

Special Advance Release

Chapter One of:

‘Pitch to Win’

‘How to Pitch for What You Want . . .
AND GET IT’



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Chapter One – Setting a Firm Foundation

Imagine this: You're on the phone following up on your resume you sent for that plum job. The secretary to the decision maker has just said 'Mr Collins' office, Charmayne Foster speaking'.

At this very moment you are pitching. The intake of breath you take before you start to speak is pitching something about you. The sound of your voice is pitching something about you to Ms Foster. The words you use pitch you. How you listen is pitching you.

From this simple phone call Ms Foster, whether she consciously realizes it or not, has formed an impression of you.

The subsequent impressions you leave with Ms Foster, her boss, the interview panel and other decision makers will have a significant impact on whether you win the pitch for the job.

Every time you meet with someone it forms an impression. With every impression, there is a potential for loss or a potential for gain. When you pitch for what you want, the cumulative impact of rich, positive impressions will give you an edge in winning what you are pitching for.

If you want to gain an edge in winning what you are pitching for:

1. Get very good at knowing what behaviours lead to positive impressions. Become acquainted with behaviours that enable your audience to form a favourable impression, and
2. Routinely pitch these positive behaviours.

Let me give you an example of negative impressions.

I was attending and speaking at an international convention in Australia. On the day before I was scheduled to speak I sat in on several presentations. For these presentations, I sat in the front row, centre position.

I usually sit in the front row because this is part of my listening plan at conferences, seminars and presentations. I know I get the most value from that position.

During the presentations I actively participated and focused on the speaker. By chance I noticed during several presentations that other people in the



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audience were not paying attention to the speaker. They were talking to other people near them, or were preoccupied with paper work. These preoccupied people were sending impressions to me and potentially to other people. They were sending negative impressions. However they seemed to be unaware of this, or perhaps they did not care how they were perceived.

Whenever you interact with people you are sending impressions.

Your identity is the source of the impressions others will hold of you.

Your identity is also the source of the results you get in your life. Let me explain.

'I am' statements are identity statements. Think for a moment about the things you know to be true about yourself. These are things you know you are. Take a moment to complete several 'I am . . .' sentences.

The things you know to be true about yourself ultimately determine your behaviours that other people see, hear, feel and form impressions from. These behaviours and impressions determine the results you get in your life. They determine to a large measure if you win what you are pitching for.

The following text box shows the progression from Identity to Results



Below is an explanation of the cumulative impact of Identity to Results.

Your identity, the 'I am. . .' statements, determine your beliefs. That is, what you believe to be true about yourself. Your beliefs determine your values – the things in life of value to you. Your values in turn determine what you become competent at. Your competencies determine your daily behaviour and, finally, your behaviour will determine the results you will attain in your life.



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The development of your identity and the progression to the results you have is developed over time. **The strength of one component will make the next component stronger.** In addition, the longer you have maintained your identity, the stronger it will be, and the stronger the impact on the other components in the hierarchy. Furthermore, strengthening any component will strengthen other components.

For example, if I become aware that I possess a certain competency, that awareness can strengthen my identity, values and beliefs related to that competency.

Let me give you a practical example of this hierarchy in practice.

Over the last 18 years I've developed the identity that 'I am a powerful and good voice user'. As said above, the longer you spend in developing your identity the more deeply ingrained it becomes in you. Eighteen years has made my voice identity very strong.

During the beginning years of developing my identity concerning my voice, my 'I am' self-talk was 'I am becoming a powerful and good voice user'. This identity statement was based on what I knew to be true at the time. That is, in the early stages of my identity development I had not achieved the 'I am' stage. I was at the 'I am becoming' stage.

In developing my 'I am becoming a powerful and good voice user' stage, I would focus my awareness on competencies, behaviours and results in my life that supported that identity. That awareness would take the form of self-talk or writing notes to reinforce this identity.

For example, I might be very curious, and value listening to a person who uses their voice in a compelling manner. **By focusing my awareness and valuing this compelling voice, I am strengthening other components in the hierarchy.**

Continuing on with the practical example, the identity I hold determines my beliefs about my voice. That is, I begin to believe that I am a powerful and good voice user.

This belief, in turn, determines what I value. I value people who use their voice very well, regardless of the words they utter. When I hear someone speak with a voice that seizes my attention, I am deeply curious about that voice. I ask myself what it is about the voice that grabs my attention. What is it about the speed, pitch, loudness, resonance and emotion of the voice that compel me to listen to it?

