

HOW TO BE A PERSUASIVE SPEAKER

It is a common misperception that some people are born orators. It is true, naturally, that some people are genetically better endowed, but none can use speech to good effect without acquiring the necessary skills. Top persuasive speakers provoke the thoughts of listeners sufficiently to move them to action. Whether you are an attorney presenting your case, or a manager motivating your team, you need to use speech to move listeners to take action. The job here is to create the correct message and deliver it through a fitting presentation. While coining the message is a separate issue, delivering it properly and sequentially is the job of a persuasive speaker. This is the reason why marketers create strategy but salespersons do the actual convincing. Alan H. Monroe of Purdue University had developed a very simple formula of preparing a persuasive presentation. Today, in the professional world it is referred to as Monroe's Motivated Sequence. In short, the sequence and the steps to deliver a message include:

1. **Grab Attention:** First, grab the attention of your audience. Do something for the audience to take notice, and focus their attention upon what you are saying. How to do that varies from situation to situation, but the principle remains the same. Whether you mention some shocking news, cut a good joke, or announce a bonus, is up to you and the situation. But, whatever you do, grab the attention of your audience at the very beginning of your speech.
2. **Create the Need:** Once you have the attention of your audience, you must quickly establish the presence of the problem you seek to address, and the reason as to why the audience needs to respond and take affirmative action. To do this effectively, you must prove with statistics or evidence that the audience deserves better, but will continue to be denied unless they decide to act.
3. **Provide the Direction:** Once the audience has recognized and agreed to the existence of a problem, it is time to introduce the solution. This is really the most important part of the presentation, and the place where you may find maximum resistance. People recognize a problem readily enough, but it is most difficult to get them to agree upon a proffered solution. Here the technique of presenting details by alternate elaborations and summarizations work well. This is the point in your presentation where you need to support your speech with concrete evidence familiar to the audience.
4. **Sell a Dream:** The listener will not be motivated to action unless he or she is convinced of a better future situation and the profits of reaching a goal. Setting the goal and establishing the need to reach the goal is not enough. The listener must visualize desired action, as conforming to his/her own needs, desires, or ambitions. The picture offered should be clear enough for the listener to visualize meaningful gain if action is taken and irretrievable loss if action is not taken.
5. **Define the Details:** At the last stage, you have to give the details of what needs to be done and must provide specific things for the listener to do. It is unwise to expect too much, and wise to provide options so that the listener finds the space to join ownership of the solution.

That is what is mostly needed to make a good persuasive presentation. Monroe's motivated sequence is time-tested and built upon the psychology of persuasion. Catch attention, establish a need, provide a solution, portray the future, and set the targets. It's not too tough. Anybody can make a persuasive presentation by understanding the method and acquiring these simple skills.

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