

## **Achieve Your Safety Outcomes with Effective Communication, Motivation, and Presentation Techniques**

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Increase your impact while conveying your next safety message. In an entirely new presentation, you will discover the techniques that the best communicators around the world use to make their presentations effective. You will learn the secrets to increase participation in your meetings and your safety process. This session will give you the skills to motivate employees to achieve a higher level of commitment to safety.

### **Free Life-Saving Information**

Let's face it! First, we are in one very strange business. We have information that we know will save lives and yet we have to beg people to listen or do what we teach them. It is so backwards from the rest of the world of information and education. Day after day, people spend thousands of dollars attending seminars that they believe will improve their life. These could be on making money or better investments or how to have a better marriage. On the other hand, if someone in the safety business held a seminar on how to do a job safely and charged an admission price the room would likely be empty. What is wrong here and what is the missing element?

### **Communication Skills**

I have had the privilege of interviewing many safety professionals and members of their audiences. Also, I have been in the audience of many a presenter. The content is rarely the problem. The information they are giving is life-changing and often, if followed, life-saving. Yet, audience member after audience member is having trouble staying awake or getting excited about what they are learning. One of the key problems is training. The safety person has been trained in safety, and many of them have come from the trades to which they are teaching safety. They know their job in the plant or in the field but now they have stepped into a new role, the role of trainer, teacher, and speaker. How much training have they received in this area? Probably not much since they were required to stand in front of a class in high school and give a report. Add to this, the fact that many people are uncomfortable in front of an audience. Everywhere I go, people perceive the problems they are having are quite often communication issues. Given this, it always amazes me that little or no time, effort, and money is invested to improve the communication skills of those in the workplace. Even if someone doesn't give presentations, improving their communication skills would improve their performance.

## **Presentation Skills**

It is time for people to improve their presentation skills and their self confidence. One great resource available across the country is Toastmasters. If you go to their website, you can find a listing of clubs in your area. They can be found at, [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org) . A good friend told me the best approach is to attend several meetings in your area and find the club that fits your needs and personality. Some have a focus on sales, others on humor, etc.

## **Outcomes—Yours and Theirs**

Outcomes are crucial to effective communication. Try looking at outcomes from two perspectives. First, your own outcomes and second, the outcomes of your audience or individuals with whom you are communicating. You must know your expected outcomes in order to master the words, tonality, and physiology you will use with which to achieve your point. Knowing the outcome of your audience will increase your ability to meet their needs and therefore, succeed. When these outcomes are compatible, you will be able to achieve significant results. If they are not, your ability to be flexible and do whatever it takes will be very necessary in order to be successful in your communication.

## **Leaders Have Specific Outcomes**

I had the privilege of hearing Norman Schwarzkopf speak about leadership and achieving objectives. He pointed out that the most critical thing related to success is that you need to know before you start what criteria will determine the measure of your success. You must identify your outcome prior to taking action. In the Desert Storm action, it had been decided ahead of time that getting Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait was the objective. In fact, the operation would be a success even without continuing on into Baghdad. The political nature of the alliance which made up the multinational force would not have allowed such a goal. Therefore, the political objective for the military action was clear and it allowed them to accurately measure their success against a standard. They knew when they had achieved success.

How many times have you given an employee a task and failed to let them know how they would measure their success in completing the task? However, if you convey in advance that they will be successful when they accomplish these specific things, it will then be easy for them and for you to measure their results.

## **Programming Your Brain to Achieve Your Outcomes**

Twenty years ago, I was going to Florida for the first time and because I have been a fan of the United States space program and NASA for years, I arranged two extra days so I could take any tours of the Kennedy Space Center that were available. I was excited as I rode the bus around the space center seeing all the places you have seen on television when they cover a launch. On one of the tours you stop just outside a fenced circle next to either pad 39a or 39b. We exited the bus and were allowed to take pictures. I stood there in awe, realizing I was looking at the spot where we as humans stepped off the earth and stepped onto the moon. The pads that had launched the Apollo spacecraft had been modified to launch the space shuttle. Looking up at the massive launch tower I was thrilled, but I also realized that I had to see more. I decided right then and there that someday I was going to stand on the launch tower.

