

Cathy Alper Professional Development Workshop, Feb. 10, 2010

“PRESENTATION ENGINEERING”

Cathy indicated that the Purpose of her presentation was to: “increase your comfort and confidence in designing and delivering presentations.” She called the framework for that Purpose: “Event Engineering”.

Cathy described “Event Engineering” as having 7 distinct components:

1. Outcomes/successes: what impact will the presentation have?
2. Who: what information do you have about your audience?
3. Content: is your presentation well-crafted with a clear core message?
4. Process: will it help audience relate to and remember the message?
5. Deliver: do you know the content so well that you can “go with the flow”?
6. Watch: are you constantly aware of your audience’s reactions/interest?
7. Adjust: can you adjust the process/content “on the fly”, if needed?

She emphasized that “**content**” had to balance “**process**”, meaning that it’s not enough to have adequate content...you need to present it in a way that your audience can relate to and remember.

One way to help people relate to and remember **content** is, in her words, to “make it sticky”. In other words, use a technique that causes key points from your presentation to “stick” in people’s brains. Some techniques to “make it sticky” are:

- Relate it to something connected to their own lives
- Use the element of surprise to get an emotional response
- Appeal to their senses: seeing, hearing, touching, etc.
- Use “social proof” (i.e., testimonials, statistics, etc.)
- Relate it something that makes people care about it

There are 3 aspects to the “**process**” you use to deliver your content:

1. The ability to “be here now”, which means you know your content so well that you can “go with the flow” of the moment
2. Watching for non-verbal cues that carry a message about your audience’s state of mind/receptiveness
3. Having a Plan B that allows you to adapt your presentation instantly to accommodate your audience’s needs

She stressed the importance of practice, practice, practice (with feedback) and suggested finding speakers you like so you can watch them and learn from them. She also suggested reading the book, “*Made to Stick*” by Chip and Dan Heath.

The real value of Cathy’s presentation was that she exhibited all the qualities she was saying were important...which made you realize her concepts didn’t just “look good on paper”, but really made a presentation more enjoyable and effective!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE DRAWINGS FOR GIFTS:

- Billy Knight won an ASTD gift certificate for a future monthly program
- Marshall Whitlock, Helen Morscher, Michele Marsden, Erica Gumienny, Bonnie Beenken and Karen Barker won books by well-known authors in the learning field
- Dana Biesterfeldt and Karen Anderson-Eberhardy won a coaching session with Cathy Alper