

---

## 3 Ways to Talk so Clients Listen

by Robert Moment

People talk to you everyday-sometimes effectively, often times not. But when it comes to business, you can't afford to not have people listen. If you want your clients to really hear what you have to say, you have to know how to say it in the most effective manner possible. In any given situation- business or otherwise-a person's main motivation is, "What's in it for me?" That means whatever you say has to be geared towards answering that very question for your listener.

If you're ready to get your point across and be heard, read on to find how to use a client's self-interest to your advantage and talk so they really listen.

### 1. Preparation

A great sales pitch or presentation always starts long before the client arrives. No matter what you're selling, no one's going to buy it if you don't know your stuff. Preparation is key: you have to know what you're talking about if you want anyone to really listen. Of course, just what kind of preparation will depend on the nature of the material you're presenting, but remember that going the extra mile here will make clients take notice later.

When preparing for any kind of meeting or presentation, take time in advance to go over all the material you're talking about. You should know the topic well, and have plenty of specifics to use for examples. It can also help to consider beforehand some of the questions that clients might ask. Anticipating their needs will help you be able to answer queries quickly and effectively.

### 2. Presentation

Next, no matter what you're talking about, how you present it has everything to do with how well clients will listen. Anyone adequately prepared can talk for hours-but part of your planning should be how best to present the given material. Decide before you begin just what kind of examples to use, or if there are any ways you can enhance your presentation with audio-visual material, pictures, or illustrations.

For big presentations, you'll want to practice in the mirror or for friends to make sure you're getting the key points across. To be more effective on a daily basis with all your clients, think of what you say as "mini" presentations. Start by examining your speech for little words like "um" and "ah" that weaken the effect of what you're trying to say- you'll be amazed at how much more attentively people listen.

As well, take the time to make sure you're well presented: tidily dressed, on time, and polite. Remember that your presentation isn't just what you say- you're a whole package, and how you present yourself needs to reflect that.

### 3. Passion

Finally, the key to talking so clients is conveying to them your passion. If you're passionate about something, it comes through in the way you speak, in the way you hold your self, it even shows on your face. There's no amount of preparation or presentation skill that can make up for a lack of passion for the topic or proposal at hand. The most effective speakers are the ones who combine all three in a way that makes people sit up and listen. The trick is to find your own personal balance and make your passion come through above all else.

So what if you're not passionate about the material? We've all done jobs we didn't like at one point or another, but you find a way to be enthusiastic and energetic about what you're doing by appreciating other sides of it. Getting passionate about something may only mean shifting your point of view. Always try to see things from the client's side, in order to understand just how what you're doing would benefit them. They'll really hear what you have to say when you make it vital and important to them-that's where your passion should lie.

Remember always that a good talker is also a great listener, and take the time to listen carefully when your clients talk. Take care to keep the client's interest in mind and you're on your way to always talking in a way that makes people listen.

Preparation, presentation and passion- three simple concepts that when used correctly can make you a great speaker. In private and public life these principles apply, and if you look closely at any of the successful people in your life, you're certain to find them in action. If you prepare in advance and take the time to present yourself and the material well, your passion will come through, and that's when people really listen.