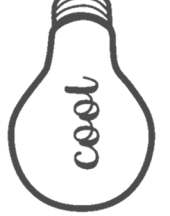


Keep Cool under Pressure: a presentation tool kit

Use this deck for important presentation best practices and inspiration for your upcoming discussion.

Reach out to travis@learningis.cool to for more info or schedule a meeting [here](#)

Nice to meet you!



Why Learning is Cool

It all started while searching for a unique website name – did you know in addition to alternate domains like *.io* there are ones like *.ninja* and *.shop*?

.cool is close to the traditional *.com* but it takes one tiny habit switch and completes a sentence.

From there, a concept was born – small, sustainable habit changes while making learning fun and human ... and guaranteeing a laugh when exchanging contact info. These themes will carry throughout our coaching and this tool kit.

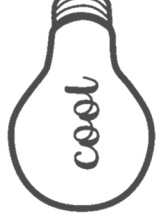
[Check our “cool” site!](#)

Who made this?

Hi, my name is Travis Dobler. I am the founder of Learning is Cool. While I come from a sales background, helping others and training is my jam. It unlocks both parts of our brains that need to be satisfied: the creative and the scientific.

I was first certified as a speaking coach in 2020 and have since led a lot of in person and virtual engagements.

Now, in addition to corporate training, I am passionate about helping individuals captivate their audience and inspire them to action. Enjoy this free tool. If you'd like to learn more or practice using it, schedule some time [here](#).



Why sharpen your presentation skills?

“The number 2 fear is death ... public speaking is number 1. At a funeral, people would rather be in the casket than give the eulogy!” -Jerry Seinfeld

1. It's a great feeling to be fully confident in a message and have others benefit from your ideas when you share them
2. Most jobs and meaningful work rely on strong communication skills
3. Ever been an audience member on autopilot during a boring presentation?
Let's prevent it from happening to you



calm your nerves | create captivating content | engage your audience

> Structure (10)

> Storytelling (9)

> Opening and Closing (5)

> The body and mind (14)

> Visuals (5)

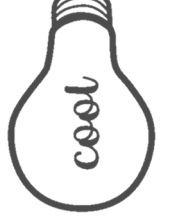
> Engagement (7)

∨ Close

56

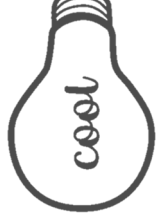


Using this deck



1. Browse by current challenge or cover to cover depending where your skills and creation are at
2. Practice the **challenges** in this deck and review alongside recordings
3. There are 6 major sections with 6 activities and a final challenge at the end – sure to make you a star!

We recommend revisiting from time to time for reminders and pairing with coaching for best results



Preamble: using your slides



Use your notes section after getting your script down to 3 bullets



Create an icon library to quickly pull images you want to use



Communicate anything that is “behind the scenes” like timing notes or guidelines in a hidden slide in the beginning

Recommendations
for notes

Italics for notes to presenter

Asterisks for **ACTION**

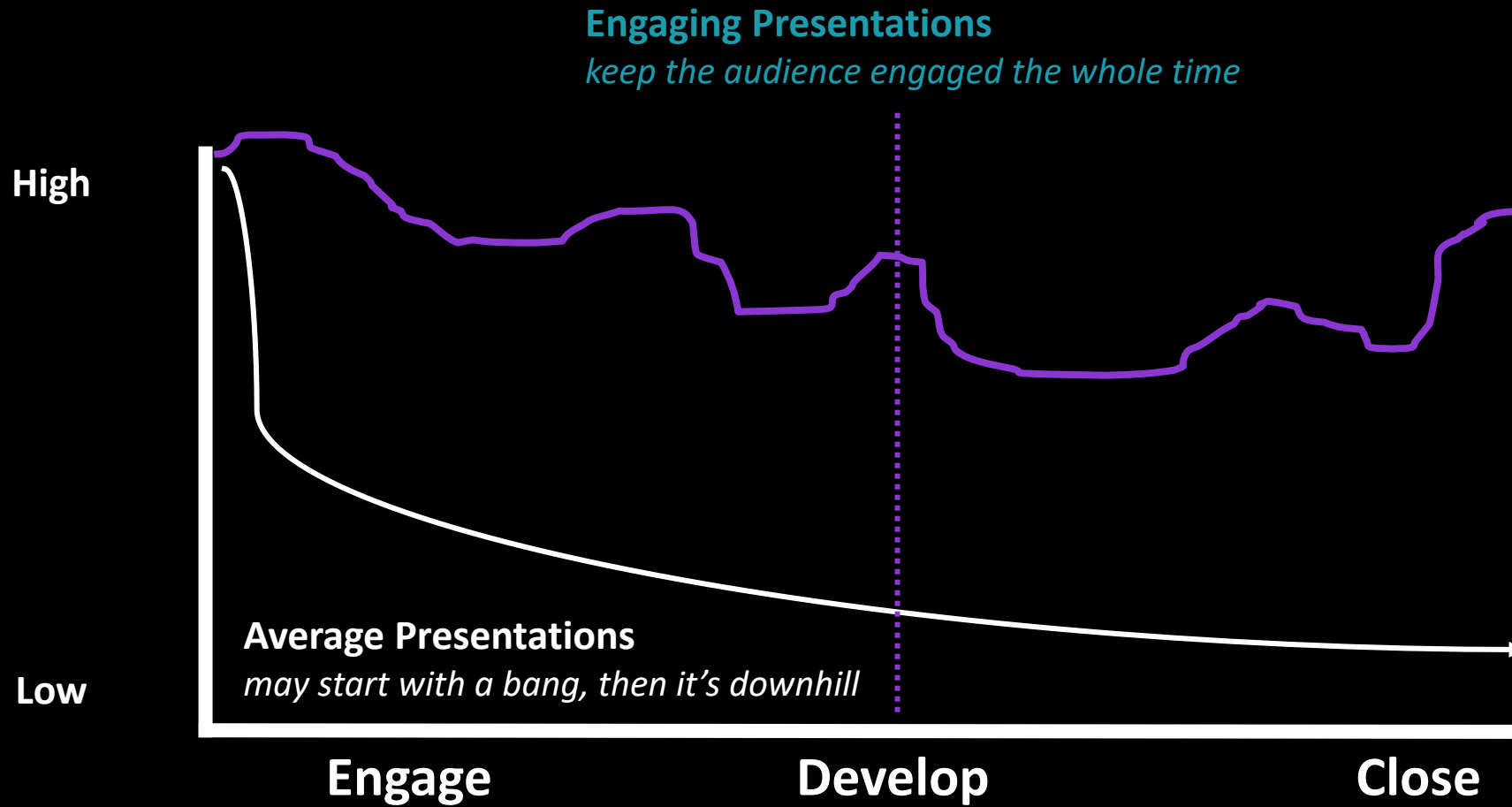
“quotes for what you want to say out loud”

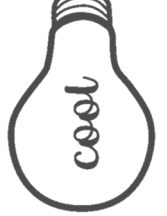
[TRANSITION statements in brackets]

STRUCTURE



The challenge: audience attention



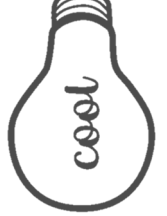


What are we talking about?

A well-defined topic or objective for your presentation is key, and it is subject to change as you develop

Start with questions like:

- Why does your audience care?
- What is it you want them to do during or after?
- How can you make action easy?
- What will indicate to your audience and to you it is a success?

