

..... THE 7
CLOSING MISTAKES
PRESENTERS MAKE

AND HOW YOU CAN AVOID THEM



Roberto Monaco

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Introduction

Is seven your lucky number? I hope it is because we've discovered the seven common mistakes presenters make when they close their presentation. By recognizing and overcoming these mistakes, you will ensure that your presentations yield the results you desire. The tools to create a powerful, urgent, and engaging message that is well-structured and impactful will be well within your reach once you understand why and how these seven critical mistakes must be eliminated from your future presentations.

My vast experience in the areas of peak performance, leadership, the psychology of achievement, presentation skills and sales comes from years of consulting and advising Fortune 500 companies, executives, managers, and sales professionals. With my business partner, Jeff Paro, InfluenceOlogy was founded in 2008 with the mission to teach people how to make a positive impact in their business and personal lives by becoming MASTERS OF INFLUENCE. The tools we provide allow our clients to take control of their destiny. Why? Because influence is power. By influencing others and challenging yourself to the mindset shifts we offer through our teachings, you will find that your destiny is determined solely by YOU. Read on to create the destiny of your dreams through effective communication, an unshakeable mindset, and foolproof presentation techniques.

Mistake #1

Developing your Content Prior to your Offer

Presenters tend to spend lots of time and energy researching their points, developing their ideas, and curating their stories. They forget about the audience and what action they want them to take at the end of the presentation. That strategy doesn't work because their content lacks the introduction to the problem that their closing offer will solve. Their content doesn't frame or pre-sell the offer, and it doesn't address any concerns that the offer may raise. Developing your content without thinking about your offer or your close first is like taking a vacation without knowing the destination. You're trying to pack but how do you begin if you don't know where you're going? What if you're going to Alaska in the winter or the humid forest of Brazil in the summer? You've got to know where you're going so you can pack the right clothes, right?

Think of your presentation in the same way. The results of this strategy are very simple. If you have a decent presentation with a very bad close, you'll have very poor conversion ratios. In other words, without having crafted your entire presentation around your final offer, your presentation will not yield the desired result. Have you found yourself developing a presentation without first addressing the offer or close? Not to worry, in my experience as a presentation coach, most presenters develop the content without first considering the most crucial part.

I once had a conversation with a chiropractor who was so excited for an upcoming presentation he was giving his current and prospective patients. He said, "Roberto, I am developing a talk about stress reduction." Of course, my

first question was, "What is your offer?"

"What do you mean my offer?" He seemed confused.

"What's your desired outcome?"

"I want to help people and I hope that by the time I'm done, people come and ask for my business card."

Obviously, he didn't have a clear close or offer ready. I used this opportunity and said, "No, no, no. The first thing you do is stop and ask yourself: What is my desired outcome? What is my close? What is my offer? What do I want the audience to do by the time I'm done?" I told him what I'm telling you now; first you must have a clear vision of the outcome. Then, you can develop your ideas, stories, and points around attaining the outcome you desire.

For each of your future presentations, answer these questions to increase your conversion rate and become clear on your intentions. Develop your content around your offer or close and rest assured that you know exactly where you're going.

- 1.) At the end of my presentation, what do I want my audience to do?
- 2.) What do I want my audience to believe?
- 3.) How do I want them to feel?
- 4.) Does my offer solve the problems that I covered during the presentation?
- 5.) Does my offer help my audience achieve their own desired outcome?
- 6.) Does my offer address the major objections that the audience may

have?

7.) Does my offer have a name that I'll be referring to during my presentation?

Mistake #2

Discomfort During the Close

Most presenters tend to feel uncomfortable when they present their closing offer. Combating this is critical. I know many presenters who love and have absolutely NO fear of public speaking, but when it comes time to talk about their offer, product, or service, they feel super uncomfortable. They avoid talking about it altogether or they poorly describe how they can help the audience.

Many years ago, a professional hired me to watch one of his live presentations. He was speaking publicly to acquire new clients but his results were terrible; he was receiving compliments like, “You are so great” or, “I loved your presentation,” but he wasn’t getting any new clients as he’d hoped. As a former college professor, he was very comfortable in front of people and his delivery was on point. He engaged the audience by telling great stories and making them laugh. Everybody enjoyed the presentation, including myself. At one point, I questioned, “That is weird. He is doing everything right, so why isn’t the audience buying from him?”

