the challenge facing the NHS and the public at large was simplified so well using simple

props, that 4 million viewers watched it in a matter of days to see the man pouring water from a bucket into a bottle in his back yard.

Another great example of this is Dragon's Den (known as the Shark Tank in the US), where would-be inventors pitch their ideas to venture capitalists on prime-time TV.

One of the big selling points for TV audiences is that they get to see the products and how they work, before the financial cross-examination begins.

Imagine how much harder it would be for the Inventors to sell their ideas, without having their products there for the investors to feel, smell, touch, taste, but above all, to look at.

Without the visual stimulus, it would not be a watchable programme, either.

So have a think about how you might use physical products or a demonstration, to bring your communication to life.

■ POINTS TO REMEMBER

- It's all about the audience.

Visual aids should be a) visual and b) an aid for them.

- Visual aids are there to support you not replace you.

Because of this, make sure that any visual aids you use are to your left. From your audiences perspective, that means that you will be on their left and your visual aids will be on their right.

Your audience reads everything from left to right and it's important that you give them a visual prompt that they are there to see and listen to you first, then your visual aids second.

- A picture paints a thousand words - stimulate your audiences imagination as much as possible using images, diagrams, pictures and photographs.

Use a variety of visual aids – e.g. flip chart and slides (when appropriate)

- Don't be afraid to get touchy feely - hit your audience's emotions.
- Remember the B key to control the focus of the audience (I'm sure you know this, but if you press the B key, the slides will 'black out', allowing all the focus to revert to you.
- Make sure that you click through any slides in advance to make sure that there are no glitches.
- In addition, ensure that you play through any videos and audio clips for video and sound quality in advance.

STEP 04

REHEARSE UNTIL YOU ARE NATURAL

When I think back to my acting days, if anyone suggested the thought of putting on a play without rehearsals, he or she would be laughed out of the theatre. It's inconceivable to think of not rehearsing a play and it should be the same with your speech, presentation or pitch.

Barack Obama, widely recognised as one of the world's great orators, looks natural and at ease when he speaks.

Do you think he practises? You'd better believe he does. He hasn't reached the level he has reached through natural ability alone.

The old adage – apparently first coined by the legendary golfer Gary Player – *'the more I practice, the luckier I get'*, holds true in every area where people look to excel. And public speaking is no exception.

Where the real magic happens

An early acting mentor of mine once gave me a mantra that I still use every time I am going to deliver a speech:

"Learn your lines and then practise until the magic happens" he said.

We understand the very obvious need for rehearsal to become used to the content.

What I had never considered and to my mind, what few people consider, are the other benefits of doing it, which is where 'the magic happens'.

■ BENEFIT 1

Firstly, it ensures the smooth running of your speech, by ironing out any clunkiness or lack of flow, both in subject matter and delivery.

Rehearsal allows you to feel more practiced, therefore more professional and therefore more confident.

When people tell me that they don't have time to rehearse, I simply do not believe them. If something is important, you MAKE time, so I will always look for an underlying reason in the people I coach rather than the excuse.

■ BENEFIT 2

Rehearsal allows you to get the timing of your speech right. There are few things worse than running over – it makes you look unprofessional – and there is no worse feeling as a speaker to run out of things to say before your slot is 'done'.

■ BENEFIT 3

The most important reason to rehearse beyond a shadow of a doubt in my mind, is that once you have embedded your content to the level that you are comfortable with as far as shape and structure are concerned, you can then start to make it yours.

What I mean by this is that when you are learning and practising your speech/pitch/presentation, together with the communication tips that will maximise your impact, it is all rather mechanical.

Having reached the stage where you are no longer having to think about the moves and the lines, you are now at the point where you can trust that all that work will have made those mechanics automatic.

As a result, you can start to get creative and to impose your own character upon it.

Of course, to do this, you need to have learned your speech or presentation or pitch so well, that it has become second nature.

■ BENEFIT 4

It is said that Abraham Lincoln coined the phrase: *"Endeavour to Persevere"*.

Perseverance can be engrained through discipline. We all know that hard work is a good thing; the trick is to make it a habit.

In the same way that, as children, the last thing we wanted to do at bedtime was to brush our teeth, but we wouldn't dream of not brushing our teeth twice a day as adults.

So somewhere in there, late childhood or adolescence, we have a) realised the value of the toothbrush (seeing the big picture – we won't be attractive to anyone if our teeth fall out!) and b) applied some self-discipline as a result.

STEP 04

REHEARSE UNTIL YOU ARE NATURAL CONT.

