

Presenting Effectively & with Ease

By

Michael Grinder

*The average presenter informs
The good presenter persuades
The great presenter inspires*

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Six Wrong Ways to Make a Right First Impression— As a Speaker

Whether we are speaking to an individual or a group of 1000 people, our hand gestures can help us make a good first impression or they can be a distraction—and even a turnoff—for our listeners. We can avoid the six gesture habits that detract from our presentations by learning a strategy called “The Frozen Hand Gesture.”

First, here is what not to do:

Least Recommended:

1. ***Incessant Talker*** – the speaker never gestures. He talks fast and gulps air when inhaling. The group doesn’t see the speaker as confident or competent.
2. ***Hyperactive Talker*** – the speaker never stops gesturing or talking. The group becomes impulsive and unsafe.
3. ***Medicated Talker*** – the speaker never gestures. He pauses a very long time between thoughts. The group is bored and falls asleep.
4. ***“Thigh-workout” Talker*** – the speaker does gesture when talking, but he doesn’t have time to go to the gym so during each pause he drops his hands down to his thighs. The group sees the presentation as disjointed.
5. ***Belly Button Insecurity Talker*** – the speaker gestures well when talking, but during the pause, his hands return to his waist as if he is checking that his belly button didn’t vanish during the time he was talking. During each pause, the group thinks he is finished, so people are jolted when he starts talking again.
6. ***Milking Talker*** – the speaker skillfully gestures when talking and during each pause, he wisely doesn’t bring his hands back to his torso. However, he curls his fingers during the pause. The group wonders if he is from a dairy farm.

Recommended: “The Frozen Hand Gesture”

Talk	Pause	Talk	Pause	Talk
with gestures	freeze gestures	with gestures	freeze gestures	with gestures

Within seconds of the beginning of a presentation, listeners form an impression of the speaker. Listeners like to be around speakers who have the *intelligence* to hold their attention. So instead of demonstrating the six wrong ways to make a first impression, we use a reliable technique called a *Frozen Hand Gesture*. One part of the technique—the pause—creates the impression that we are intelligent and worth listening to. And unlike the spoken word, this non-verbal skill is effective cross-culturally. Here’s why the pause is so important. When we talk, listeners notice our culture; this includes the talking speed, volume, intonation, accent, facial expressions, and gestures. In contrast, when we pause they are impressed by our unspoken intelligence. Our comfort with the pause is a subliminal way to convey confidence and competency.

Five Wrong Ways to Make a Right First Impression—As a Listener

As mentioned above, when we are speaking, we display our intelligence by talking with interesting gestures and freezing the gesture during the pause. We convey cross-cultural intelligence by our comfort during the pause.

We can also display this same intelligence when we are not talking by how we position our forearms. And, as a bonus, this position doesn't just convey that we are intelligent; it communicates that the other person is also intelligent.

Because our brains learn quickly when we are presented with contrasts, we take a quick look at the five least recommended ways to hold our forearms. One way of remembering the wrong ways is to relate them to household pets. We operate from our *dog* when we want people to like us as a *person*. We operate from our *cat* when we want people to fear us as a *position of authority*. So again, we first consider what not to do.



Fig Leaf



Pockets



Behind Back



Arms Folded



On Hips

Dog Posture

Cat Posture

To communicate that we are intelligent, comfortable, and competent we hold our forearms in one of three positions.



At Side



Parallel



Combination

One helpful hint is to hold a pen or book in your hand. For some reason we posture our forearms appropriately when we hold an object.



Object In Hand (Paper)



Object In Hand (Pencil)

Presenting with Pizza(zz) - Part One, The Crust

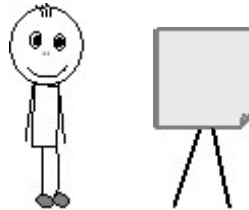
By: Michael Grinder & Mary Yenik

This formula is a recipe for winning over any audience in two minutes. It's a breakthrough for presenters because they can use a single sequence for their opening and then add one of seven options to fit the particular audience. Using the analogy of turning a pizza into pizzazz, the sequence is like the crust and the seven options are like the best possible toppings.

Crust: There are the five ingredients that make up the basic opening – this is foundation for the seven toppings detailed in Part Two.

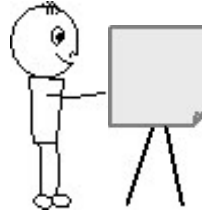
- 1. Establish a location for presenting.** This is the place from which you will do much of your presentation. Open with a greeting...