When he transitioned from the content of the presentation to the close, I had my answer. The energy in the room suddenly dropped. It looked like he was suffering. He seemed apologetic for having a solution and service for the audiences’ problem. The presentation finally ended, people thanked him, and they left the room. He looked at me without saying anything, but he didn’t need to. His body language communicated, “You see, it happened again. Nobody bought from me.”

We sat down for our coaching session to debrief, and after discussing the positive aspects of his presentation, I asked him, “What do you feel when you offer your services in front of an audience? What beliefs do you have about the process?” He responded, “I feel like a used car salesman. I love speaking and teaching, but I don't like the sales aspect of the presentation.”

With feelings of fear, dread, or guilt, how could anyone be effective?

This limiting belief was causing him to change the energy level of his presentation. At an unconscious level, he was sending a positive message about his content and a negative message about his offer. Can you relate to that? Have you ever felt awkward when pitching your products and services? Do you hate selling from the front of a room?

During our event, “Influencing from the Front,” we teach several ways to overcome this. Here are a few:

- 1.) If you believe 100% that your offer can help people BUT you feel uncomfortable offering it, you are making your presentation about you, not about your audience. You are more concerned about what the audience is going to think about you, and you fear rejection. Instead, the presentation needs to be about them, and how they can get to the next level with your offer.
- 2.) You will have more opportunities to help your audience with your product or service than with your presentation. You can only cover so much in a presentation since time limits what you can do. The real impact occurs when your talk is done and they start working with you or consuming your product.

3.) If you are confident about your topic, you can be confident about unveiling your offer. Your confidence doesn't disappear from your body. It is there; you are the same person. It is imperative that you remove the limiting beliefs that hinder you from effectively offering your services in front of people.

Mistake #3

Time Runs Out Before the Close

Most presenters run out of time during their close. When that happens, their conversions decrease dramatically because they are forced to rush, they speak way too fast, and they don't allow enough time for the audience to decide.

Early one morning, when I was speaking at a car dealership, I got super excited about a couple of stories and I ended up speaking more than I should've. I went way too long. Suddenly, I heard a voice crackling over the intercom, "The dealership is about to open, salespeople on the floor." The audience, a group of car salesmen, looked at me, stood up, said "Thank you, Roberto," and left the room! Not fun! So, what can you do to ensure you never commit the same mistake?

By following these 3 simple strategies, you will never run out of time during your close.

- 1.) Practice your close and time it. Your close should be ingrained in your body. You should know exactly how long it is, down to the second. Time it!
- 2.) Track time during your presentation or have someone in the audience help you by signaling how much time is remaining.
- 3.) Have some transitional phrases ready to go, in case you go too long or your presentation needs to be cut short. You should be able to transition to the close at any time. A transitional phrase that you can use at the drop of a hat is this: "And that leads us to the most important part of the presentation: How we can help you implement this information."

Mistake #4

Lack of Audience Engagement

Most presenters don't ask enough questions during their presentations in front of a live audience or webinar. I know this is basic, but in one month alone I've seen four speakers commit this mistake.

What I've found is that it is easier and more natural for a professional to attract a prospective client in a one-on-one presentation. Most people do a good job. But something happens when you put that same professional in front of an audience. For some reason, they forget about engaging their viewers with questions, and they switch to a ONE-WAY communication style. The speaker does all the talking.

This is a big mistake not just for the body of the presentation, but the closing as well. By doing this, the presenter violates several influence strategies, the most important being the principle of commitment and consistency. This principle states that small, strategic commitments during your presentation lead to a BIG commitment at the end of your presentation.

Let me give you an example: A guy walks into a bar and approaches a girl he has never seen before. He says, "Do you want to marry me right now?"

Most likely she'll say no, right?

For him to get the answer that he wants, there are a series of small agreements that must take place first. Perhaps they'll agree to chat, know each other's name, and exchange phone numbers. Then they'll agree to get to know each other, meet another time, and go out to dinner. Eventually, they'll agree to meet each other's friends and family. Finally, they'll agree to commit to each other and get married.