This value determines my competencies. I then become competent at powerful and good voice use. We usually focus on what we are competent at. We avoid things that we are not competent at. This competency determines



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our behaviours that people hear, see and feel. That is, people would hear and experience me producing a powerful and good voice.

Finally, this behaviour determines the results I get. The result I get from this behaviour is that people generally listen to what I say. People generally believe what I say. From this behaviour, the result I get is that people often do what I want them to do. If I phone a prospective customer for an appointment, my voice helps me get the appointment. Another result is that people will seek my counsel as an authority because I sound authoritative.

Let me make a final comment on the hierarchy. **It is important that there are links between the components.**

Endless repetition of an identity statement, which some would call affirmations (Emile Coue's 'Everyday and in every way I am getting better and better' comes to mind) with no relationship to better competencies, behaviours and results has limited use.

Awareness through self-talk or making written notes on the relationship between the components is the process to aim for.

Other Important Belief Systems to Develop

Near the beginning of my Winning Customer Perceptions pitch coaching workshops, and at other events such as management retreats and keynote speaking, I discuss other important identity statements and belief systems to hold.

One belief system is: 'There is no failure, only feedback and learning opportunities'.

When you are pitching for what you want, you will have 'non-desired outcomes'. You can view these non-desired outcomes as failures, or you can view them as opportunities for feedback and learning.

For this belief system, one identity statement you could develop is: 'I am becoming focused on feedback and learning opportunities'. In our hierarchy in the table above, the 'I am focused on feedback and learning opportunities' belief system will determine what you value.

That is, over time, you will value the feedback and learning opportunities from non-desired outcomes and not view them as failures. This value will determine what you become competent at. That is, you will become competent at identifying and using feedback and learning opportunities, and so on.



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The key message from the above comments is:

To Get the Behaviours and Results You Want, First Develop Your Identity

Another belief system that I encourage you to develop is to 'put your ego in the box' when you get feedback about your behaviours. Let me explain what this means. When people give us feedback about our behaviours sometimes we can get defensive about the feedback.

We may downplay the feedback or make excuses for our behaviours. One way to receive the feedback non-defensively is to think of your ego as a physical substance.

Picture an imaginary box on a shelf. Before you get feedback on your behaviour, imagine putting your 'ego in the box'.

Once you receive the feedback you can 'take your ego back from the box'.

Using this imagery will allow you to receive feedback more objectively.

Another belief system is that 'Repeated attempts with feedback build skills'. This means that to acquire a skill you need to complete many attempts of the skill followed by feedback on how successful you are in achieving the skill.

Let me give you an example. In a Winning Presentations workshop every participant gets numerous opportunities to make short and longer presentations. The presentations are often video recorded.

After they have completed a presentation, they receive feedback from me and other participants. They also repeat parts of the presentations based on the feedback they get. They might make five repetitions of certain parts of the presentation, followed by feedback.

Through this repetition and feedback process the participants gradually begin to acquire better skill in presenting. They also get to take away the video clips of their presentations and the feedback. Reviewing the clips further embeds their presentation skill.

An additional belief system is: **'To form a habit you need to know what to do, how to do it and to have the desire to form the habit'.**

The most important 'to do' is to have the desire. If you have the desire, it will lead you to find out the 'what to do' and the 'how to do'. This belief system compliments the identity pyramid mentioned earlier.



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11 Ways to Set Your Mind, Energise Yourself and Increase Your Confidence Before an Interaction

1. **'It's show time'**. I have a friend who is a very experienced presenter. He plans and delivers numerous presentations each week. He once told me that in doing so many presentations he can approach a presentation with a blasé attitude. However, on occasion he can also find that he is very nervous before a presentation.

He finds that if he says 'It's show time' to himself just before going on to present, these words generate energy in his body if he is feeling blasé. If he is nervous before a presentation, the words have a calming effect.

Before you're about to make an important phone call, go into a job interview, or make an important presentation, use the 'It's show time' phrase, or other catch phrases so you can perform at your best.

2. **Use 'the long, lost friend down the corridor image'**. Imagine that you have a very good friend. Imagine that you hadn't seen that very good friend in five years. Now imagine that you spy that friend down the end of a long corridor. You start running toward each other. Finally you come together. Each of you says. 'Wow, how long has it been? You've got to tell me all that's been happening to you, and I have so much to tell you.'

