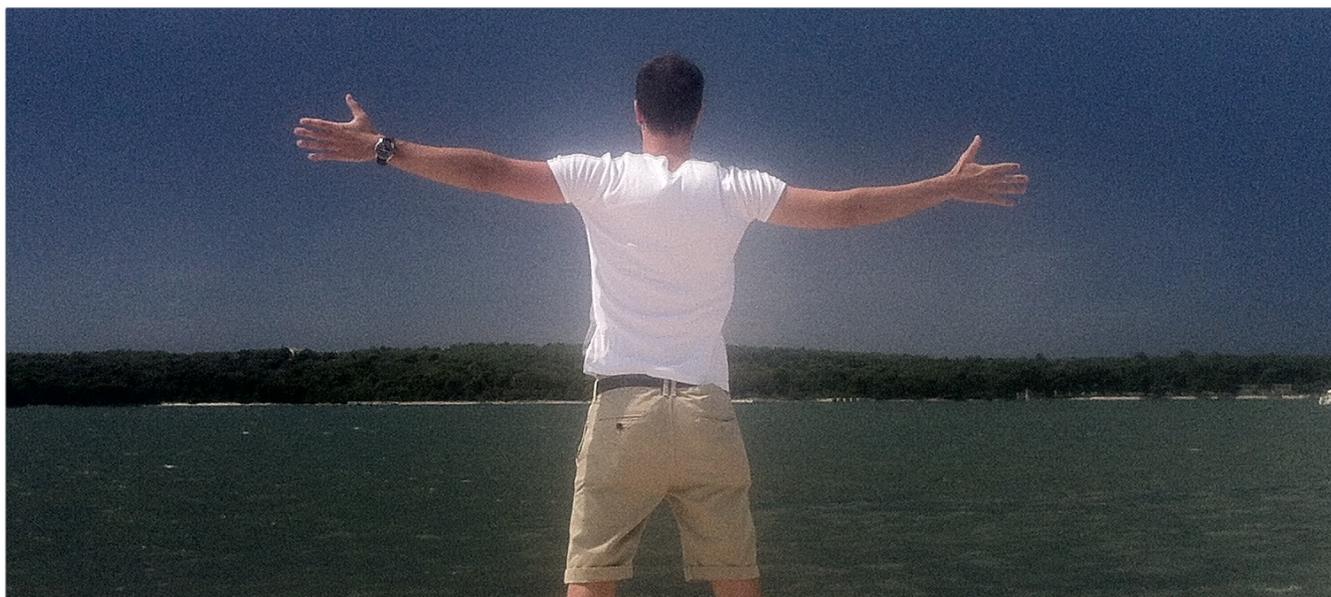




Lalli | Executive Coaching

## Because Presenting Is An Art



High Class Presentation Tips for Students &  
Professional Beginners

2017



In this booklet I have compiled a couple of valuable tips for you, which will help you to get out of the presentation maze and create high class presentations instead.

I look forward to a deepening coaching with you and I hope you have a lot of fun with the reading ;)

*Dr. Roberto Lalli delle Malebranche*



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# High Class Presentation Tips for Students & Professional Beginners

**“The great thing is not to be this or that, but to be ourselves”.**

Søren Kierkegaard

Are you **afraid** of presenting? I am and most people I know, some of them famous, experienced public speakers, are too. In fact, whenever we present alone in front of our audience, we always present ourselves too. With every movement of our body, with every nuance of our voice and with every slide we bring on, we reveal to the others, who we are and how we see the world.

What's so scaring about that? Well, we could be **wrong**, we could **fail** and make a fool of ourself. People might reject our ideas and us. Right? Right? Well, actually no. Our audience isn't our problem, my friend, you and me are.

Most of the times we see ourselves more critically than the most critical stranger and our fear of presenting in front of others is primarily nurtured by **our** worries, to be unable to satisfy **our own** pretences. If we then have to stand in the centre of the attention of other people, we do not regard this as an opportunity for exchange and growth but rather as a danger; the danger not to live up to our own expectations.

Correspondingly we dumb-down our presentation and are glad when it's finally over, so that we can dive back in the comfort of the masses again. We rush through our presentation maze made of endless sentences, overloaded slides and alien ideas taken from articles and scripts and get back to our real life. But what we fail to understand is: Presenting **is** an important part of our life, the stage of our presentations is a miniature edition of the stage of life, and we will not master our lives completely without having mastered the art of presenting first.

