

# PEAK PRESENTATIONS



Engage Your Audience  
Get *RESULTS*

**Robert Hellmann**

# Peak Presentations

Engage Your Audience, Get *RESULTS*

By Robert Hellmann, President of *Hellmann Career Consulting*

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## About the Author

As President of *Hellmann Career Consulting*, Robert Hellmann provides career services to individuals and organizations. He's a certified Five O'Clock Club Senior Career Coach and Executive Coach as well as an adjunct Instructor at New York University. Rob has delivered "Presentation & Pitch," "Social Media," "Creativity" and "Employee Engagement" seminars to global Fortune 500 companies. He also runs weekly career strategy groups for c-level executives on behalf of the Club. In his private coaching practice, Rob has helped thousands of individuals to achieve career and presentation success.

Rob's background includes over 20 years of experience in Career Development, Organizational Development and Marketing. His clients and employers include American Express, JP Morgan Chase, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and the Audubon Society. He has developed career-training programs for higher-education including Columbia University, Harvard Business School, New York University, Fordham University, Montclair State University, Baruch College and Pace University.

Rob's career-related insights and commentary have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *The Washington*

*Post, Money Magazine, the Chicago Tribune, CNBC.com, NBC News, ABC News and more.*

Active in non-profit organizations, Rob is on the board of the Association of Talent Development's (ATD) New York chapter, and has chaired Program Committees for the NY Chapter of the Marketing Executives Networking Group (MENG). He has also worked with the Big Brother/Big Sister program to offer career-related support.

Rob combines his marketing background with his training and coaching experience to help individuals present themselves effectively, and organizations improve employee communication. Feel free to contact him at [rob@hellmannconsulting.com](mailto:rob@hellmannconsulting.com), or visit his website at [www.hellmannconsulting.com](http://www.hellmannconsulting.com).

*“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.”*

**Jerry Seinfeld**

*"Make thyself a craftsman in speech, for thereby thou shalt gain the upper hand."*

**Inscription found in a 3,000 year-old Egyptian Tomb**



## Introduction

Hello and welcome. The journey you are about to take is split into four parts. In the first part (Chapter 1), we'll cover what does and doesn't make for a “peak” presentation. In Chapters 2 through 9, we'll look at how to apply the *RESULTS* methodology. In Chapter 10, we'll move on to how to adapt the *RESULTS* methodology to your pitch, which is essentially a mini presentation. Finally, in Chapters 11, 12 and 13, we'll cover some additional tips on dealing with anxiety, organizing your presentation and optimizing the physical, “mechanical” aspects of your presentation.

Before I reveal the secrets to a great presentation, let me share with you a little of my background (beyond what's in the “About the Author” section) and what inspired me to write this book.

I have delivered countless presentations in my career. These presentations have consistently received top survey scores, great email and verbal feedback, referrals and requests for repeat engagements. In fact, my career hinges on my being able to deliver a powerful presentation, so I have continued to hone my skill through observation, research and practice.

The impetus for writing this book, however, came from my frustration with the quality of presentation skills training out there. Too much of the training I've observed and experienced focuses on the mechanics as the key to a great presentation. By "mechanics," I mean things like where you stand on the stage, lighting, posture, vocal quality, etc. These aspects of presenting routinely comprise the bulk of training. While important, the mechanics will only get you so far; the keys to presentation greatness lie elsewhere (as you will see in Chapter 1).

This book addresses this gap in training; it will show you how you can go beyond the mechanics to truly make your presentations powerful, memorable, and effective. The book's contents primarily represent both a summary of my field-tested experience and my study of great (and not-so great) presenters.

Now on with the show!

## Chapter 1: Defining “Peak Presentations”

*“You can speak well if your tongue can deliver  
the message of your heart.”*

**John Ford**

When I give a presentation skills training workshop, I start off with the following slide and ask the room, “What is the number one key to a great presentation?”

### Key to a Great Presentation?

1. Where you stand in the room
2. How you use your hands
3. Making eye contact with an audience
4. Using “pauses” in the right places
5. All of the above
6. None of the above

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Some people select “Where you stand in the room.” Others choose “How you use your hands” or “Making eye

contact” or “Using pauses.” Some are convinced that the answer is “All of the above.” Never has someone chosen “*None of the above,*” which is, in fact, the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Let me explain.

The items I have listed here are “the mechanics” of a presentation. While the mechanics can help or hurt, they are not the defining factor.

Think about it. When you leave a presentation that you thought was terrific, you're unlikely to say, "I loved where he stood on the stage," or, "I thought her arm movements really emphasized her points well," or, "his eye contact was excellent," or, "the pauses were all in the right places."

What you might say is: "That story she told was so moving," or, "Wow, that information surprised me! I never thought about it like that," or, "I feel inspired and motivated by his vision."

View the mechanics as having the potential to hurt your presentation if you get them very wrong (we will cover the most common mechanical issues in Chapter 13), but not as holding the key to a “peak presentation.” For most of this book, we’ll be going far beyond the mechanics.

Remember, some people are considered great presenters despite insurmountable mechanical issues. One of the best professors I ever had was blind, so he wasn't able to make

eye contact. Another fantastic presenter I saw was in a wheelchair and unable to use his hands, yet he inspired everyone in his audience.

What did these and other peak presenters know that helped them to go beyond the mechanics and achieve greatness in their presentations? The next chapter provides the answer.