Perhaps you have something you are passionate about such as improving the safe behaviors of people with whom you work. Once you decide that you want to improve safety results, you are on the way. Making a decision puts our brain into action but you are much more likely to hit a target or outcome that has real clarity. I, without knowing it, programmed my brain for success that afternoon. The technique is simple but profound and is easy for you to use in achieving the results you want. I knew exactly what it would look like, sound like, feel like, smell like, and taste like when I would be standing on that tower. I knew I would see the Atlantic Ocean to my left. In front of me would be the old launch sites and looking down I would see the flame trench. To the right, I would see the Vehicle Assembly Building four miles away. I also knew I would be attentively listening to someone telling me all about that which I was standing on and looking at. I knew I would feel the wind blowing across the cape and through my clothes. I also knew that I would smell the ocean in the air and probably even taste it. What I had done without realizing it was program my computer using the five input devices we as humans have. Everything you have stored in your mind has been taken in through your five senses. Just as a computer uses a keyboard and a mouse as input devices, our brain has these five input devices. By making the outcome sensory specific, you can chart the course that will take you where you want to go.

Since that day ten years ago, I developed my speaking career and finally had the opportunity to do a training session at Kennedy Space Center for the safety team. When my presentation was over they had promised to take me on a tour. We went to the orbital processing facility where they get the space shuttle (orbiter) ready for the next mission. I was so excited I was almost in outer space myself.

## **Reach Higher Levels of Performance by Stretching Your Outcomes**

My outcome for this trip was to be able to stand on the launch tower and also get close enough to one of the space shuttles to be able to touch it. After checking in, we walked under the Space Shuttle Atlantis and I looked up at the tiles that protect it from the heat of re-entry, you could see the ones that had just been replaced and the ones with marks from previous missions. It was incredible and truly a dream come true. We walked upstairs and I stood at the nose of the orbiter where I met Mike who was in charge of this facility. He told me it was too bad I had not been there the previous week. I asked why, figuring that something special had happened. He said that had I been there one week earlier they could have taken me aboard the shuttle onto the actual flight deck. I was stunned, I was still thrilled to have the privilege of being there, but I realized that I had set my outcomes too low. Have you ever set your sights too low because you didn't know or believe something was possible? It is easy in the safety profession to get discouraged unless you focus on your ultimate outcome and allow your brain to find a way to achieve it. I decided at that moment that I would always dream the biggest dreams and set the highest outcomes in order to experience life to its fullest. They did, however, tell me that when I came back to do some more training that they would get me on board.

We then drove out to launch pad 39a and drove up the ramp to the base of the launch tower. We entered the elevator and went up to the two hundred fifty five foot level. I walked out of the elevator and what a beautiful view! I looked to my left and saw the Atlantic Ocean. In front of me were the old launch sites and looking down I could see the flame trench. To the right, I saw the Vehicle Assembly Building four miles away. Our escort at the pad was relating to us about the Apollo program and also explaining the structure on which we were standing. I felt the wind blowing across the cape and through my clothes. I could smell the ocean in the air and even tasted it. I then looked down and watched a tour bus pull up and as the people got out to take photos, I realized that I had been there ten years earlier. Goose bumps went from my head to my toes as I realized I had achieved exactly what I programmed my brain to accomplish. You can achieve your outcomes by making them sensory specific.

## **Help Others Reach Higher Standards by Stretching Your Outcomes**

Remember, they had promised on my next visit I would be able to go inside a space shuttle. Well, I returned several months later and this time as we went into the Orbital Processing Facility we were issued clean suits. After signing in, we went through an air shower and then put on the special garments. I was then invited to climb onto a small platform that went through the hatch and into the Space Shuttle Atlantis. It had just returned from a rendezvous with the space station Mir. I climbed a ladder and entered the flight deck where they allowed me to look through the windows to the cargo bay and explained the equipment on board. Our escort then asked if I would like to sit in the pilot's seat and proceeded to give me directions on how to accomplish this task. I sat there with the joy stick in one hand and I was thrilled. It was then that I discovered something else special. As I looked to my left, my friend Jack was sitting in the commander's seat with a big smile on his face and it was then that I realized in his career with NASA he had never taken the opportunity to go on board one of the space shuttles. I discovered that when we achieve our outstanding outcomes we get to bring along others we care about. This is especially true for us in the safety profession. When you are successful helping others to work safely, they benefit as you achieve the safety outcomes you have programmed into your brain. As you raise your standards, many people benefit.