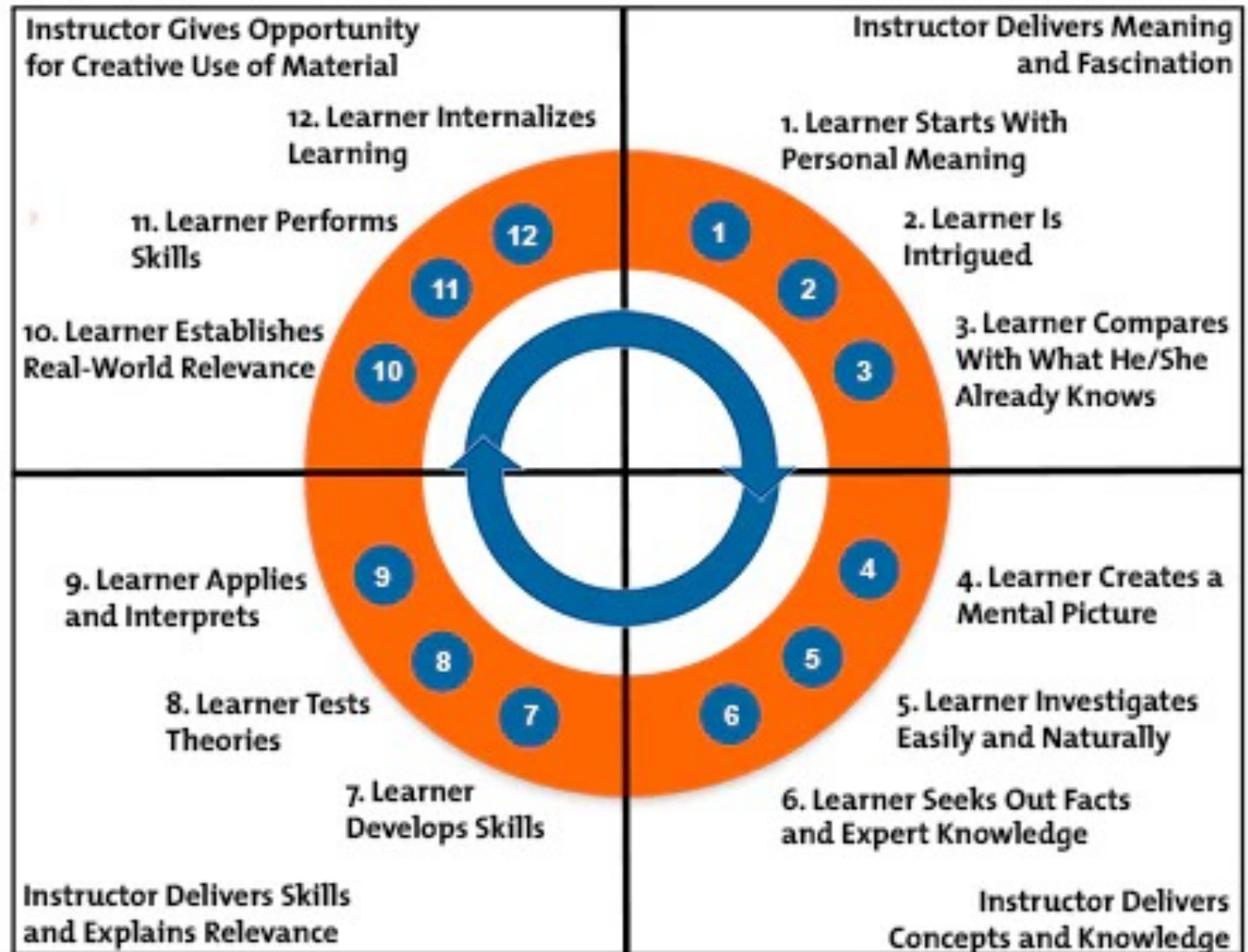


Common tool for Structure

The 4MAT model is a learning cycle developed by Bernice McCarthy in the 1980s, based on the idea that people have different preferences for how they perceive and process information. It divides learners into four quadrants, each with a different question and approach.

See next page for a sample to build your presentation with.

[More info](#)



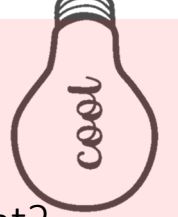
IF

What questions might they have? How else can they apply?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4

WHY



Why is this beneficial? Why is it important?

-
-
-

1

HOW

What steps do they need to take? How can they proceed?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

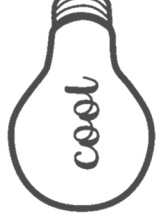
3

WHAT

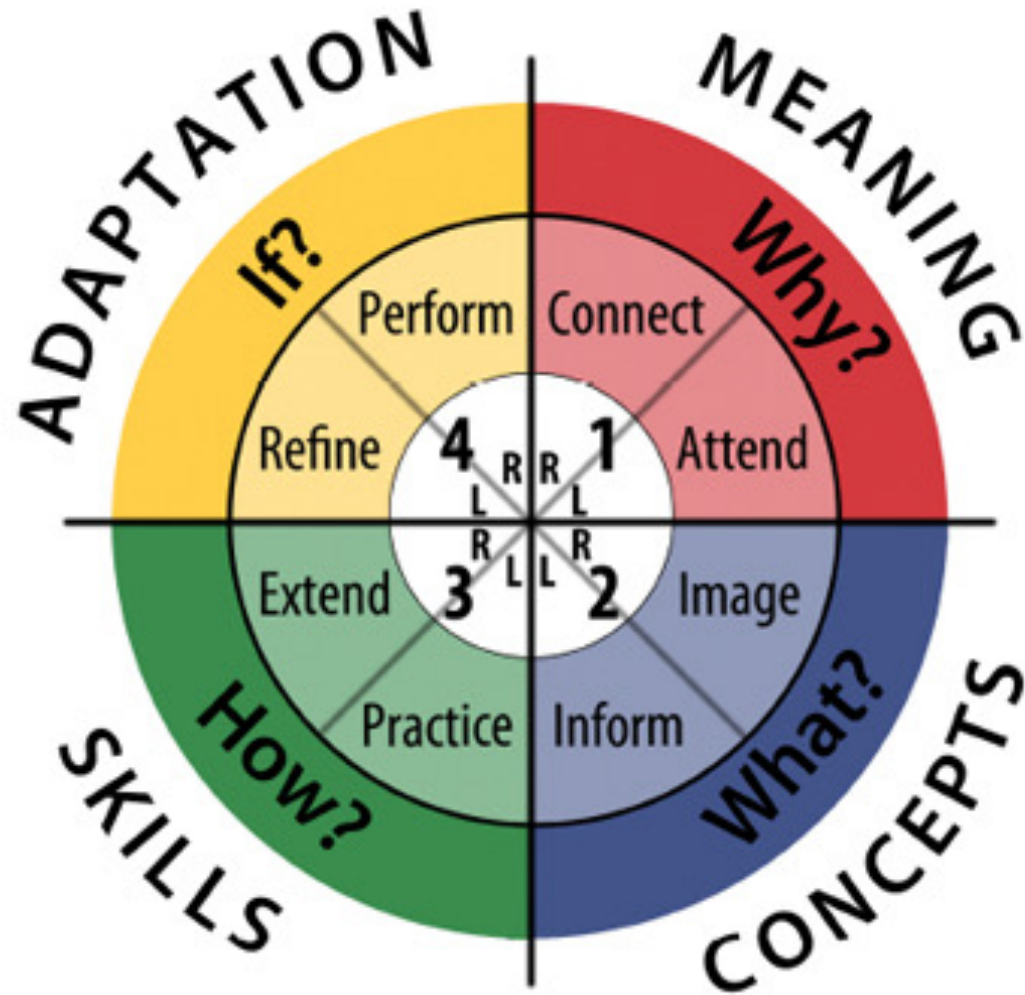
What are we communicating? Any definitions needed?