Oops, now you are even ore afraid, right? Ok, so let's have a look at **presentation fear management** before we talk about the little Kaizen steps you can take to become an amazing (as well as an amazed) presenter:

**MANAGE YOUR FEAR:** First of all, **accept your fear**. Fear is natural and even good, because it sharpens our senses and makes us plan and practice. Prepare your presentation and do at least three complete **dry runs** before the mirror, your dog and/ or your friend or partner. Then start **visualising**. In order to do that you have to know the location, so go there, if possible. Make a stage test, a sound check, a projector test. If you can't get there beforehand, get photographs and imagine yourself being there and doing fine – and overcoming a specific problem that might arouse. See yourself on the silver screen of your mind presenting amazingly, for two minutes every day in the weeks before you actually go on stage. On the day of your presentation get up early and take a walk, breath deeply, meditate or just listen to your favourite song and sing the lyrics along. **Laugh, try to relax.**

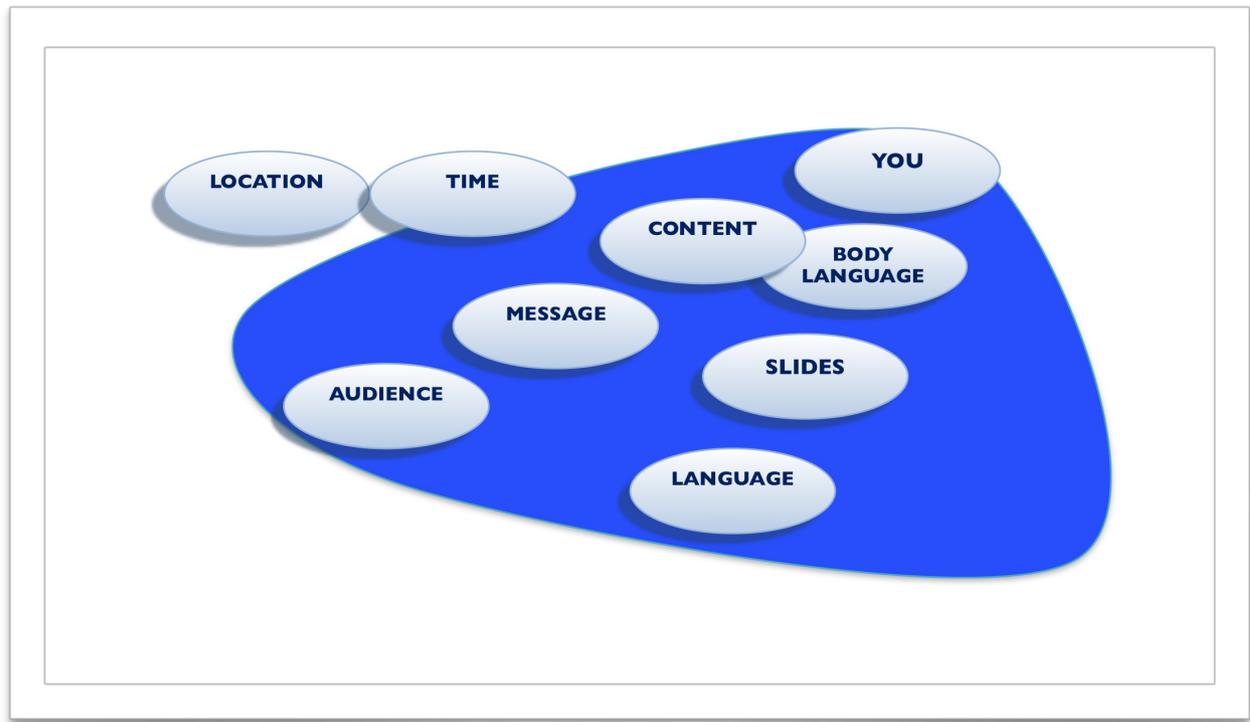
When D-Day has arrived, go there early, **shake hands** with your audience while it flocks in, smile, remember that it's not about you, it's about them, it's about what you are going to give them today to make their lives better. Once on stage, **smile**. Take a good look at the audience, from the left to the right and back, endure the silence and suspense, then choose a person in the midst of the audience who is smiling at you. Keep eye contact, bring up your arms and start. Throw in your **passion**, accept mistakes if they happen, people do not need another hero, they want authentic, caring, passionate people on stage.