## Chapter 2: **RESULTS** Matter

*“If you don’t know what you want to achieve in your presentation, your audience never will.”*

**Harvey Diamond**

*(#1 Best-selling co-author, Fit for Life)*

Great presenters intuitively know how to apply the **RESULTS** method in their presentations. While it’s a corny acronym, it is an effective way to remember the principles that I’m going to share.

**R**eally Simple  
**E**ngaging  
**S**taories  
**U**seful  
**L**icensed  
**T**ailored  
**S**urprising

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It all starts with keeping your presentation really SIMPLE. Then you need to actively ENGAGE your audience, tell STORIES (i.e. give memorable examples), make it USEFUL, be perceived as having LICENSE (i.e. expertise) and TAILOR your talk to the audience and situation. Finally, you need to employ the element of SURPRISE. Getting these seven elements into your presentation will make all the difference in how you come across.

Before we dive into each element of the *RESULTS* method, you need to clearly understand the purpose of your presentation. Ask yourself, “Why am I delivering this?” “What is my objective, and my desired outcome?”

In a business setting, there are generally two types of presentations, *influencing* and *enabling*.

*Influencing* may include persuading someone regarding a decision they are making, trying to sell something, or advocating for a course of action.

If you are *enabling* your audience, then your goal is to teach them a new skill, concept or way of thinking. You can consider this book an *enabling* presentation, since my primary purpose is to teach you how to become a great speaker.

While it’s important to know which type of presentation

you want to give, every great talk ultimately includes elements of both. For example, in the case of this book, in order to enable you to become a peak presenter, I have to influence you to accept my ideas.

Your first step in creating a top-notch presentation is to be clear about your purpose. If you aren't clear, then the audience won't be either and then you'll have a problem.

**Really Simple**  
**Engaging**  
**Stories**  
**Useful**  
**Licensed**  
**Tailored**  
**Surprising**

**What's the purpose...**

**Influence  
or  
enable?**

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Don't make the mistake one of my clients made. She came to me after she delivered a less than stellar presentation to a senior executive. She wasn't sure if she should have



presented an overview of the department and how it works - in other words, an *enabling* presentation - or delivered recommendations on how to make the department more efficient - in other words, an *influencing* presentation.

She needed to do the homework ahead of time to understand what kind of information her boss was looking for. The bottom line: you need to decide in advance what you want your audience to say, feel or think following your presentation.

Once you've decided whether your presentation is primarily an enabling one or an influencing one, you're ready to move forward by bringing in each of the elements of the *RESULTS* method.

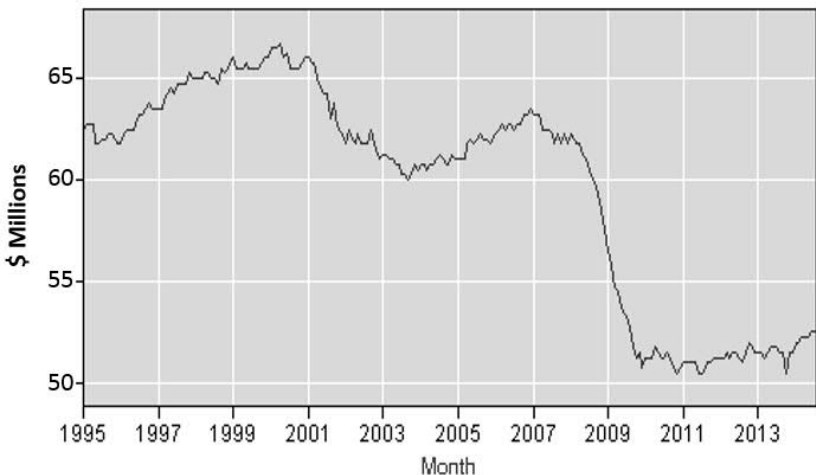
## Chapter 3: Really Simple

*“Make everything as simple as possible but not simpler...If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.”*

**Albert Einstein**

Keeping things as simple as possible helps to ensure that your message will be heard and understood. Let's look at some examples to illustrate what I mean by “simple,” using charts and tables that might be included in presentation slides.

### Gross Revenue is Still Depressed



How quickly do you understand the point this chart is trying to make? For me, it takes about three seconds. It's clearly titled so that you understand: "Gross Revenue is Still Depressed." And you see just one line that drops off steeply beginning in 2008, and then stays low. Pretty clear.

Now take a look at this next slide.

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purchase this book, at**

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**Thank you!**

This insightful and informative guide can revolutionize how you communicate with your clients, your bosses, and other audiences. Learn the **RESULTS™** method and master the art of presentation. Whether it's a thirty-second pitch or a two-hour seminar, whether you present to one person or a thousand, this book is for you. You'll learn what information to include, keys to a memorable delivery, and how to use visuals, pacing, and storytelling to make your presentations shine. Written in a light, engaging style, and filled with case studies and easy to use tools, this powerful book gives you the skills you need to persuade and inform your audience, and get the results you seek.



**Robert Hellmann** has helped thousands of clients in diverse industries and professions to reach their career goals through great presentations. Along with his career- and executive-coaching practice, Rob delivers over a hundred seminars annually to Fortune 500 companies, non-profits, institutes of higher education, and government agencies. He is an instructor at NYU's School of Professional Studies, and a certified Five O'Clock Club career coach. His career-related

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