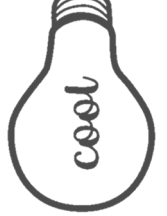
-
-
-

2



4MAT can be applied to your overall structure as well as key topics and sections within it





Questions



Write at least 2-3 questions you expect an audience member might have (the IF section of 4MAT)



At the end of a presentation if there are no questions, you can provide these to get the conversation started or continue demonstrating your wisdom

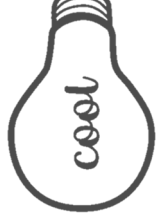


Reiterate any audience questions so all can hear, you get a chance to reframe or get clarity and time to think of your response



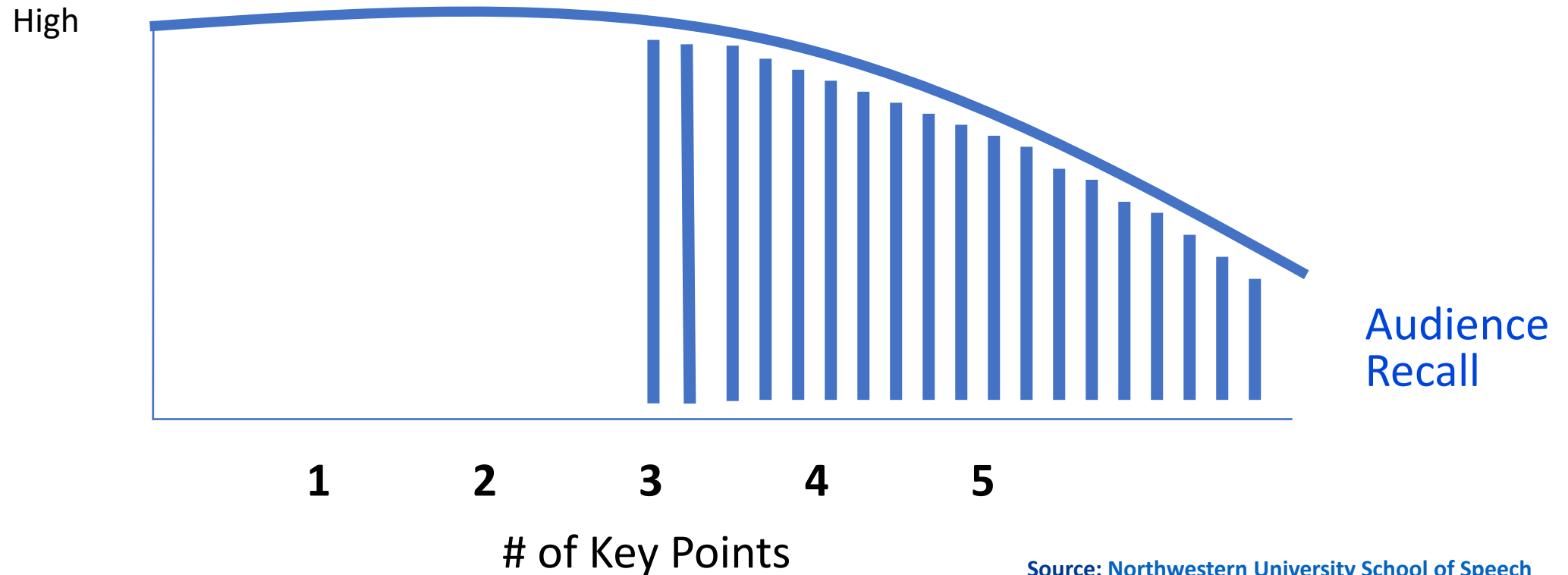
Note: in the beginning of a presentation, take control and free your audience's mind to focus on your content by addressing how you will do Q&A

“interrupt me as we go” “we’ll have time at the end for questions”

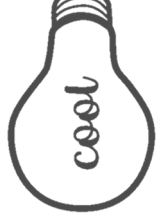


3 Key Points

*Whether in an agenda, section of a presentation or follow up actions, keeping things in 3s helps retention**



Source: [Northwestern University School of Speech](#)



How to cluster ideas

Brainstorm

Moving to a new city:

1. Affordability
2. Cafes nearby
3. HOA
4. Schools
5. Transportation
6. Sporting events
7. Maintenance
8. Restaurants
9. Block parties
10. Walkability

Cluster

1, 3, 7

2, 4, 8, 9

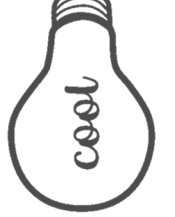
5, 6, 10

Three Key Points

Money

Kids

Culture



Challenge 1: Nebulous

Laying a foundation

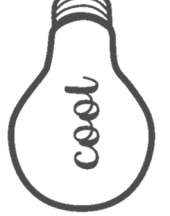
1. List as many benefits as possible to something you are learning
2. Cluster it into 3 key points
3. Put in an order or why → what → how → if

STORYTELLING



Storytelling

It's what makes us human



“

The social and cultural activity of sharing stories, sometimes with improvisation, theatrics or embellishment. Every culture has its own stories or narratives, which are shared as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation or instilling moral values ”

