



# Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story

By Jerry Weissman

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## Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story By Jerry Weissman

In *Presenting to Win: Persuading Your Audience Every Time*, the world's #1 presentation consultant shows how to connect with even the toughest, most high-level audiences--and move them to action. Jerry Weissman shows presenters of all kinds how to dump those PowerPoint templates once and for all--and learn to tell compelling stories that focus on what's in it for their listeners. Drawing on dozens of practical examples and real case studies, Weissman shows presenters how to identify their real goals and messages before they even open PowerPoint; how to stay focused on what their listeners really care about; and how to capture their audiences in the first crucial 90 seconds. From bullets and graphics to the effective, sparing use of special effects, Weissman covers all the practical mechanics of effective presentation--and walks readers through every step of building a Power Presentation, from brainstorming through delivery. Unlike the techniques in other presentation books, this book's easy, step-by-step approach has been proven with billions of dollars on the line, in hundreds of IPO road shows before the world's most jaded investors.

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# PREFACE

## What's Past Is Prologue

My first experience with the power of the spoken word came on December 8, 1941, when as a child, I joined my father and mother at the family Philco radio to hear President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, deliver his stirring Day of Infamy speech. I'll never forget how he concluded, his rich voice reverberating: "With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounded determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph. So help us God." In that exhilarating moment, Roosevelt's potent words pierced through our dismay, lifted our spirits, and restored our confidence in our nation and in our future.

Later, I learned more about the ability of words to move people's minds in my graduate classes in the Speech and Drama Department at Stanford University, where I studied the works of the great Greek orators. Still later, in my work as a news and public affairs producer for CBS Television in New York, I witnessed the momentous impact of the words of great national leaders, from John F. Kennedy to Martin Luther King, Jr.

But I never fully realized the universal significance of communication until I left the broadcast medium and entered the world of business. The medium of choice in business is the presentation, and I soon discovered the force it can exert: A poor presentation can kill a deal, while a powerful one can make it soar. Early in my business career, I was privileged to work on the Initial Public Offering presentation, known as an IPO road show, for Cisco Systems, and saw, on its first day of trading after the road show, Cisco's valuation increase by over 40 million dollars.

The big *Aha!* for me was the realization that *every* communication is an IPO. Everyone communicates every day. You do. I do. Every time we do, we can either fail or succeed. My job is to help you succeed in your everyday communications, just as I helped the Cisco IPO, and as I've helped hundreds of corporations like Microsoft and Intel, and thousands of clients who are executives or managers or salespeople just like you. My job is to help you persuade every audience, every time.

The very same principles that propelled Cisco's success reach all the way back to the classical concepts of Aristotle. Those same basics underlie Abraham Lincoln's towering rhetoric that healed a nation torn asunder by civil war. They underlie Sir Winston Churchill's inspiring orations and Franklin Roosevelt's assuring fireside chats that rallied their nations to the victorious defense of the free world. And they underlie Martin Luther King's rousing speeches that spearheaded the civil rights movement.

They also underlie your sales pitch, your presentation to a potential new customer, your bid for financing, your requisition for more resources, your petition for a promotion, your appeal for a raise, your call to action, and your own quest for the big *Aha!*

They are the principles that will empower you to present to win.

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