That is the law of commitment and consistency in practice. The same rule applies to you. If you want to increase your closing ratios, use this principle to get small agreements during your presentation. How do you do that? There are various ways, but my favorite is by asking questions. Ask questions and allow your audience to speak, write down, or think about their answers. You

could even implement all the above throughout your presentation.

Let me give you an example. When I present “How to Acquire More Clients Using Video Marketing,” I lay it out into two main parts. Part one describes the “Video Marketing Opportunity,” while part two reveals the 5-step process to capitalize on this opportunity. As I teach our clients about the “Video Marketing Opportunity,” I ask several questions so that the law of commitment and consistency kicks in. I ask questions and assign activities like:

- What has been your biggest “A-HA! moment” thus far?
- Can you see how video marketing will help you generate more leads?
- Knowing what you know now about video marketing, how would you use it in your business?
- Please write down what would happen to your business if you were to expose your products or services to thousands of new prospects every single month.
- What would you do with the 10 extra hours a month you saved now that you are using video to leverage your sales process? Do you feel that you have missed out on revenue and opportunities because you have not leveraged video marketing effectively?
- Please share the dangers, costs, or consequences if you do not adopt video marketing.

These are just some examples of questions I may ask, but the main goal here is that, by the end of part one, the audience has agreed that there is, in fact, an opportunity for them to use video marketing.

After that, the audience is ready for part two; the 5-step process to capitalize on this opportunity. Again, as in part one, I keep asking questions and implementing the commitment and consistency principle until the close. Does that make sense?

If you think about it, if my audience does not agree that there is a big opportunity for them to use video marketing, the second part of my

presentation will be worthless to them. By the time I present my offer it will be irrelevant to them, and we will all be wasting our time.

To avoid this, make sure your questions are leading the audience to the solution you want. I want you to look at your presentation and notice:

- 1.) How often are you asking questions?
- 2.) Are your questions relevant?
- 3.) Are your questions helping you sell more?

Mistake #5

Lack of Urgency

Most presenters don't create enough urgency during their presentation and offer. This is an important lesson.

Do you find your audience saying things like;

“AHHHHHH.... don't worry about it...I'll do it tomorrow...”

“Take your time...you can do it later...”

“Let me think about it...”

Have you heard of the LODI monster?

He is the monster that KILLS your dreams and is one of the biggest reasons your audience does not act at the end of your presentation. I call this monster the “**L**ord of **D**iminishing **I**ntent,” “LODI” for short, to teach the “Law of Diminishing Intention.” This law states that even the best intentions will decrease over time.

“I just don't feel like doing it...”

“I will start my diet next Monday...”

As a presenter, you'll fight this monster every time. Have you ever given an amazing presentation and your audience;

recognized that they had costly problems,

recognized that you have a solution,

recognized the benefits of that solution,

and they wanted to do something about it?

But...WHEN?

Maybe tomorrow, then tomorrow becomes next week, and next week becomes next month, and eventually they end up NEVER acting. Can you relate to that?

“Let me first speak with my spouse, lawyer, cat, dog; I’ll call you tomorrow...”

That is the LODI monster in action!

Here is the crazy part: Some of your audience members are just giving you excuses, but some of them believe they will go home and do something about it. Because what we know about the LODI monster is that most of them will not. Life inevitably gets in their way and their good intentions will diminish.

So how do you win the battle against the LODI monster? Maybe we’ll get to that in the next chapter...

No! Now!

Here is the best way: Overcome your OWN LODI monster. Now.

You must feel compelled to become a person that achieves your goals, dreams, and purpose daily and with urgency.

I am not talking about stress. I am talking about maintaining a sense of urgency when it comes to having the life you want, experiencing what is most important to you, and living your purpose.

The bottom line is this: If you don't have urgency in your own life, your audience will have a hard time urgently taking the action you offer.

Think about it. If you are considering a gym membership and the salesman is out of shape yet telling you that your health should be your priority, what kind of message is that sending you? The whole time you’ll be stuck thinking, "Why he is overweight? Why is he talking about the importance of health when he doesn't even take care of his own?"