All *good* stories

100

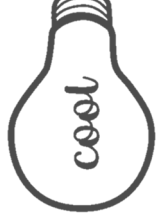
contain true stuff



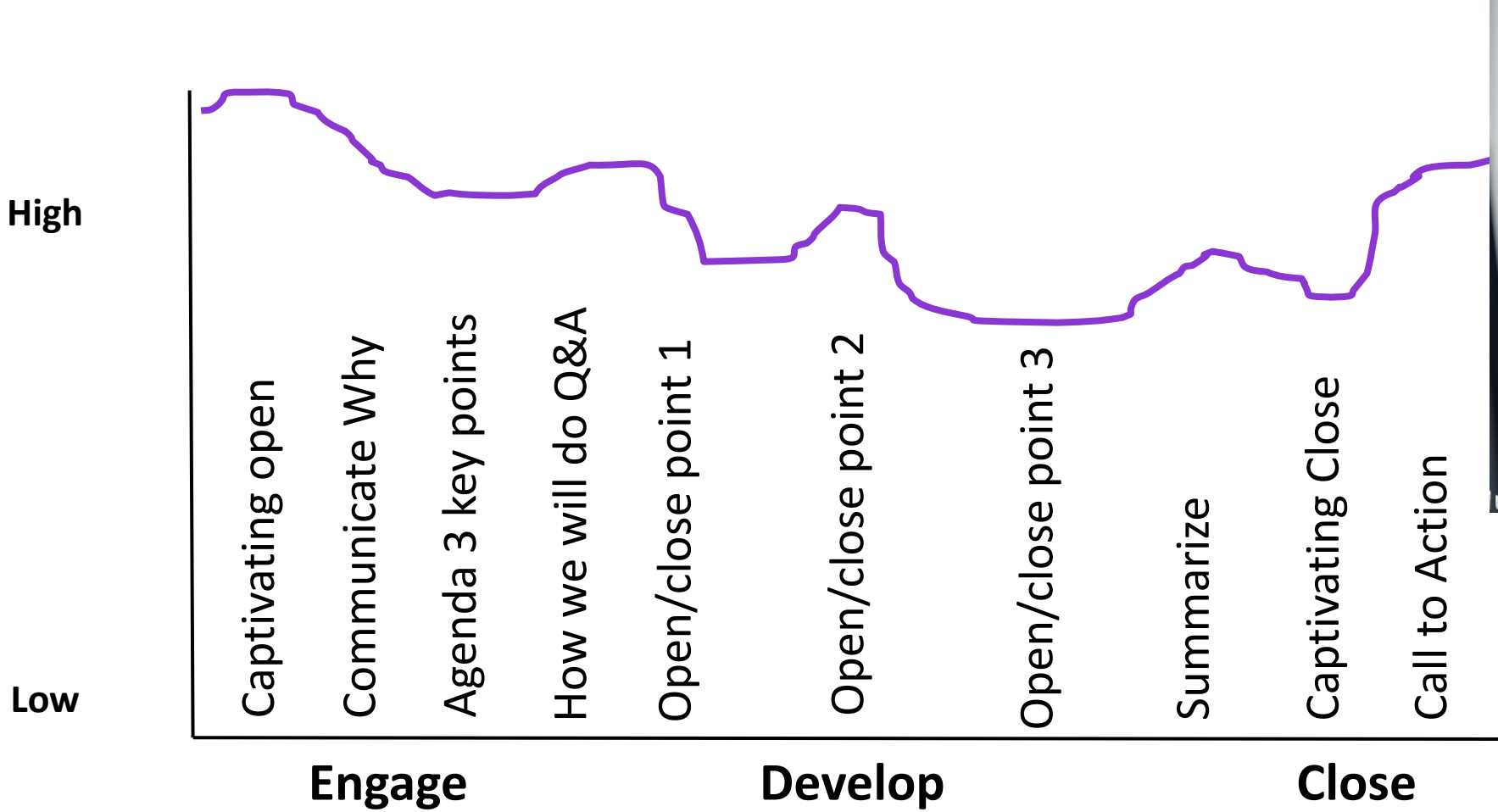
are short and sweet



have conflict and resolution



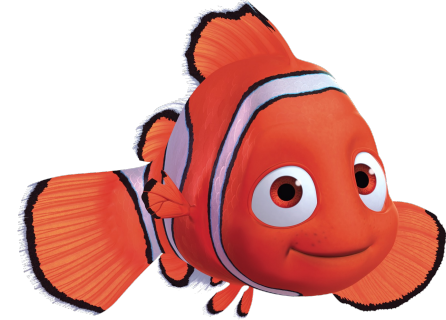
The basics



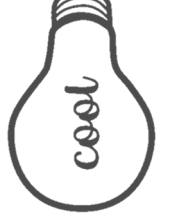


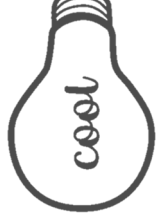
Try the Pixar method

1. **Once up a time there was ...**
2. **Every day ...**
3. **One day ...**
4. **Because of that ...**
5. **Because of that ...**
6. **Until finally ...**



Convincing Elements



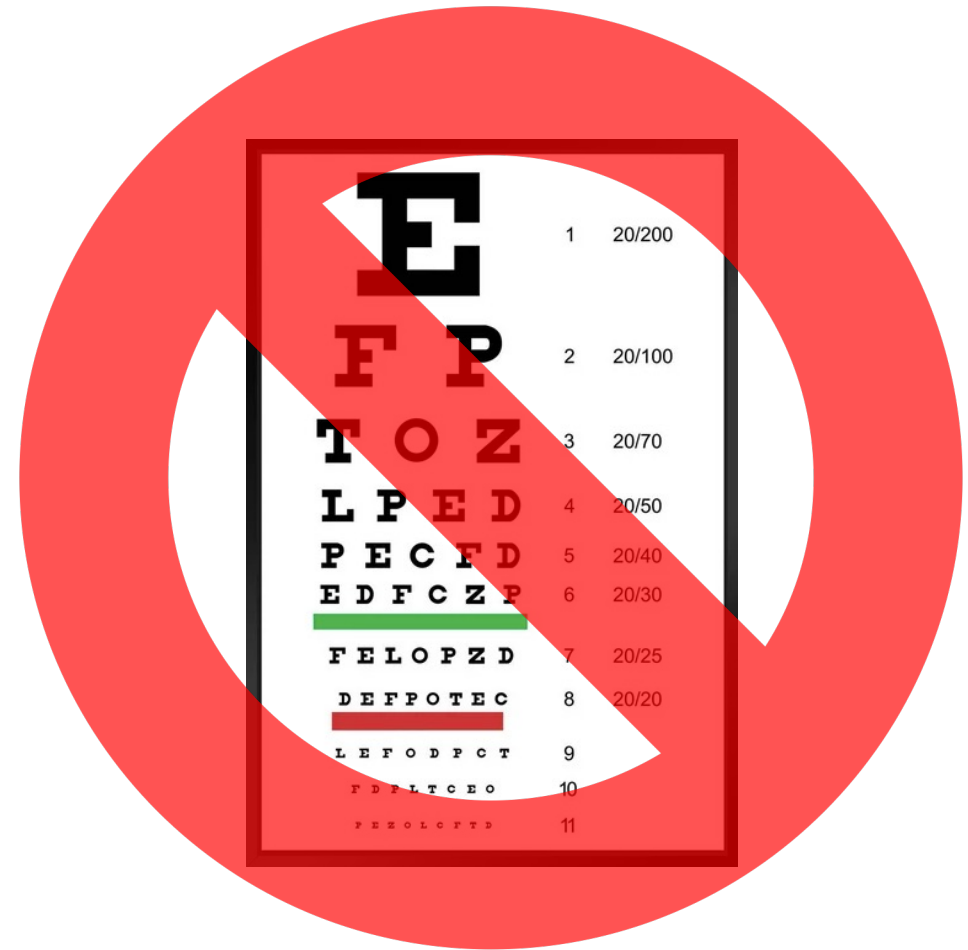


🙄 Never say “here’s an eye chart” again

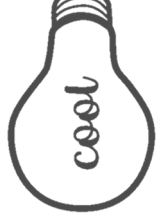
Presenting data or a lot of info can be a challenge

Too much info can

1. Look too challenging to understand resulting in the brain shutting down
2. Distract us from your words with reading



*Tip: make sure to define your **what** early*



Break it down

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Can I spread this information out across multiple visuals?
2. Am I giving too much background info?
3. Which info matters *to this audience*?
4. How minimal of detail can I provide?
5. Am I setting up the context of this data?

Things to try:

1. Make a story out of your data
2. Break your info into 3 key focuses
3. Circle, highlight and annotate to focus
4. Remove extra words, numbers and marks
5. Break out of slides to show tools, give audience members a chance to try on their own or write things down

[See here for the latest slide annoyances as per David Paradi](#)

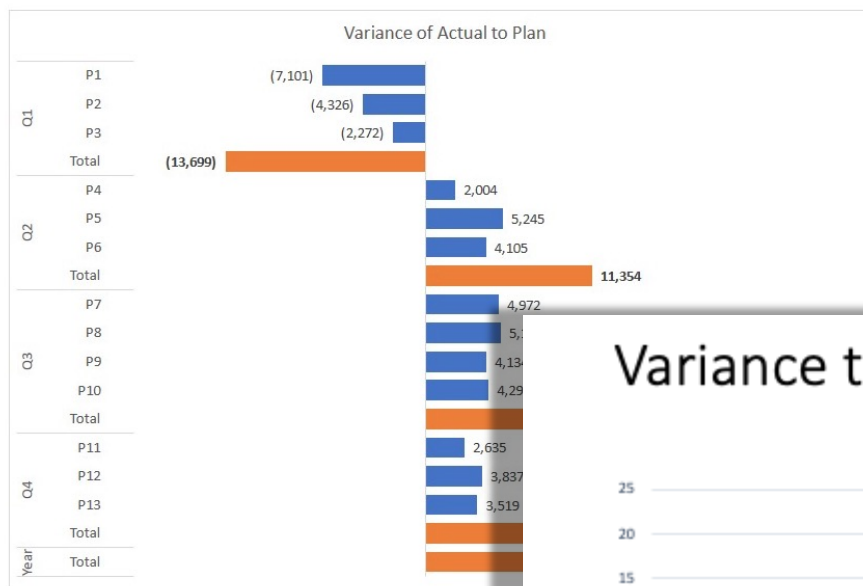


Bad: just data

Actual vs. Forecast			
	Forecast	Actual	Actual vs. Forecast
P1	8,983	1,882	(7,101)
P2	6,500	2,174	(4,326)
P3	7,714	5,442	(2,272)
Total Q1	23,197	9,498	
P4	4,786	6,790	
P5	2,664	7,909	
P6	4,241	8,346	
Total Q2	11,691	23,045	
P7	2,661	7,633	
P8	2,576	7,682	
P9	4,002	8,136	
P10	3,060	7,355	
Total Q3	12,299	30,806	
P11	3,213	5,848	
P12	4,139	7,976	
P13	4,863	8,382	
Total Q4	12,215	22,206	
TOTAL	59,402	85,555	

