

## **PR media release: When words are not enough**

Body movement and voice projection are the two most powerful forces for effective communication and presentation.

The infamous 1960s study found fifty-five percent of communication is non verbal; with 38 per cent of message delivery is down to volume, pitch and rhythm of the voice, leaving a paltry seven per cent sway to the actual content.\*

A key study in 1970 analysed the relative contribution of verbal and nonverbal signals, and found that all types of non-verbal cues combined – especially body posture – had 4.3 times the effect of verbal cues \*\*

“Hopefully this nugget will help those preparing a presentation, be that in the classroom or on stage. Get physical.” says Dr Gary Wohlman.

Gary should know, as choreographed communication is the cornerstone of the Wohlman method of presentation skills which Gary has been using for over 30 years to train everyone from nervous novices to global industry leaders.

The principle of the Wohlman method is to match content with physical expression in what Gary calls the three Vs; *Verbal Vocal* and *Visual*. If tone, nuance or stance is unaligned, there is a perceived inauthenticity with the message which will come across as insincere or fake.

Gary has developed dozens of proprietary tools and techniques such as the *Nine Squares Grid* in which audiences are trained to follow the speaker's movements. The grid sets up a subliminal pattern in the mind of the audience so they listen attentively and remember the message. With a map that looks like a noughts and crosses game, the presenter uses subtle movement through the squares which signify past to future from left to right. The presenter is also shown how to chart the zones in the front and back of the stage, as well as returning to the central square -- to emphasise, punctuate and place key points. Furthermore, this grounds the on-field-style presenter who runs all over the stage, and provides a clear, choreographed pattern of movement to those growing roots to the floor.

Many of Gary's clients come to him to rid themselves of idiosyncrasies, nervous habits or ticks. They are so distracting that the message is obliterated and only the tick is remembered. In a technique which Gary calls *Double Extreme* – he firstly exaggerates the tick to the most extreme, often *Monty Pythonesque* scenario to take away the fear and heighten awareness. This creates a primal shift, in less than 30 minutes, and the tick is transformed into an advantage. Gary talks of a presenter who had the annoying habit of tapping his foot when he gave presentations (he was also a concert pianist accustomed to using piano pedals), but of course all the audience watched was the increasingly annoying foot tapping. Employing the science behind the *Double Extreme* technique, the movement is exaggerated and, as a result of the presenter's giving themselves permission to do what they have been feeling self-conscious about, loses the old habit -- replacing it with a range of new options. After one session, the presenter will swiftly lose the tick – or the tap – in this case.

For those who speak too fast or too slow, Gary will work the *Double Extreme* to speed up a presentation, then slow it down...and speed it up even more, slow it down even more...then bring out the best of the fast and slow at the same time. Through this simple, sequential process of exploring both extremes, the presenter naturally expands their comfort zone and ability to speak with new found strength and sensitivity. The multi-sensory, multi-modality reinforcement is easy to remember and it provides the presenter with an indelible default program, so they do not return to the old habit.

Given that over half of a successful presentation is dependent on the body, hands and arms, getting the presenter's movements right is more vital than the message. In fact, the message, words and full self-expression flow more fluidly when the outer movements match the presenter's inner intentions.

Gary suggests postures for the fingers, arms and hands to make pictures the audience can clearly see. "Show what you are telling," he says. "The audience will see the message – even before you open your mouth, and retain and recall the message more deeply on multiple levels."

"There is no greater thrill, nothing more exciting than confidently presenting a researched, rehearsed presentation for the first time, giving that information to the audience and seeing, feeling and hearing exactly the response you planned for. It's an adrenalin surge of the best kind," adds Gary

### **Three communication essentials of the Wohlman method**

- 1) It is always the first time: no matter how often you have presented, find something different and new each time. Draw on the audience, the location, your own mood or events – this keeps the presentation fresh.
- 2) Speak to one person: whether it is two people or 200. Find one person and begin your sentence to them – move your gaze through the audience then come back and find another, ideally a person who is also giving you attention and positive energy. Do this in a structured way by dividing the audience up into a grid pattern.
- 3) If you get lost: don't say out loud, 'Where was I?' include the audience with something like, 'Where do we go from here?' 'Let me go back over what we've been talking about,' use it as an opportunity to recap and include the audience. Just like the strategy of moving through a skid, going more deeply into the skid brings one right out of it.

Prepared for: Dr Gary Wohlman [www.mypresentationdoctor.com](http://www.mypresentationdoctor.com)

Prepared by: Heusler Public Relations

\*Albert Mehrabian Professor Emeritus Of Psychology UCLA

^ Hsee, Christopher K.; Hatfield, Elaine; Chemtob, Claude (1992). "Assessments of the Emotional States of Others: Conscious Judgments versus Emotional Contagion". *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* **14** (2):

---