■ THE 4 SECRETS TO PERSEVERANCE

The secret seems to be then, that in order for you to persevere:

1. See the value of doing so

2. Raise awareness for the importance to you of achieving the goal you are attempting to reach. In the 'Application and Discipline' case study mentioned earlier, Keith embraced hard work. By going 'above and beyond' the reasonable limits expected of an average public speaking professional, he was proving to himself on a daily basis that – in his own words – *'if it's worthwhile, it's got to hurt'*.

3. 'Realise that Practice Pays'

You need to have a willingness to practice – and then practice, practice and practice some more – until your skills are hard-wired and improved to the level where you have instant credibility in that area and are recognised as a go-to specialist.

There is sadly no silver bullet, but do the work and focus on your goal – the reason why you are working so hard and the chore can become a real pleasure

Familiarise yourself with your material until you are ready to put your stamp upon it.

4. Keep yourself firmly rooted to your audience's seat as you're rehearsing your content from your audience's perspective.

There are 2 great ways of doing this: -

a) Get some objectivity, by asking for an impartial view from someone whose opinion you trust.

b) Why would your audience care about each element of your speech or presentation?

After every point/slide, ask yourself the question 'So what?' from the audience's perspective to test relevance.



04

WORKSHEET



What outcome will rehearsing this speech/pitch/presentation give me? (Be as specific as possible)



What are the potential timings challenges?



What are the potentially confusing or complex parts of my speech/presentation/pitch?



Which parts do I need to practise the most?

STEP 05

DELIVERY

“Enjoy the moment”

My early schooldays were challenging.

If your weekly marks didn't reach a certain standard, at the end of each week, you were compelled to stand and tell the whole school why you had underperformed.

As I gradually realised in later years, my subconscious had formed an extremely unhelpful association as a result of these weekly humiliations:

Standing up in public was dangerous.

The thought of any form of public speaking sent a primaevial shudder through my whole being; whether it was speaking in class, calling out my name when the register was taken – or later, speaking out, even in social gatherings, the damage was done.

It was much safer to keep your head down.

We may not even have had personal traumatic experiences on our feet, but it is enough either to have imagined being exposed on your feet, or even to have heard horror stories about other peoples' public speaking nightmares, in order to feel the dread of doing it.

We know that we are geared for survival, and the sheer potential for exposure when we speak in public makes doing it a potentially hazardous experience.

So how DO we learn to enjoy the experience?

It sounds simple, but a large part of the solution lies in recognising that, whilst our adrenaline levels may be telling us that this is life or death, no-one actually dies!

I once read an article whose title proclaimed that “*being nervous is essentially selfish*”.

It was a slap in the face, because selfishness and being nervous had never been linked in my mind in any way whatsoever.

As I read on, the point was made:

If we are nervous, who are we focusing on?

Answer: Ourselves.

Who should we be focusing on?

Answer: The audience.

The article stuck with me and has made a real difference. The more focused you are on giving the audience what it needs, the less your brain will be able to focus on your anxiety. It really works.

In addition: -

1. Recognise that nerves are normal.
2. Remember that we are born communicators – we are tribal animals and wired for it. It is only our learned dread (not based in real events) that stands in our way.
3. ‘If you fail to plan, you plan to fail’ – so practise, practise, practise!! The better prepared (and rehearsed) you are, the more confident you will feel.
4. It may seem crazy, but the more you do something, the easier it becomes – it's a law of the universe. So I urge you actively to seek opportunities to speak in public as much as you can.
5. Communicating is a privilege. It really is. If you are able to stand tall and talk passionately, persuasively and authentically about a subject, you have power. The power to move people, the power to inspire people.

In other words, it's about learning to see public speaking not as something to be feared and avoided, but instead to see it for what it is - a gift.

Celebrate success

Lastly, all this re-programming needs anchoring – or hard-wiring - to become habitual rather than practised, so get into the habit of celebrating your successes each time. It's like a pat on the back, not in a big-headed way, but just as a nod – or a reinforcement of your progress and a reminder to yourself that you will always be doing a lot of things well, despite our cultural conditioning to look for the negative aspects instead.

For each presentation, speech or pitch, try and think of a different celebration, to make each success specific and anchored to a feeling of pleasure, rather than self-criticism.

05

WORKSHEET



What is your personal incentive for this speech/pitch/presentation? (NB - not a sale nor a contract – that’s a result. It’s more about a developmental incentive, such as increased confidence, or a feeling of growing expertise or experience)



Perspective – nerves are normal AND no-one dies, so look for positive signs, not negative ones (i.e. smiles and nodding from your audience, instead of impatience and negative body language. They will be there – it’s just a matter of re-tuning your focus)



Anchor success – how will you celebrate your positive result?