If you want to create urgency and have your audience take immediate action, you must speak from that place. Who you are is more important than what you say, and your audience will be able to sense a contradiction between the two.

When you live with urgency, your audience will feel inspired to take action. Make the change in your life today, and see how your energy will fuel your audience to action.

Mistake 6

Offer Isn't Connected to a Higher Level of Thinking

Most presenters fail to connect their offer to a higher level of thinking. Are you wondering, "Roberto, what is this higher level of thinking?" I'm going to give you an example. Let's say someone approaches a coach, mentor, or consultant and the conversation goes like this:

"I'm afraid of public speaking."

"I will help you transform your fear into confidence," responds the coach.

"Yes, I want to be a confident presenter."

"No problem. Just sign up for my seminar and you'll become a confident communicator."

"Well, let me think about it."

Now that's a big problem. Most presenters were taught in traditional sales training to find a problem then give a solution at the same level of thinking. Let me explain. In the example, the person approached the consultant with a clear problem. Fear of speaking. The coach, the sales professional, offered his solution as a product, a seminar. With that solution, he guaranteed a result. So, what is that result? Confidence. You see, it is at the same level of thinking. The problem: Fear (an incapability to escape fear). Solution: Seminar (to replace incapability with capability). Result: Confidence (incapability to escape from fear is replaced by the capability to be confident). Same level of thinking.

Are you thinking, "Roberto, I still don't understand. What's wrong with that process?" It's not wrong, but it can be even more effective if you use this strategy. Let me introduce the Sales Ninja. He is good. Really good. He's an awesome sales professional, influencer, and presenter. And the Sales Ninja has a special technique up his sleeve.

First, he connects his solution to the same level of thinking as the problem, just like in the example. But he doesn't stop there. He then connects his solution, offer, product, or service to a higher level of thinking. But what is this

“higher level of thinking?”

You and I have forces. Literally. These psychological forces drive us to do or not do things, to choose yes or no daily. Based upon this fact, there are several things that determine our behavior and our choices. In my opinion, the top three are purpose, identity, and values, in that order.

Purpose is why we do what we do. What is our purpose in life? What's our purpose in our careers? Why are you doing what you're doing in this moment? What is your purpose on earth? That's the highest-level thinking.

The second-highest level thinking is our identity; how we see ourselves. We may identify ourselves as a dad, mom, son, or daughter. As a brother or a sister, a friend or mentor. Maybe you have an identity as a leader, speaker, coach, chiropractor, doctor, entrepreneur, lawyer, or investor. Do you identify as a good, outgoing, or confident person? As a person who likes adventure or takes risks? Identity makes up the beliefs that we have of ourselves. The drive to create our identity is a very strong force that shapes our behavior.

The third major determining factor of our behavior is our value system. These are the things we value most, the things that are most important to us. Spirituality, health, love, connection, adventure, passion, and commitment are just a few things that constitute our value system.

There's no right or wrong purpose, identity, or value system. The point is that everybody has them and they drive people to take action. People who are enlightened are very clear about their purpose, identity, and values. Others just go through life without knowing the impact these three factors have on their decisions.

The Sales Ninja knows this fact. So, when a prospective client has a challenge, the Sales Ninja offers a solution at the same level of thinking. If we use the example above, the Sales Ninja would need to offer a capable solution. His solution would still be for the prospective client to experience confidence. But...the Sales Ninja won't stop there. He'll link his solution to that person's purpose, thus appealing to their higher level of thinking. Perhaps this person's purpose is to change the industry, our planet, or their company's

destiny. This driving force, this purpose, is bigger than his or her personal goals. So, he's going to connect how overcoming fear and having confidence will allow the person to fulfill their purpose.

The Sales Ninja could also connect confidence with someone's identity. How does the person currently see himself? How would he like to see himself? This person wants to identify as confident, not fearful.

I had a client that wanted to overcome his fear of speaking. It seemed like he would never change until I connected confidence with his higher level of thinking. I challenged him to imagine what the confidence would do for him as a role model to his children. His kids were learning that their dad was afraid of speaking, and they were learning to be controlled by fear. If he could undergo this transformation, I explained, the confidence would allow him to be a better dad, role model, and leader. With his newly acquired drive to change, he overcame his fear.