## **Guidelines for an Achievable Outcome**

### **State Your Outcome in the Positive**

Not long ago, I had the opportunity to help a client who wanted to overcome their fear of flying. The client had been given airfare and two weeks accommodations in Hawaii yet was absolutely afraid to fly. When we sat down to deal with this situation, I asked what they wanted to achieve. I was asking for the desired outcome. The immediate response was, "I don't want to be afraid during the flight." I said that was fine but that it is difficult to achieve a negative outcome such as that. I asked if it were possible to wave a magic wand what would the experience of flying to Hawaii be like. The client told me enjoying the flight and having a good time would be just right. That was great! Now, I had an outcome which was positive and achievable. After only two hours of work, we achieved the desired outcome and as a result the flight and the entire trip were a big success. The client told me later that even the flights between islands on the smaller planes were enjoyable.

You have probably been faced with challenges where the outcome you set for yourself was for something not to happen or some other negative representation of a goal. The difficulty you experienced may have been a result of not having a positive goal. Knowing this, you can learn in this chapter to develop outcomes in such a way as to increase the likelihood of achieving them.

One summer, I witnessed another example of why it is important to state your outcome in the positive. I observed lifeguards at a public pool and the effectiveness of their communication. A boy was running across the decking when the lifeguard yelled, "Don't run!" The boy continued on at the same speed and jumped into the pool. Perhaps, in his mind he wasn't running; he was in the process of jumping. Later, another lifeguard was on duty and when a boy was running they said, "Walk." Almost instantly, the boy began to walk because it was easy to understand the desired behavior. Whenever possible, state your outcomes and desired behaviors in the positive.

## **Be Specific In What You Want**

In addition to being stated in the positive, your outcomes must state specifically what you want.

For example:

- I want my employees to work safely.
- I want employees to follow all safety procedures.
- I want management committed to safety.
- I want employees committed to safety.
- I want a raise. (Not a safety goal but it is specific)

## **Take Into Account Their Current Behavior**

With any journey, you have a starting point and a destination. Knowing the destination is important, but the instructions or specific steps you take in getting there are also determined by your starting point. Evaluate what the current behavior is, then develop a plan to achieve the outcome. The more you know about where you are starting from will allow you to accurately develop a communication strategy that will yield results.

## **Outcomes Initiated and Maintained By You**

The starting point includes your personal outcome. Can the outcome you have decided upon be initiated by you and maintained by you? If it can, you have much more control over its success. If it can't, then it merely means you must take that into account and involve others to achieve the results you must have.

## **Make Your Outcomes Sensory Specific**

When speaking about your outcomes it is important to remember that you use your senses to evaluate the world around yourself. Your brain represents the world using your senses through representational systems, so it is helpful to make your outcomes sensory-based and measurable. What will I see when I achieve this outcome? What things will I hear from myself internally and from others externally when I achieve this outcome? What will it feel like when I have achieved this outcome? If there are smells or tastes associated with the outcome, they should be looked at in the same way. When you use these as ways to define your outcome, your brain has a well-defined target and knows, just as a laser-guided missile, when it has hit the well-defined target.

## **Is It Compelling?**

Can you think of something in your life that you decided you must have, whether it is a material possession, position, or power? You know that you are willing to do whatever it takes to get what you want. The rule is that if you want something enough, you will figure out how to achieve it. This is the same level you must achieve if you want to increase your effectiveness as a safety professional. What is the importance of it and what does it mean? You can make something more compelling by picturing in your mind the massive change which will be achieved.

Discover the power of possibility. Give your mind permission to open up and move forward because it knows it is possible. If you see it you can achieve it!! There are many examples throughout our history that illustrate how someone had a vision and led many others. John F. Kennedy saw us landing a man on the moon and it became a reality. Walt Disney saw Epcot and it became a reality. Sally Ride saw herself as an astronaut and became the first American woman in space. In each case, believing something was possible and seeing it as if it were completed, helped to make it a reality.