STEP 06

ANALYSE HOW IT WENT

After the goal-setting and the rehearsal, the other much-neglected must-do is the review – or analysis - of how the speech, pitch or presentation went.

As you read this, the hope is that you are instinctively agreeing with the value of doing this.

Why then do so few people make a discipline of it?

Whatever the common reasons that others produce for not analysing their performances, try not to follow suit if you can.

The reason that I may be labouring this point is that it is impossible to improve unless you review your highs and lows after each performance.

It's vital to do this.

Lastly, the brain, for all its brilliance, does have its weak spots and it's too much to expect anyone to remember the minutiae of a speech, which may have occurred sometime in the past.

It's therefore also vital to write down your findings instead of just having a think about what's just happened.

Only then, in a similar way to taking photos of your life, can you then look back over your learning journey in the future and read how far you have come.

So the technique is simple:-

- A.** Write down what went well
- B.** Write down what didn't go as well as expected and therefore
- C.** Write down what you need to change for next time.

I. 'What went well?'

For the parents amongst you, I would ask you to consider the scenario when your child returns home with a report card from school. As a conditioned response, do you focus more attention on the 'A's' and the 'B's' - or the 'D's' and the 'E's'?

As a society, we are conditioned not to look at the positive, but at the negative side to life.

This is the reason why the 'What worked well?' part of the equation is in place. This is to get you to switch off your autopilot conditioned response of focusing on what's wrong or broken and instead, of getting into the habit of looking for the positive in every situation.

In practical terms, this means a daily reminder to remember that you are succeeding every day; the challenge is that you are too busy focusing on what isn't working, rather than on what is.

It is easy to forget that good things happen every day. The key is to acknowledge this, whatever else happens.

And what does recognition of daily achievement give us?

The suggestion is - several things.

A reminder that we are doing things right every day will give us confidence.

A reminder that we are doing things right every day will provide us with the means to measure our success.

A reminder that we are doing things right every day will enable us to fight the general culture of pessimism.

So, that's the 'What did I do well?' part. Even by itself, without the other 2 elements, a metaphorical and consistent pat on the back is a profound builder of 'self' (self-esteem, self-confidence and self-belief).

2. 'What did I learn?'

The second step in the improvement strategy is the 'What didn't work well – what are my 'learns?'

Very much in the same way as we are conditioned to look for the negative meaning in our experiences, so we are also conditioned by society to describe things that haven't succeeded as losing or failure.

And as we look at our adult lives, isn't it true that the only way of improving is by making mistakes? It's hard to think of a single example where we are immediately proficient at a new skill. It's a law of nature; we can't run until we have learned to walk.

STEP 06

ANALYSE HOW IT WENT CONT.

Success is only achieved through experience. Many would say – even many would say – that life is about the journey, not the destination. The journey is the suffering, the trial and error; the school of hard knocks and the knocks are what make us better.

So what we HAVE to do, is to be able to thrive in that area of mistakes and mishaps.

In order for us to do that, we need to reframe the word ‘failure’, which will hard-wire a resourceful new habit of experimentation in an area that others will struggle in.

So the first thing to do is to make a conscious decision to re-frame and re-name the word failure to learning - a more positive alternative.

Who likes to fail? No-one. Who likes to learn? Everyone.

So the idea here is to make a seemingly small change in mindset. If you see things that don’t work as ‘failures’ or ‘losses’, you will not want to experiment, to persist.

The trick is to move from ‘lose’ to ‘learn’ and to make failure a thing of the past. All you need to do now is to either reinforce our successes or to reframe our failures into ‘learns’ how to succeed the next time.

3. ‘So what do I need to do differently next time?’

This is the final step in the analysis ritual.

It is not enough to just reframe our failures into learns, as this will only change our emotions and attitudes to our challenges, but not our outcomes.

If we wish to improve our performance in a conscious and measured way, we need to employ learned mindfulness, so that we can judge whether or not our attempts to succeed are working or not – and if not, to refine or tweak our approach until we find a solution that gives us the required outcome.

06

WORKSHEET



What went well? What are my 'wins'?



What didn't go as expected? What are my 'learns'?



and therefore, what do I need to do differently next time?

PREPARING YOUR
A G E N D A

Guide On Public Speaking & Presentation

The **A G E N D A** approach is designed to give you the tools to be completely prepared before you put yourself in front of an audience.

This is what it's all about...

- A** Your Audience is number one
- G** Make sure you set a Goal and have a purpose
- E** Your content must have the Elements of structure and visual aids
- N** Get Natural with the words by practising
- D** Deliver the words with confidence and flair
- A** Analyse what went right and what you could do better

YOU DID IT!

Looking for more great content or feel like you need a chat to delve deeper?

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