The transformation from fear to confidence may also be connected to someone's values. Someone may value money while another may value leverage and free time with family. Either way, whatever is offered through a product or service can be linked up to that value.

The next time you are constructing a presentation, use the Sales Ninja technique and connect your solution to the problem, then connect that solution to someone's purpose, identity, or values. Your message will be extremely persuasive.

Mistake 7

Avoiding the Counter Argument

Why is it so important to address the possible negative aspects of your offer? Although most presenters tend to avoid this, research shows that when you willingly address the aspects of your offer that could be viewed as negative, your message becomes more persuasive. Why? With a careful strategy, it increases your credibility as an enforcer, presenter, and communicator.

In the legal field, they call this strategy "stealing the thunder." In the article, "The Effect of Stealing Thunder in Criminal and Civil Trials" by Kipling D. Williams, Martin J. Bourgeois, and Robert T. Croyle, 1,257 students read or heard one of three versions of a criminal assault trial. In one version, a damaging piece of evidence about the defendant was absent. There was no thunder, no negative aspect. In the second version, the prosecutor brought up the damaging evidence first. That is considered thunder, but it is even more damaging because the prosecutor brought it up first, thus making it appear that the defense attorney was hiding something or unprepared. In the third version, when the thunder was brought up by the defense attorney first, it was called, "stolen thunder." The defense attorney stole the thunder and addressed it before anyone could ask or use it against his client.

The study showed that, when the defense attorney brought in the damaging piece of evidence first, his whole case became even more persuasive. He was more credible and the impact of the thunder was dampened. Remember this scenario.

In a sales situation or presentation, perhaps there will be no thunder. No one will mention the negative aspects of your offer. Your audience may think about them, but they won't ask and you won't mention them. The negative thoughts your audience has about your product or service could be stopping them from taking action, and you don't even know it.

Or maybe your prospective client or audience "brings the thunder" first, much like the prosecutor in the study. In this case, you're talking and somebody in your audience brings up something negative about your product or your idea.

You risk appearing untrustworthy and unprepared as you try to justify your offer from a defensive stance.

The best option is to steal the thunder. You already know the potential negative aspects of the offer, you bring those up first, and you reframe them in a way that you've strategically planned beforehand.

Anyone in any field can use this strategy. For example, if you're a mortgage broker and you talk to a prospective home buyer, one of the negative aspects is the amount of paperwork. How can you address and reframe that?

If you're a chiropractor, what is one of the potential negative aspects of being in your care? The necessary time commitment? How can you reframe that and make it a positive? Can you reframe it into something fun or critical, no matter what temporary inconvenience the drive or the session time may be?

When I teach people how to use public speaking to make more money, one of the negative aspects of my offer is preparation time. I don't care how much they learn or know, to become amazing communicators and influencers they must prepare. There's preparation time required, and there's no getting around it. They may find themselves preparing in an empty hotel room or in their car, reviewing their presentation over and over again.

I cannot prepare for them. I can give them preparation strategies, but ultimately they need to spend time preparing by themselves. I address and reframe that in my presentation by telling them the truth; "Hey, you're not simply by yourself preparing for no reason. You have a purpose. That purpose motivates you through the preparation process and guides you through each practiced word of your presentation. I'm so excited because now we know how powerful you really are. After all, when you prepare by yourself in front of a camera or mirror, you're building the muscle to become a powerful communicator."

Reframe what your audience believes to be a negative aspect of your offer into a positive one before they can create doubts of their own. Steal the thunder.

Williams, Kipling D., Martin J. Bourgeois, and Robert T. Croyle. "The Effects of Stealing Thunder in Criminal and Civil Trials." *Law and Human Behavior*. Vol. 17, No. 6 (Dec., 1993), pp. 597-609.

Additional Resources

Seminars:

<http://www.influencingfromthefront.com>

<http://publicspeakingforchiros.com>

Products:

www.influenceacademy.com/

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/influenceology

www.youtube.com/influenceology