Likewise, there is danger in what you predict and what you see. If you imagine something won't work, it probably won't. Your unconscious mind will move towards the predominate image. You should always be sure you are imagining empowering possibilities. You must make it compelling enough for your mind to create the result. See the outcome in the future. See yourself in the future with the outcome achieved.

**“Whether you think you can or think you can’t—  
you are right.”**

**--Henry Ford**

### **Determine Specific Evidence of Achievement**

There is specific evidence which lets you know when you have achieved your outcome. How do you know when you have achieved it? What specifically will you see, hear, and feel? Much of this you have already done by making the outcome sensory specific.

### **Is It What You Really Want?**

You may have heard the admonition, “Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it.” That is exactly what this step is about. Are you willing to do whatever it takes to achieve your outcome and how will taking these actions affect the rest of your life? My friend, Bruce Wilkinson, tells his clients that they should set their policies and consequences for violating those policies as if their most valuable employee would violate the rule. If you have said you will take a particular course of action if someone violates a safety procedure, and then you do not administer the enforcement of it in a fair and equitable manner, you will destroy the outcome. This commitment is how you determine the difference between a wish and a desired compelling future. What do you have at stake in getting this outcome? What's in it for you? The more compelling you can make it, the harder your brain will work to achieve it.

### **Who Is This Outcome Up To?**

Is this outcome up to you? If it is, rise to the challenge and make it happen. If not, use your communication skills to enlist the help of others to do their part to make it happen. Is it initiated by you and maintained by you? Once again, if so, go and get it done. If not, what must you do to motivate others to do their part?

### **Do You Have A Choice Of Ways To Achieve It?**

Is there more than one way to achieve your outcome? Flexibility is important in achieving outcomes. Remember the old saying, “There is more than one way to skin a cat.” When in the past have you ever done this or something like this successfully? Do you know anyone who has achieved this outcome?

### **Is The First Step Specified And Achievable?**

One of my performance mentors taught me that if you take action towards a goal within twenty-four hours of setting that goal your chances for achieving it go up dramatically. You can probably think of situations where you took the first step and once you began, momentum instantly was achieved. Once you take action, you seem to keep moving. For most people, the first step is the longest one of any journey they are taking.

Specify the first step necessary, take action and do it. Of course, once you have started, it is useful to keep going, so it is important that you have listed all the steps needed to achieve your outcome. Keep going down the list of steps until you accomplish what you want.

## **What Resources Do You Need To Achieve Your Outcome?**

What resources do you have now and which ones will you need to achieve your outcome? When in the past have you ever done this or something like this successfully? Do you know anyone who has achieved this outcome?

## **Act As If**

When have you heard this before? Once you have established an outcome using the above guidelines, act as if you have achieved it. Your unconscious mind doesn't distinguish between imagination and reality. For example, Dr. Krasner has his students try the following exercise. Imagine a nice, big, yellow lemon sitting on your desk. Imagine picking it up, taking a knife, and cutting it in half. See the juice drip on the table. Now, pick up one-half of the lemon and bite into it. If you have done as I just asked, I am sure you are puckering up just as if you had actually done it. The puckering your mouth is doing is based purely on imagination because you and I both know the only lemon on your table came from within your mind. When you acted "as if" you were biting into a lemon, your salivary glands knew just what to do. The same is true for your outcomes. When you act as if you can achieve something, your brain does the rest. It won't produce saliva for you, but it will cause you to do the things which will direct you to achieve your outcome.

## **Some Fine Tuning Questions To Ask**

- How will achieving this outcome affect your life?
- What is your purpose for achieving this outcome?
- What will you gain if you have it?
- What will you lose if you have it? (Sometimes gaining one thing means losing something else. If you have more to lose, your brain will make sure you will not achieve your outcome.)
- What will happen if you achieve this outcome?
- What will happen if you don't achieve it?
- What won't happen if you achieve it?
- What won't happen if you don't achieve your outcome?

Have you ever really looked at your outcomes in this manner before? Can you see reasons why some of your outcomes in the past haven't been achieved because these outcomes did not take any of the above into account? Practice developing outcomes for your safety meetings, your interaction with other people, and whatever else you want to accomplish. You will find doing this will be enlightening and fun.

**“While predicting the future would be an awesome skill to have, we have an even greater gift and that is to create our future.”**

**--John Drebing Jr.**