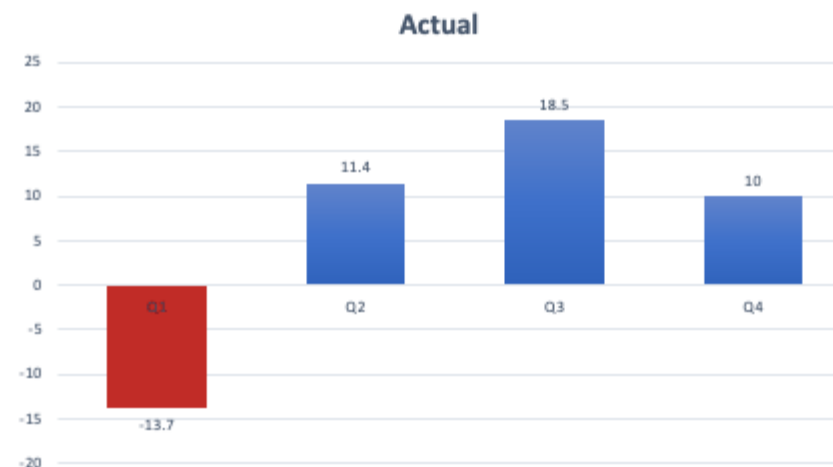
Original

Better: comparative visual



Best: streamlined, colors have meaning, important data focused

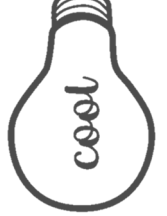
Variance to Plan



Total:
26,153

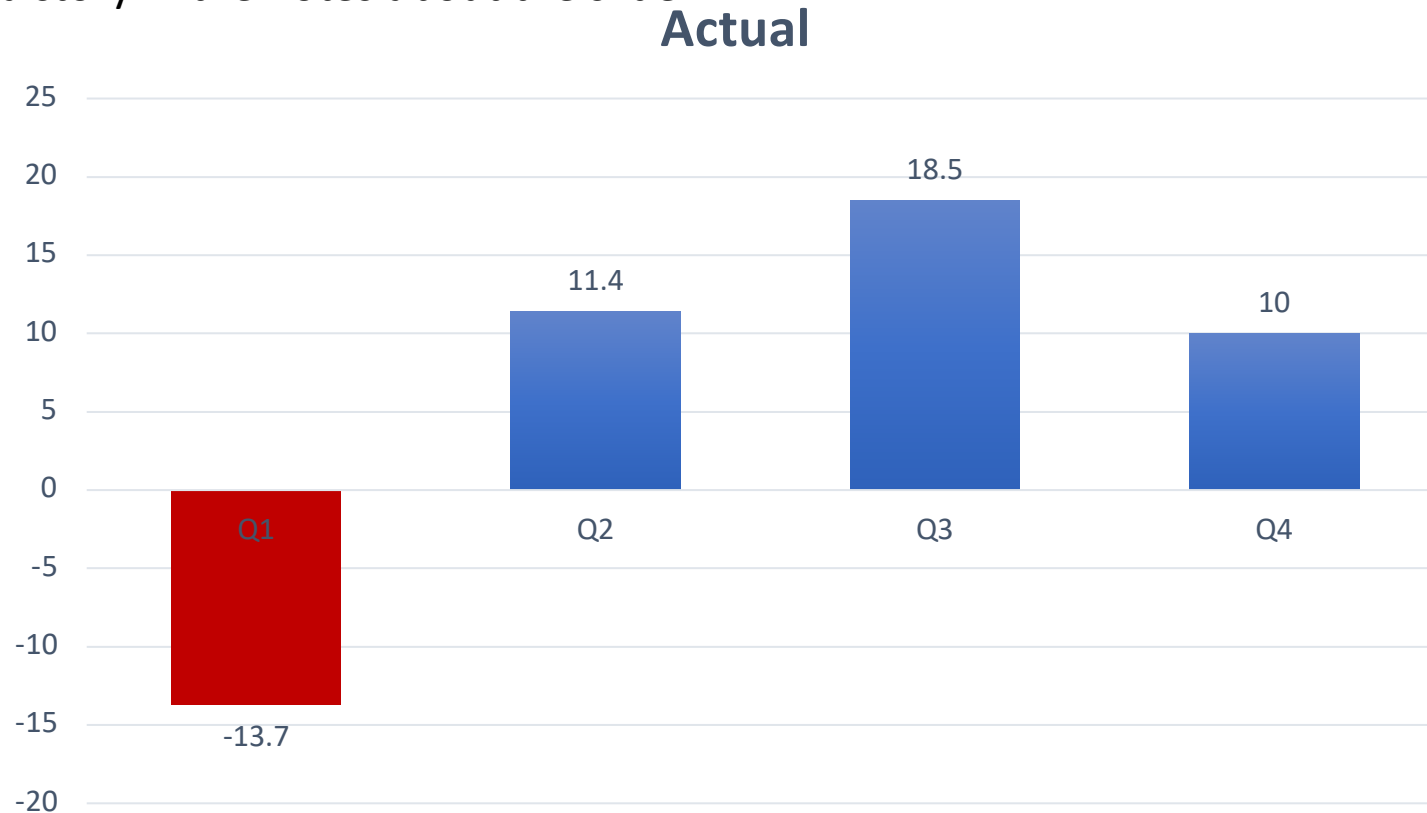
[Check out these makeover videos for more basics](#)

Challenge 2: Data Giant



1. Edit this slide to look even better
2. Try different colors and scales
3. Edit the data on this slide to practice with excel

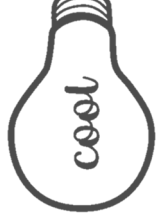
Bonus: Write a story in the notes about the slide



**Total:
26,153**







OPENING and CLOSING



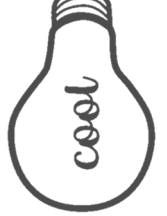


Have you created a self-elevator pitch?

It is important to connect with your audience from your introduction

-  What connects your audience with the topic?
-  Why are you a trusted authority?
-  What do you and your audience have in common?
-  Tailor each pitch until it is natural for you
-  Take about 30-60 seconds
-  If appropriate, have others introduce themselves out loud or in a chat
Virtually: try having audience vote or annotate on your screen where they are from