Once your presentation is over, disappear for a moment. **Relax**. Then go back and get **feedback**, the more, the better. Make some notes and leave and have a good time. Disengage, let it sink in without thinking about it. Until tomorrow.

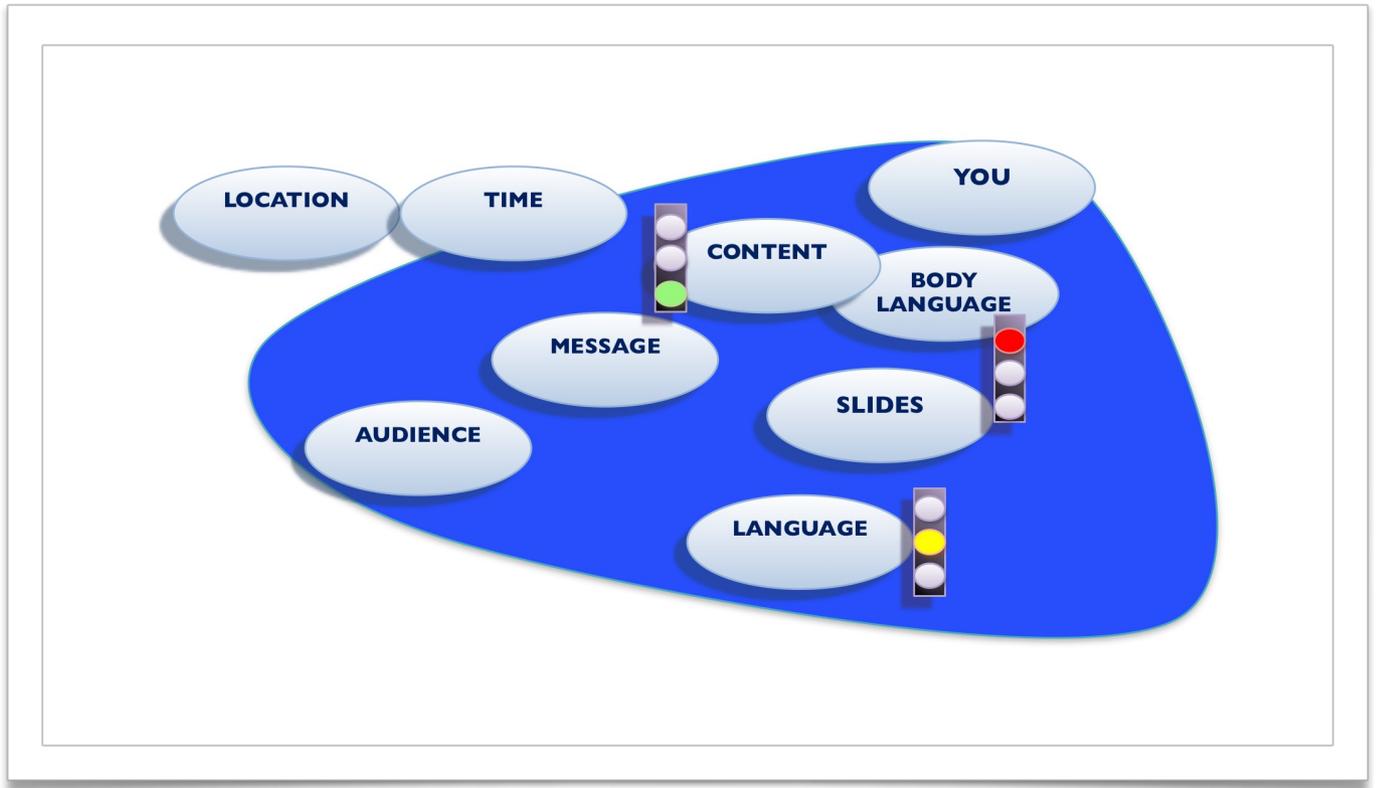


Ok, these were our presentation fear management tips, and now we will talk about your presentation as such and how you can transform it into an amazing event for your audience, ok?

Basically you must try to improve little step by little step – this is important, so I will say it once again: little step by little step – on the three main dimensions of every presentation; your content (and message), your body language (and slides) and your language. For now let's say that your content must be compact, thrilling and delivering one clear message to your audience; your body must express openness and move towards the audience and your language must be made of short sentences and pauses, vivid images and power words like "us", "together" and "we".



