

# Presenting... Presentations!



How much sense does this make?

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How about this? Does it make any *more* sense?

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Business is built upon relationships and relationships are built upon communication – clear communication.

As globalization continues, there is an ever-increasing need for clear communication in multi-cultural environments using some common language, such as English, German, Japanese or Chinese. And this communication happens in several ways: email, phone calls and conference calls, through web pages, and...giving presentations.

What comes to your mind when you think about giving a presentation?

Jerry Seinfeld said, "According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy." So, is there a way to make this stressful process easier – especially in a foreign language (such as English)? Yes. Historically, giving presentations was considered a 2-cycle process: preparation and delivery. This is what nearly all presentation courses talk about – and is how presentations are taught in many Business English books. However, increasingly giving presentations is being viewed as having a 3-stage life-cycle: the preparation phase, the design phase and the delivery phase.

How the visual aids of a presentation are prepared actually *is* the presentation. We have developed a program that thinks about what the participant needs to **know** to give an effective presentation, what he/she needs to **do** to give an effective presentation and what kind of people they need to **be**. Accent has developed a program that is short (16 hours) and practical (8 tasks) to help participants learn how to prepare, *design* and deliver effective presentations.

But how do you help people who give presentations all the time improve their presentation skills? This has been the question I've had to face recently.

Accent Corporate Training has recently run their Effective Business Presentations course in two organizations. In each organization, the participants are people who have a great deal of contact with presentations in different forms – either as participants or presenters.

Many presentation courses fall into one of three categories: highly theoretical and focusing on the minutia of communication theory; impractical presentation of practical methods;

focused on practice and performance with little understanding of underlying principles.

There are, of course, good presentation courses, but finding a course in English given by people who have given many presentations and actually use their own methodology, both in the presentation course as well as in other presentations they give, is difficult.

The Presentations training that Accent is offering is the methodology that we use in all of our skills courses (Modern Business e-Correspondence and Telephoning for Customer Service, among others). We have developed a presentation model (or philosophy for giving presentations) that is built upon a solid theoretical foundation. This foundation is presented to the participants through a practical process that is based upon usage rather than lecture.

Practicing and developing your presentation skills is one of the keys to effective communication – just like this table is the key to understanding the puzzle at the beginning of this article.

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