Captivating techniques



Personal Experiences

Provocative Statements

Humorous Anecdotes

Quotes

Props

Interesting facts

Questions

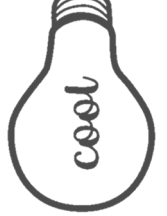
Statistics

Demos

Pictures Videos

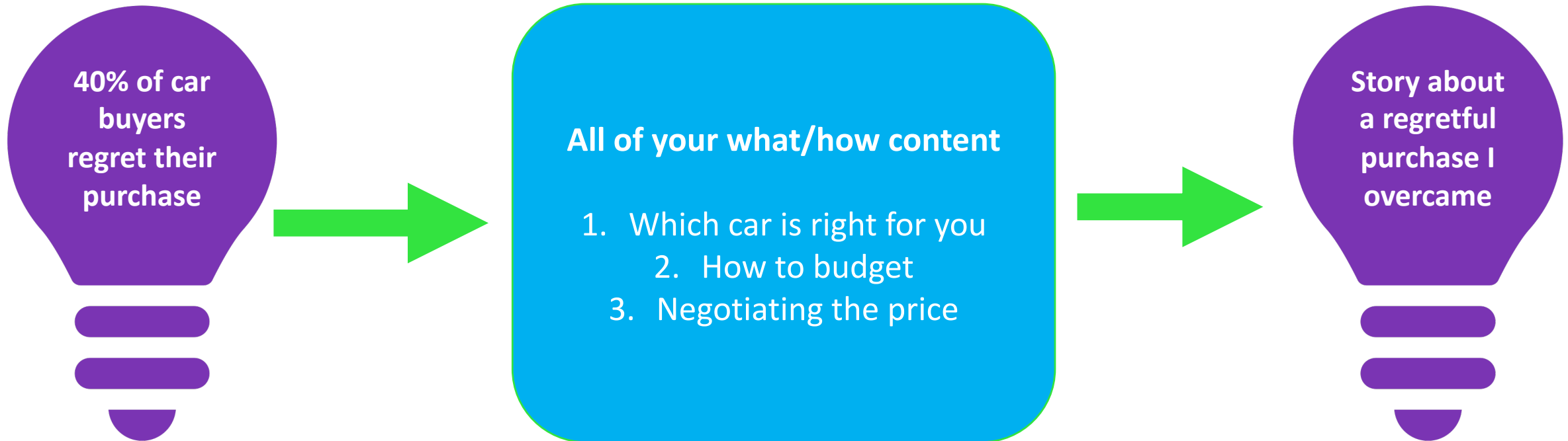
Challenges

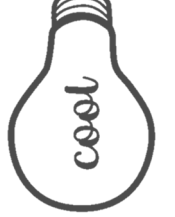
Stories



Match your opening and close

for your overall presentation as well as each section



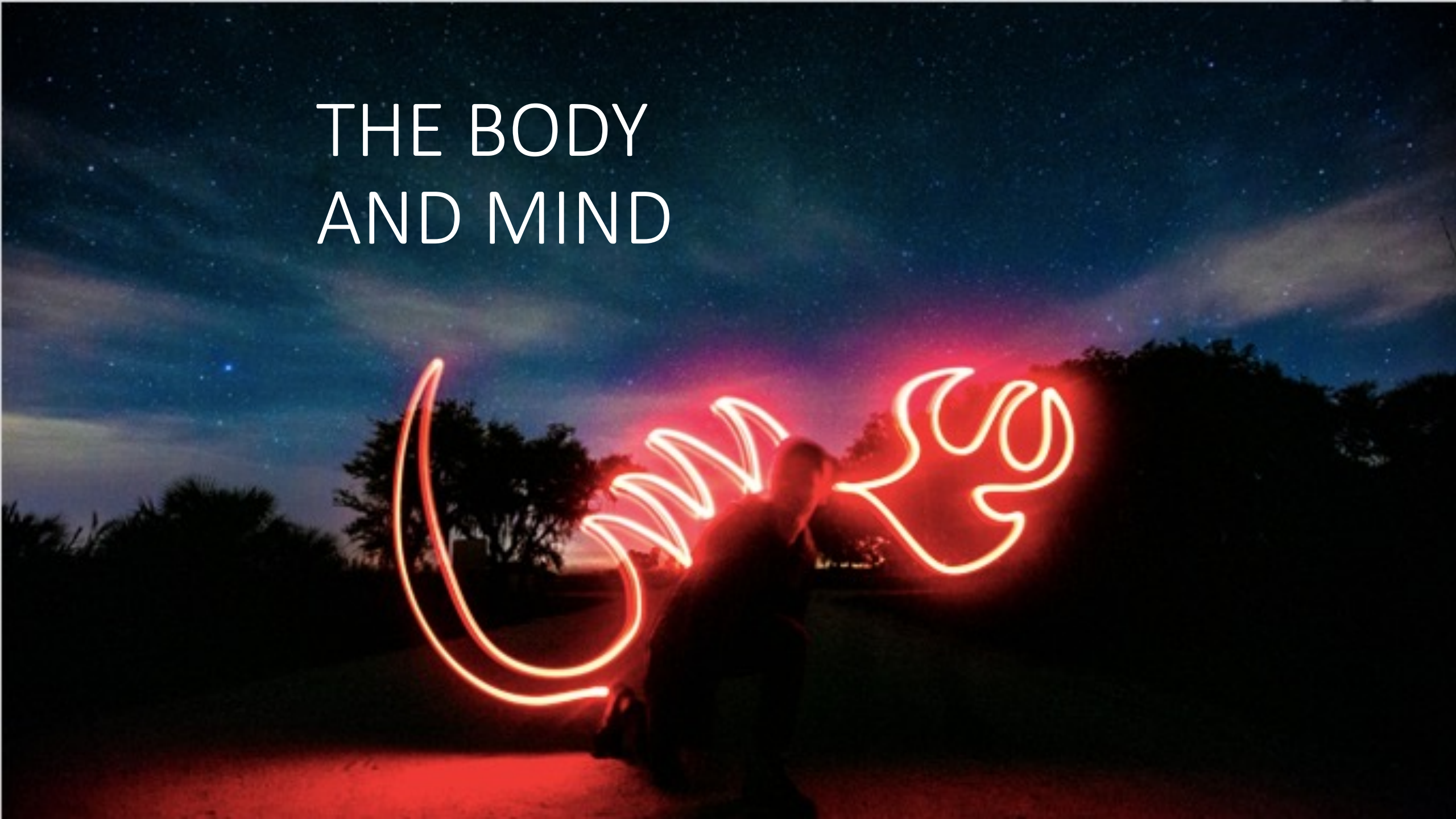


Challenge 3: Fusion

1. Revisit your 3 key topics from challenge 1
2. Create a captivating open for your main subject
3. Create a matching close that will inspire your audience to action!

Bonus: create an open and close for each key topic

THE BODY AND MIND



Eyes

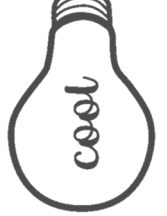
in person and virtual



To keep engagement high, strive to get eyes moving every 2-3 seconds with hand gestures, animation, activity, stopping screen share

If speaking to your camera feels unnatural, try adding googly eyes next to your webcam to appear more human or a widget behind it

If you write out a script for your slides, get it down to 3 bullets and practice so you can look up at the camera as much as possible




Body Movement

on stage and on camera

 If virtual: try presenting with a standing desk or placing your screen on a stack of books

 Use your space: after a key point or section conclusion, move to a different area of the room to keep eyes moving and engage different sides

 Avoid turning your back on your audience when referring to a board or slide

 When you're comfortable with your words, get your hands in frame or above your waist to accentuate what you are saying.

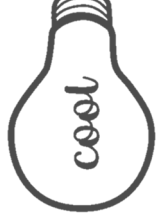
 The most common hand gesture is open palms while explaining, it can be overused

 Mix up your hand gestures while counting, pulling/pushing, pointing to your body

[More info](#)

Important tip for presentation jitters! Work out beforehand: even if it's push ups and yoga stretches it will reduce distracting gestures, stuttering and nervous energy

[Physical activity supports brain function](#)



Body Language

how does each stance make you feel?

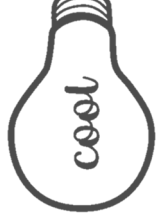


Things to avoid:

1. Shifting on your feet/in your seat
2. Crossing your arms
3. Fig leaf poses
- if on standby, try having arms at your side

[The Art of Positive Presentation](#)





Pace and Inflection

We think at 1,000-3,000 words per minute, a conversation is only ~125*

Ever notice questions end in a rising inflection?