Now, please imagine a traffic light alongside each dimension. It will indicate how well you master the challenges connected to it at the moment: What are your traffic lights showing respectively? Green, yellow or red? Your “development task” consists in taking all traffic lights to green – little step by little step. This may take you weeks, months or years, but you are young and you have a lot of time – and fun – ahead of you.

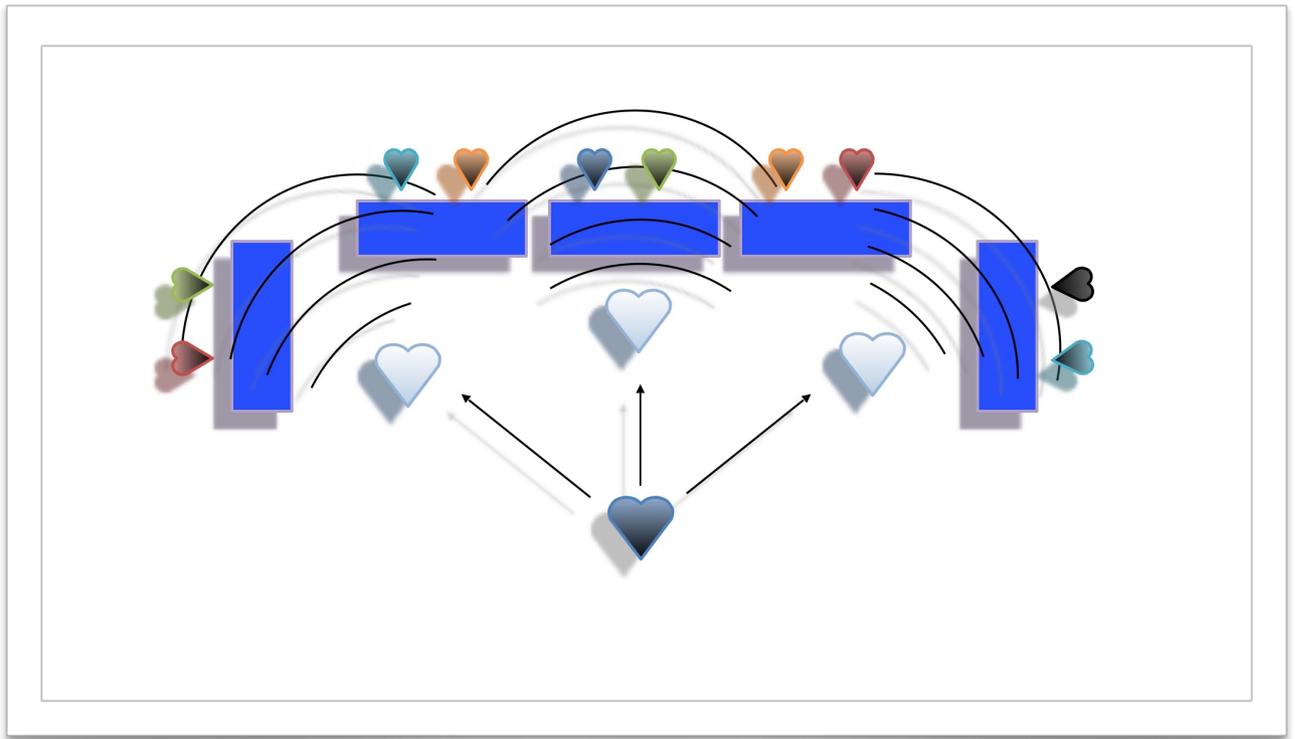


Why do I emphasise the little steps on your way to become a little presenter. The answer is **Kaizen**. Kaizen in presentation means to improve our presentation skills through very small steps instead of overwhelming us by trying to become a great presenter with our very next presentation. Kaizen is an excellent technique to **bypass our fear to get better**. Yes, you got me right; our fear to get better. Because we are all afraid of fundamental change, even when it's to the better. That is one reason that there are seldom big, huge improvements from one day to another. All successful people on this planet know that small steps done every day can bypass our fear to fail and create a positive change that **lasts**. Most people try to improve through crash programs: They go to the gym with a new, heavy schedule, try a radical diet or get away to a deserted island. Most of these heroic efforts fail after a few weeks. But small, almost insignificant steps done day after day, are bound to last and to change our life forever.