Before you go into a meeting or just before a presentation use the long lost friend image. **That is, be as eager to listen to and share with the person(s) as you would be in interacting with a long, lost friend.**

3. **Begin with the end in mind.** One of Stephen Covey's seven habits of highly successful people is 'Begin with the end in mind.' Here is how I use that habit in my work. Prior to delivering a customer appreciation presentation, for example, or facilitating a management retreat, I project ahead in my mind to the end of the event.

In vivid colour I imagine the person that hired me coming over and enthusiastically shaking my hand and in an enthusiastic manner, saying these words while looking me in the eye 'You did a terrific job.'

That vivid image of a terrific ending helps me actually produce the terrific ending. Before an encounter, interaction, interview or presentation, vividly imagine the end result you want. The more vivid the imagery the better.

4. **Let the little boy or girl in you come out to play.** Bill Gove, a legend of professional speaking in the United States now deceased, said that



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public speakers should 'let the little boy or girl in them come out to play.' What Gove means by this saying is that you shouldn't take yourself too seriously. You should remember and recapture the enthusiasm, awe, wonder and excitement you had when you were a little boy or girl.

Here is how I apply that idea. I rummaged through my photo box and found a photograph of myself at seven years of age. Now before a meeting or presentation I often take a look at my younger self. While looking at that little boy in the photo, I can't take myself too seriously. It also reminds me to bring freshness and enthusiasm to every interaction.

5. **Imagine a person you respect is watching you.** To do our best in critical interactions and environments, it can be useful to remember what we are capable of, and of a person we respect who knows what we are capable of. Think of a person who knows how good you can be when you are at your best. Imagine that person standing next to you and watching you while you do the critical activity. The activity could be making an important phone call or delivering an important message.

This imagery of your friend 'watching over you' will propel you to produce your best effort.

6. **'Take on the cloak' of a person that excels in what they do.** If you are about to go in for an interview for a job, think about how a great communicator might feel, think, act and prepare for the interview. Having done that, imagine wearing the cloak of that person. That is, imagine behaving in a manner similar to that person.

For example, before an important encounter or presentation, I imagine taking on the cloak of Bill Clinton, former United States President. There are many opinions of Clinton – both positive and negative.

However, one generally agreed opinion is this: **When Bill Clinton listens to you he can make you believe that what you are saying is the most fascinating thing he has ever heard.**

When Clinton speaks he also has an exceptional skill in connecting with people.

When I take on the cloak of Clinton it helps me be very personable, connected and interested in the other person. Through this cloak wearing, I get a distinct feeling that there will be no comment, question or matter that I will not be able to respond to in a compelling and interesting way.



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Wearing the cloak of Clinton's wife Hillary might also be beneficial. It is said that no matter if Hillary Clinton is just about to deliver a presentation, or if she is signing autographs, or if she is giving an interview, **she can always give the impression that there is nowhere else she would rather be.** Think of the cumulative impact of repeatedly giving that impression.

7. **This is my last interaction.** To give yourself an edge before any interaction, tell yourself: 'This is the last time I'll interact with this person (or deliver a presentation, or go for a job interview). This self-talk can spur you to give the best effort you are capable of in the interaction.
8. **Do whatever it takes to feel good about yourself.** This means eliminating irritations that can lessen your effectiveness in an interaction. Irritations might include eye glasses that constantly need adjusting or hair that must constantly be brushed away from your face, or a garment that doesn't fit well on your body.
9. I once owned a pair of eye glasses that repeatedly slid down my nose. The need to constantly adjust the glasses irritated me. Unknowingly at the time, I would pass on that irritation to my interaction partner. Now I wear glasses and clothing that look great and feel great, and don't irritate me.
10. **Keep a 'Win Note' page or book and refer to it frequently.** Win notes are written notes about the positive thoughts you have about yourself, or are the positive comments people make about you. Often we do not remember the positive thoughts we think about ourselves, or the positive comments we receive from others. By referring to these Win Notes we can get a boost of enthusiasm before an interaction.
11. **Take up more space with your voice.** By allowing your voice to 'take up' more space in the environment that you are in, you will be perceived as more confident by those you interact with.

