



# The Speech Clinic®



## *Speaking Tips No 14* 050919

### Should you or your aid dominate?

Amazing, how often mistakes are being made here! The speaker does not use overheads (OH) or computer projected material (PowerPoint or PP) as support for what is being said but rather as a comprehensive and totally bombarded manuscript. The speaker further declares the audience incapacitated, without reading capability, as (s)he stands aside facing the screen or wall reading out loud. And what happens? Well, the audience becomes heavily confused! It doesn't know whether to read or to listen. Are they listeners or readers? Is the person up front speaker or reciter? Why is (s)he there? Could (s)he not just as well start a tape recorder, synchronized with the projector, and leave for a coffee? Why are we here? Could we not just as well have received the material to read in piece ourselves?

In those cases the aid has completely taken over the show, the seminar has become meaningless and the speaker has become a member of the association for insignificants. The reason why this so often happens is mainly fear and/or sheer laziness. Fear to lose the thread making a fool of oneself and laziness lacking the energy to learn the contents. The audience has therefore reason to suspect that the speaker is afraid, lazy or arrogant. None of these alternatives are very smart. How then, is one supposed to do? Here are a few simple tips (not valid for technical drawings etc.):

1. Learn what you want to say. Let the message on the screen consist of simple pictures, preferably photos! If you need text, then see to it that you can read an A-5 page, lying on the floor, from a standing position. The support text should not be more than a fraction of what you are going to say.
2. Make sure to let the audience read a new text slide before you start speaking. Give them a few seconds, then speak.
3. Never turn to the wall or large screen but keep eye contact with and stay turned facing the audience by glancing at the plastic sheet on the OH machine or at your computer screen. If you absolutely want to or need to point at the wall or large screen, then do it in silence, turn back to the audience and then speak. Never speak to the wall.
4. Turn off the picture as soon as it is not needed any longer. Step forward and take command again! With the remote control a PP-picture can easily be put out and on again to continue. The OH can either be switched off and on or the mirror closed and opened.

**You must keep control, not the aid! You should dominate!**

**Please tell colleagues and friends to register for Speaking Tips!**

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