Please read: Robert Maurer: *The Kaizen Way. One Small Step Can Change Your Life.*

So let's have a look at the small steps towards an amazing presentation that you can take the very next time you go on stage. Let's start with the **frame** of every presentation, location and time:

As I said before, the LOCATION in which you are going to deliver your presentation should be known to you and feel familiar. In any case, make sure you have a look at it on time. This gives you two advantages: you can anticipate your successful lecture visually and you get a sense of how you can **master the room**. Do this like a pop-star by moving slowly between certain points of the room. "Activate" thus (all) the specific parts of the audience again and again.

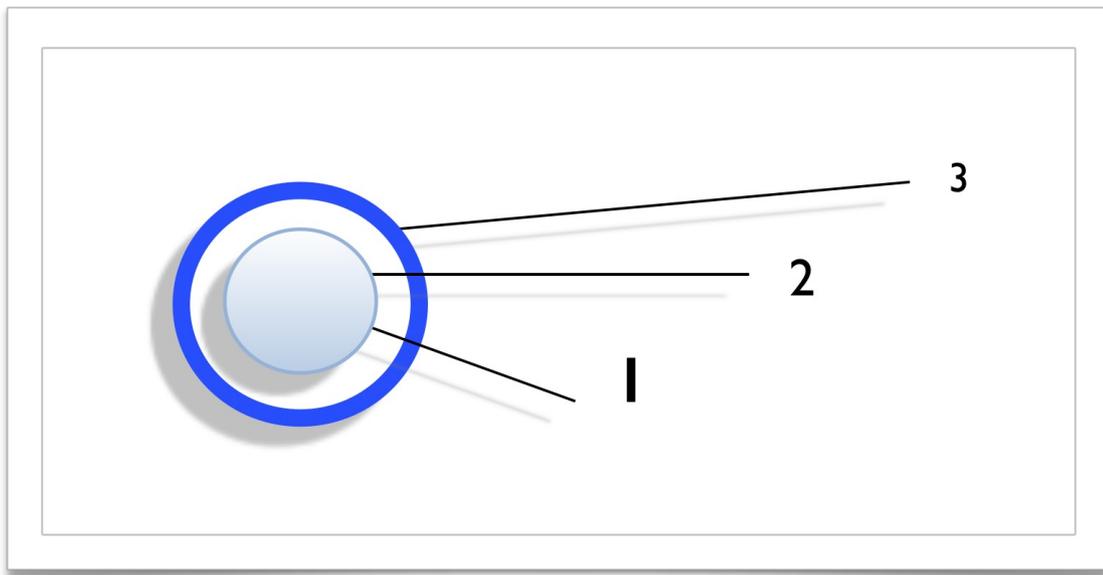


To do so, you must of course be independent of your slides and of your notebook as much as possible during your whole presentation. So don't rely on them.

**LESS TIME MEANS MORE FOCUS:** Most presentations are much too long and lack clarity. Try Guy Kawasaki's 10-20-30-rule instead; not more than 10 slides, in less than 20 minutes with a font of at least 30 points. Please try this, it will help you to identify and shape the **core**, the heart of your presentation, and to use fewer but more convincing images, charts and sentences.

Which brings us to the three main dimensions of your presentation, your content and your message, your body language and your slides and your language. Let's start with your content and message:

**CONTENT AND MESSAGE:** How well you deliver your message (please only one!) to your audience depends substantially on whether it is clear enough to yourself or not. What **exactly** do you want to tell your audience? What exactly should the audience think, feel and do differently after your presentation? While preparing your presentation ask yourself once and again the mother of all questions: "**So what?** Why should this finding, chart or image be important to us, your audience?" If the core of your concern is crystal clear to yourself, you can reduce your presentation to two minutes ("elevator pitch") or stretch it to 40. Use the **target**, while planning your presentation. First become crystal clear about the core of your presentation (1); then, what is important because it makes the core clearer (2); and finally, what will help promoting the understanding of your presentation (but can be left out however if necessary) (3).



Clarity concerning the central message of your presentation does not automatically mean you know exactly how to **deliver** it to your audience. Obviously it's an advantage if you know as much as possible about the audience's expectations, values, hopes and fears. Independent of that you should never start by presenting your person or the structure of your presentation, but with a good **story**. A good story is very short, emotional thrilling because dense with vivid details and images, credible because full of obstacles your hero has to clear on his or her path to success, and introduces elegantly the question you are going to answer with your presentation.