Vary your tone and draw attention to certain words with intention

Quick activity: Say these out loud

I didn't accuse you of taking the last cookie
I didn't accuse you of taking the last cookie
I didn't accuse you of taking the last cookie

The camera doesn't make you look tired
The camera doesn't make you look tired
The camera doesn't make you look tired

Bonus activity: listen to radio, TV or watch videos on line and document where they inflect and observe their pace

Filler words

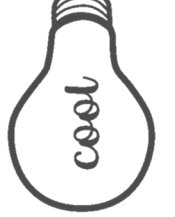
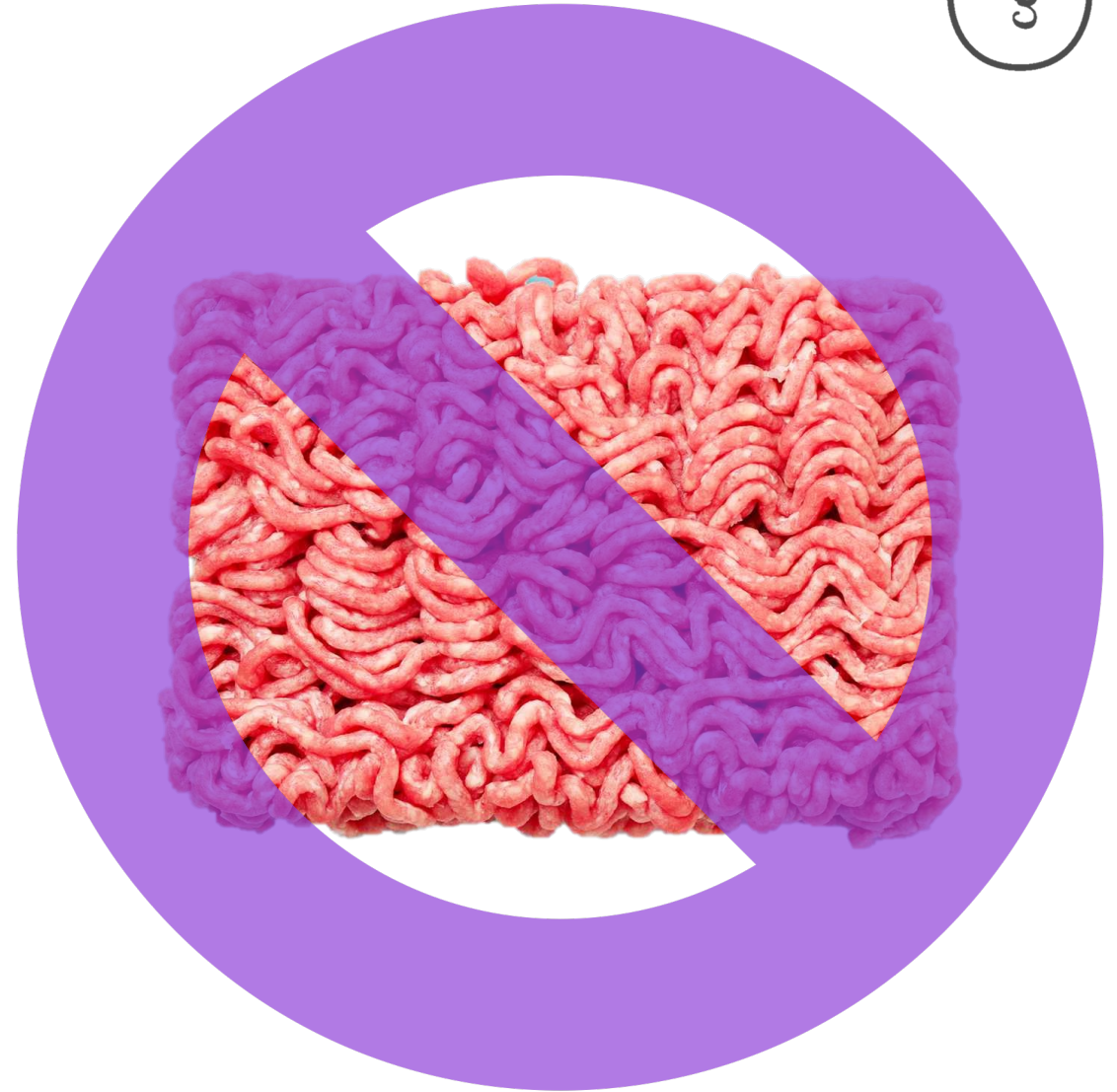
Combat your dependence with

⚠ Slowing down

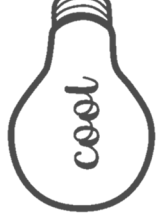
“ **Practice** saying your notes out loud

🎥 Gain **awareness** by watching recordings and asking others for feedback

🔄 Create intentional **transitions** that bridge topics



Words to eliminate



Just

That being said

Um / Uh

**See what I
mean?**

Kinda

Again...

**You
know**

Little

Like

Right

Sorta

Okay

If you will...

Look

Hopefully

You guys

So...

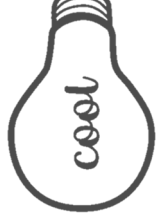
Gonna

Basically

Actually

Yea, well

Ya, but...



Places to pause and breathe

- 🙄 After you greet your audience
- 🙄 End of a provocative statement
- 🙄 End of a sentence
- 🙄 As you transition to ...
- 🙄 When you change slides

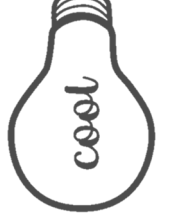
Virtually

When you request a chat response

As you unmute people

After a question is asked

When you say something human



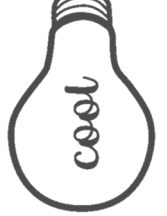
Challenge 4: Fill the Sky

1. Open up your phone and record a 30 second elevator pitch of yourself and why people should try your favorite food or a product
2. Record yourself off script
3. Count your fillers!

Bonus: Record one for a product or service after trying different poses and exercise

WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS; THEY BECOME **WORDS**.
WATCH YOUR **WORDS**; THEY BECOME ACTIONS.
WATCH YOUR ACTIONS; THEY BECOME HABIT.
WATCH YOUR **HABITS**; THEY BECOME CHARACTER.
WATCH YOUR CHARACTER; IT BECOMES YOUR **DESTINY**.

LAO TZU



Positive Filter – grow with attitude

confidence creates clear communication

- ✦ It is easier for some than others to stay positive or view things as opportunities
- ✦ Neurons in the brain are like any muscle, if you practice making positive connections it will become a reflex!
- ✦ To obtain and maintain great speaking skills means committing to constant practice and feedback