Many people in face-to-face interactions could slightly increase the loudness and energy of their voice. There is much environmental background noise that interferes with our voice clearly reaching the ears of our intended listeners. **A voice with an extra edge of loudness and energy is not only perceived as confident but also is more frequently understood on the first occasion.**

12. **'Own' more space with your body.** Confident people occupy and 'own' more space with how they move, stand, sit, gesture. Less confident people constrain their body movements.

When you enter and participate in an interaction expand the space you occupy. For example, if seated at a desk or table, sit erectly. Extend



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your arms slightly away from your body and place your hands on the desk.

Handling Fear – Six Ways

1. **Prepare, but don't over-prepare.** When I conduct workshops I ask the participants to think of ways, prior to a presentation or important interaction, that they have successfully handled fear. A significant proportion of the people say preparation is the key to handling their fear.

Preparation can take many forms, however you can over prepare. For example, prior to delivering a group presentation I don't recommend (as I did previously), that people rehearse their presentation ten times prior to giving it.

After listening to advice from Alan Weiss of Summit Consulting, I now recommend that you **audio record a rough version of the presentation and then play it in your car to accustom yourself to it.** This could occur in the two weeks or so prior to the presentation. When you get bored with listening to the tape you're ready to present.

This rehearsal process has been reported by participants to help them know and feel prepared to deliver the presentation while saving the time it would take to rehearse the presentation multiple times.

2. **Use slow, deep, in and out breaths to diminish fear.** Grant Carter, a medical doctor and Vice President with ResMed, a manufacturer of sleep apnoea devices, participated in one of my workshops on how to effectively get a message across. Grant relayed a method to slow down your heart rate, and subsequently to promote the feeling of calm.

Let me explain . . .

Simply take in a breath slowly for the count of a full five seconds. Hold the breath for five seconds, then breathe out slowly for a full five seconds.
Repeat these steps several times.

3. **Find friendly faces fast (FFFF)**
When you present or meet with people, use the encouraging faces in the audience or in the meeting to give yourself courage. There may be unfriendly faces that are also there. You still must look at this people. However, put more focus on the friendly faces.



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4. **Relax your legs**

If you are nervous prior to a presentation tension can be held in your legs. This leg tension can spread to the rest of your body. Body tension can promote nervousness. Relax and bend your legs at the knees to release the tension and promote the feeling of calm.

5. **You are not your behaviour**

Sometimes an interaction or presentation or meeting will not be successful. This does not mean that you are not successful. It means that on this occasion you did not meet the measure of success you wanted. You are not your behaviour. You at your core are a good person. Your behaviour is something you do. Separate yourself from your behaviours and you'll be able to learn from and be more objective about your behaviours.

6. **Recognise what type of fear you have.**

- a. Career terror: Career terror is the fear that your career may be ruined if you do not perform well in the interaction or meeting. Some interactions are very important. However few will have the potential to be career threatening in themselves.
- b. Perfectionism: One person's perfect can be judged as another person's mediocre. Perfectionism is an unworthy goal. In place of perfection focus on the definition of success provided by John Wooden, legendary United States basketball coach: **'Success is the inner peace that comes from the self-satisfaction, that you made the effort to do the best you were capable of'**.
- c. Panic: Previously there was a discussion of using breathing to calm yourself. This will help with panic. If you continually panic before an interaction get curious about what is the source of the panic. In her book, Feel the fear and do it anyway, Susan Jeffers maintains that to handle your fear all you need do is to know that you can handle anything that could possibly happen.

This means imagining that the interaction going horribly wrong and still being able to handle it. Realize that despite the terrible interaction, you will still be able to go on with your life. You will still go home and have dinner as normal.

- d. Avoidance: The best action for avoidance is to make a plan to do the thing you've previously avoided, and stick to it. In addition, you can ask a friend to help you conquer your avoidance. When I was starting out in business I would avoid making phone calls to secure appointments with prospective customers.



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To overcome this avoidance I would tell a friend to ring me at 5:00pm on the day I was scheduled to make 45 minutes worth of phone calls. When he rang, I told my friend to ask me if I had made the calls. **If I had avoided the calls my friend would remind me of the commitment that I had made.** This checking up by a friend helped me overcome my avoidance.

- e. Trauma: You may have had a very bad experience in an interaction or presentation. We can classify this as trauma. I encourage you to look objectively at the trauma and assess its long-term impact. Usually the trauma, though painful at the time, did not have long-term consequences.

The techniques above including 'You are not your behaviour' and Susan Jeffers' advice will help you handle past traumas.

Ref: PITCHspreport



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