Only after your first **bang!**, your story, can you introduce yourself and welcome your audience. And by the way, try not to let the word "presentation" slip from your mouth, not even once. Although you are presenting something – an idea, product, personal vision or result – if you do this well, your audience will forget that a presentation is taking place, just like the audience at a piano concert will slip out of the concert hall and forget about the pianist as they fall into the rhythms of the music.

If you want to get the extra cookie, create a **claim**, something which will allow you to convincingly illustrate your central message with few words. Repeat your claim at least three times during your presentation. Start every section of a longer presentation with a short announcement and close it with a short summary **and your claim**. Steve Jobs did this always in an excellent way, his watershed claim at the presentation of a new type of telephone in 2007 was a presumptuous, but also very accurate summary of his central message: "Today we are going to reinvent the phone".

Last but not least: Your last words (of your presentation, not your life) should never be "That's it", or something similar. I believe the final repetition of your claim or a dramatic closing question, which will **continue to work** in the heads of your audience, to be the two best variants of a closing remark.



So far so good for your content and message, now let's have a look at your body language and slides:

**INCLUSIVE BODY LANGUAGE, INCLUSIVE SLIDES:** The centre of your show are your viewers and listeners. You do not deliver your presentation for your own benefit or that of your professor or boss. What you should try to achieve is a **real connection** with everybody in the room, you could even call it a communion. This requires a whole lot of inclusivity. You have to repeatedly **hug** the audience (from a distance, my dear, from a distance), your hands and arms should be at a level with your heart, and you should keep eye-contact with everyone in the room.

Your **SLIDES** are your emotional co-commentators and will help you to **touch** your audience. In my humble opinion the best design consists in few text lines or figures on 10 to 20 slides with high-resolution photographs, while you move everything complicated in a printed handout. Do not produce slide docs. Your slides are meant to activate the different senses of your audience thus making it **emotionally stick** with your audience.

Fascinating stuff, right? So, after having dealt with your body language and your slides we close this wonderful booklet with a look at the little steps that will help you to improve your presentation language:



Your LANGUAGE should not only be **inclusive** (always “us”, never “one”) but also **active**, therefore consisting of many verbs and adjectives, delivered in short and **positive** sentences. Positive means, that you do always mention the things that you want, instead of evoking those which you do not want. Therefore do not say: “This wouldn’t be a problem and nobody would have to line up any more”, but : “This could be implemented easily, and then everybody could immediately pay and leave the shop”. We do think mainly in images, and words such as “no”, “not”, “no one” and “never” will not impede us to do so. Therefore use a simple, but not vulgar language full of positive images and inspiring **metaphors** instead of that pseudo management lingo that a lot of business presenters use. Imagine your audience to be a friend, a friend in love with life that wants to be enriched by your ideas.

Just ask yourself: "What makes me so refreshingly different and what distinguishes me so uniquely in the good and in the bad from all other people? How can I give my audience something that they won't find in a book, article or Wikipedia page?" From this **treasure deep inside**, you should feed your presentation, because only if you stay yourself, you can enrich us and at the same time experience that kind of success that will be good for you by making you grow further.

Well, and that's all I wanted to share with you in this booklet. Remember: **Small steps**, do not try to apply all of these tips to your next presentation, take your time. One magic step after the other you will lead you out of the presentation maze of meaningless words and data and push you towards a world where hearts can mend hearts and great ideas can trigger great actions.

We are here to learn, **together**, every day of our lives, and today, my friend, you have made another step towards an amazing future, today you have grown. Thank you for that.



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Together WE Will Change The World!

**Myself as much as this brochure owe a lot to the following great authors, excellent books and outstanding publishing houses:**

Robert Maurer: **The Kaizen Way**

Garr Reynolds: **Presentation Zen**

Nancy Duarte: **Resonate**

**I recommend you warmly** to buy these books.

The photographs in these booklet show the following artists:



Denis Patković, [www.denis-patkovic.com](http://www.denis-patkovic.com)



Garr Reynolds, [www.presentationzen.com](http://www.presentationzen.com)



Guy Kawasaki, [www.guykawasaki.com](http://www.guykawasaki.com)



The IdeasOnStage Team: [www.ideasonstage.com](http://www.ideasonstage.com)

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