“Thank you for coming.” [Two-point with a friendly voice]



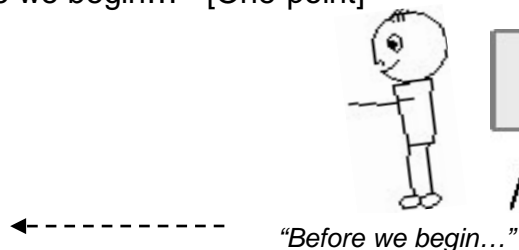
While speaking, turn to your left and establish a “third point” on which you have written your agenda, etc. Many presenters find it helpful to transition to this third point within the first 30-60 seconds. As you begin to turn, you say:

“Our topic is...” [Three-point with a businesslike voice]

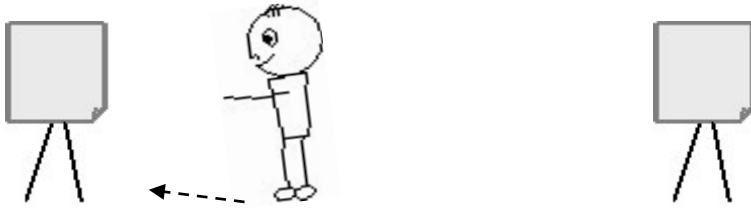


- 2. Transition to a new location.** To prepare for one of the seven options (listed below), walk over to a location off-to-the-side. As you walk to the outside of the front of the room, look down and speak in a different voice as you say,

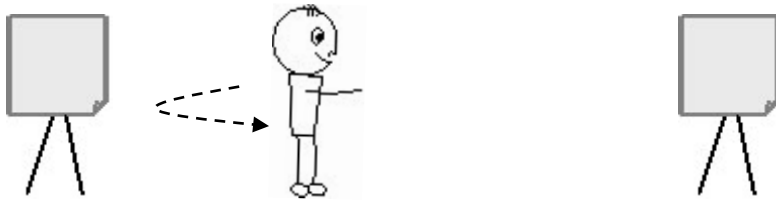
“Before we begin...” [One-point]



3. **Select a topping.** Once you have arrived at the new location, you are ready to use one of several toppings listed below. You may want to use a second flipchart.



4. **Return to the original greeting/presentation location.** After using the topping of your choice, you are finished communicating from the place over to the side. Now, return to the center location by walking in silence and looking down. Do a complete about-face as you return rather than sliding back to presentation spot with your body partly turned toward the audience.



5. **Begin your formal presentation.** Decide whether to *join* the off-to-the side content with your main content or to *separate* it from the main content. Two choices:

Join. If the content *over there* was positive, look over and with a gathering gesture, bring it into the presentation spot. For examples of when and how to bring good stuff over to your presentation spot, see the description of Toppings Four and Five in Pizzazz, Part Two.]

Separate. To separate what happened *over there* [the spot you just left], first settle in the presentation spot while still looking down. Take your time. Then with your eyes and hands in perfect sync, “pop up” and begin your presentation with a few high-interest words. Reminder: If the content over there was negative, leave it there; do not refer to it as you begin your presentation.

This completes the opening sequence, your pizza's crust.

Toppings: there are seven toppings you can put on your crust. To help you remember them, the initials from each of the options form the acronym **Bargosa** ...an old Grinder family recipe.

B--Bad News: Address bad news in a way that keeps people resourceful.

A--Assume an Identity: When you lack credibility with the audience, become someone who already has credibility with them.

R--Resistance is Acknowledged: Acknowledge the elephant of resistance immediately.

G--Goals: Establish goals and determine the appropriate level of dependence on you.

O--Open off to the side: If the opening bombs, you move back to the center and recover your composure.

S--Stories told off to the side can be recalled later. By locating stories away from center stage, you can create a more powerful emotional impact.

A--Answers & Questions: Establish a location away from your presentation so that you are not interrupted by questions until you are ready for questions.

**While others may define my
success by,
“Did I get the results?”**

**I will define myself by,
“How did I do based on the level
of permission
I had?”**

Michael Grinder

On hard days – put a Q-tip in your pocket. There are two ends. Pretend the initials at one end stands for Quit – Taking It Personally. And imagine the initials at the other end represent Quietly – Take it Professionally.

[from *Shifting Gears* by Robin Rose; www.robinrose.com]

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