



9 STEPS TO KEEP AN AUDIENCE TUNED IN

Author **Michelle Bowden** reveals tips for your next presentation

Presentation and influencing skills expert Michelle Bowden says most people have had the experience in which a business meeting goes wrong.

Bowden, one of 35 female Certified Speaking Professionals (CSP) in Australia, says it often occurs when a presenter either does not grab the attention of their audience from the outset or loses control of a presentation.

“The problem is that it doesn’t matter how good your message is if no one’s listening!” she says.

“And the good news is that in my experience, anyone can be an exceptional presenter. It’s just a matter of knowing what to do and doing it.”

She provides her advice to succeed in your next business presentation or pitch to an audience.

1 ANALYSE THE AUDIENCE

Before making the presentation, decide what change you are trying to create within or for the audience.

2 BUILD RAPPORT

Remember, it’s not about you, it’s all about the audience. Get them on your side.

3 PRACTICE

Practising your presentation again and again will increase your confidence and lift your performance to greater levels.

4 WARM UP

Do some voice exercises or read parts of your presentation out loud before you try to speak so you don’t trip over your words. A rich, resonant vocal quality does wonders for your credibility and makes it easier for people to listen to you.

5 FOCUS

Keep your attention on your audience at all times and try not to be distracted by anything occurring outside the room.

6 USE PROPS EFFECTIVELY

Don’t read your slides to your audience. Slides should only be a visual aid.

7 USE YOUR BODY

This can help support your message. For example, do not stand like a statue with your hands placed over your crotch in what is known as the fig leaf or reluctant nudist posture.

8 PAUSE AND BREATHE

Pausing in between points will help your audience listen,

allow you clarity of thought, give you a feeling of greater relaxation and also a stronger voice.

9 ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Ensure your audience is as clear about what you want them to do next and leave them feeling great.



them feeling great.