



WHEN POWERPOINT IS YOUR CASH REGISTER

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When PowerPoint's your cash register

The cash register in a company is often the PowerPoint presentation (not just the PowerPoint, but the whole package that comes with it – which is usually you).

Although we frequently sell our work (or rather ourselves) on paper, and even sometimes verbally; in many cases the success of the sale depends on the persuasion of the PowerPoint presentation.

Unfortunately, we often use PowerPoint as a drunk uses a lamppost – more for support than illumination. We place an extreme amount of focus on our product or service and yet we will spend very little time on effective presentation to sell that product or service. That's like giving your wife a Gucci handbag wrapped in newspaper. Or your husband a radio controlled plane without the batteries.

It's about control

Contrary to popular belief, the product does not sell itself. If presentation skills are so important – and they are the veritable buttons on the cash register, why do we just plug away, using whatever natural talents we were blessed with, to stand up in front of a critical audience and state our case?

Having control of your bodily functions (in the non-gastrointestinal sense) is crucial to getting your message across. As ironic as this may sound – the more control you have over your hands, feet, eyes etc, the more natural your presentation style appears. If you've never seen yourself present on videotape, how do you know what you're really projecting?

Even Tiger Woods (in his day) had a coach to give him feedback on all the attributes of his swing. And, I am told, he often uses videotape to watch himself (playing golf).



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Make that cash register work

Here are five things you have to do to make the cash register work

- Don't read slides verbatim – it infers you know nothing more than what's on the slide
- Never ever go smaller than 16 point
- Use a picture instead of a thousand words
- Don't put the agenda up as a slide – just give the general gist of where you're going (otherwise it's like the dentist telling you why the next 30 minutes will be unpleasant). Better still, the opening slide should allude to the entire story you're telling.
- Get yourself videotaped. Trust me, you are your best critic. This may sound somewhat passé, but I think the term 'get over yourself' is most appropriate.

About the author

Sid Peimer is the Executive Director of the Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry. His book 'The Clear Win: Pitching for new business – the strategies that work; the myths that don't' can be found on Amazon [here](#)

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