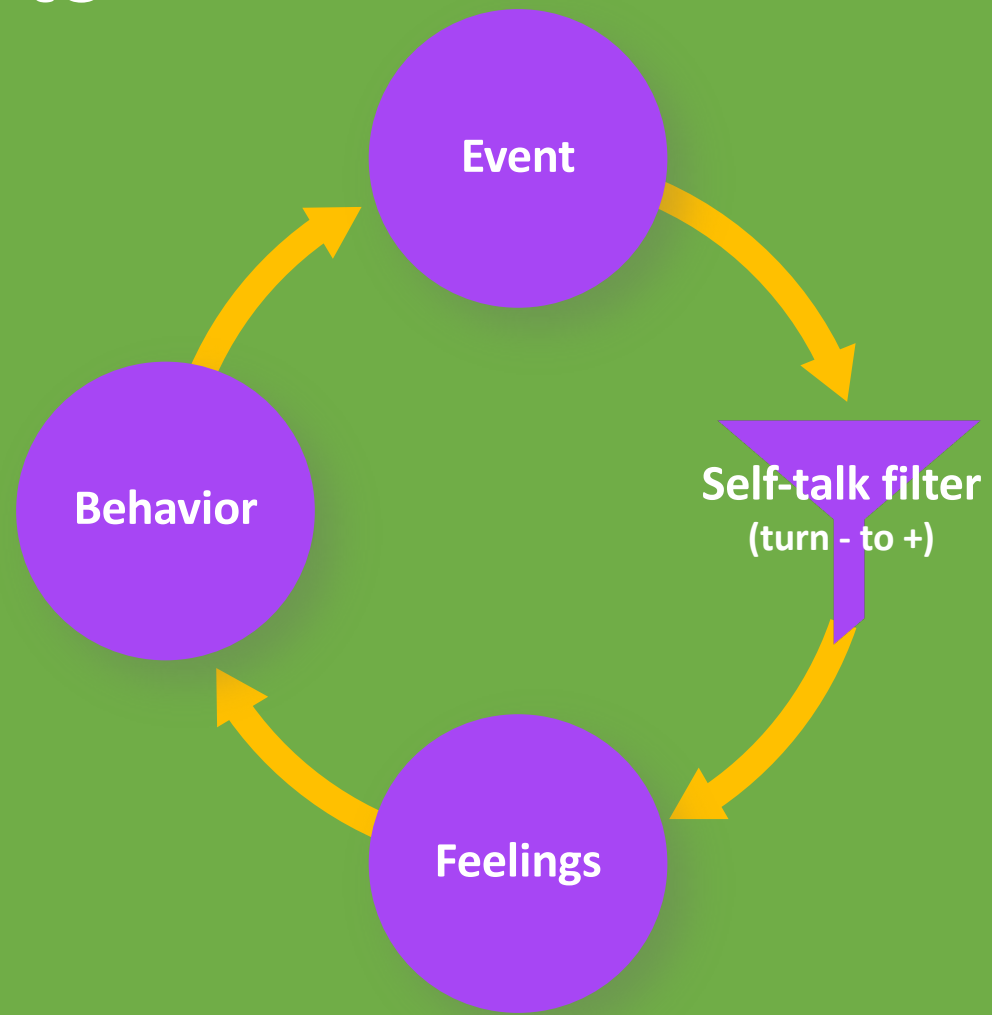


BREATHE

Remember to laugh at yourself and that speaking isn't life-saving surgery

View failure as fuel and don't be afraid to try new things

I have to → I *get* to



Notice how these make you feel



The -negative filter

“I **hate** being in front of groups”

“I freeze up in front of **CXOs.**”

“I never have enough **time**
to prepare.”

“They’re going to know
I’m **nervous.**”

“I **don’t** know what I’m
talking about.”

The +positive filter

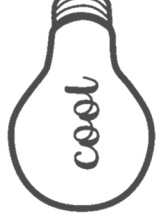
“No one’s perfect, I am always
improving.”

“I **love** working with people!”

“This is a good **opportunity** to get feedback.”

“I’m sure I’ll pick up **some new**
ideas.”

“I am well-practiced 😎”



Challenge 5: Gratitude Practice

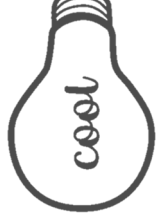
*Practicing positivity can become a reflex**

1. Write down or say outloud 5 things you are grateful for
2. Notice how you feel - does it become easier the more you do?
3. Share a complement with someone

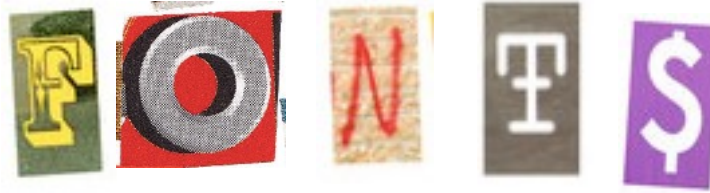
Bonus: Keep a gratitude journal for a week. Write in the morning, reflect on them at night.

VISUALS





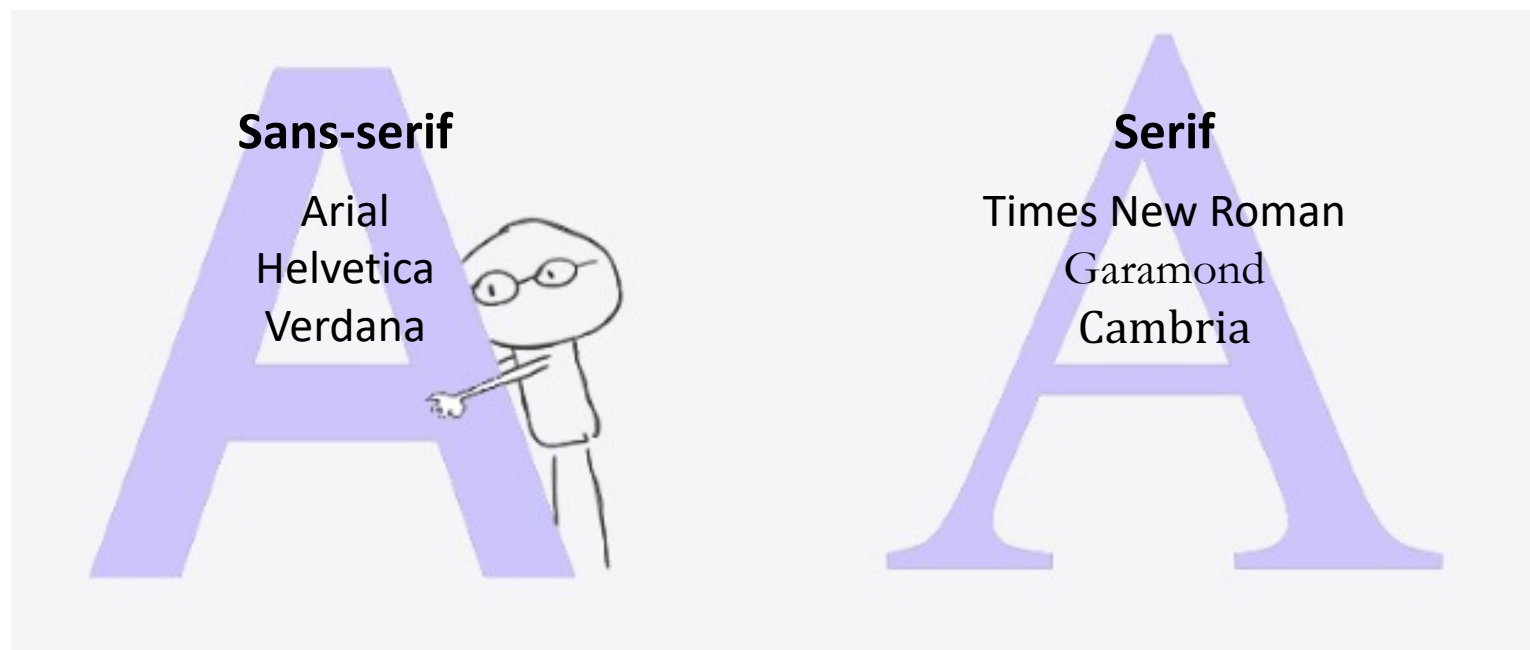
A moment for



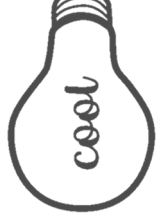
To be inclusive of people with low vision, sans-serif fonts such as Arial, Helvetica, Verdana or Adsans are more readable than Serif fonts*

Different styles communicate different feelings or call attention to words in different ways





Test: Readability is key, try seeing how your slides look on a phone



Source: [*Vision Research](#)



Slide checks

-  Remember the rule of 3 key points!
-  Bullets kill (consider graphics or text spaced out far enough where you don't need bullets to separate items)
-  Bullet thoughts not sentences
-  If you're ever going to say "this next one is an eyechart," you probably need to separate your visuals

By the numbers

6 Lines – 6 Words/Line

20 24 28 32 36

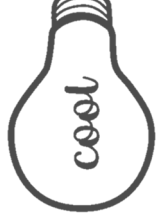
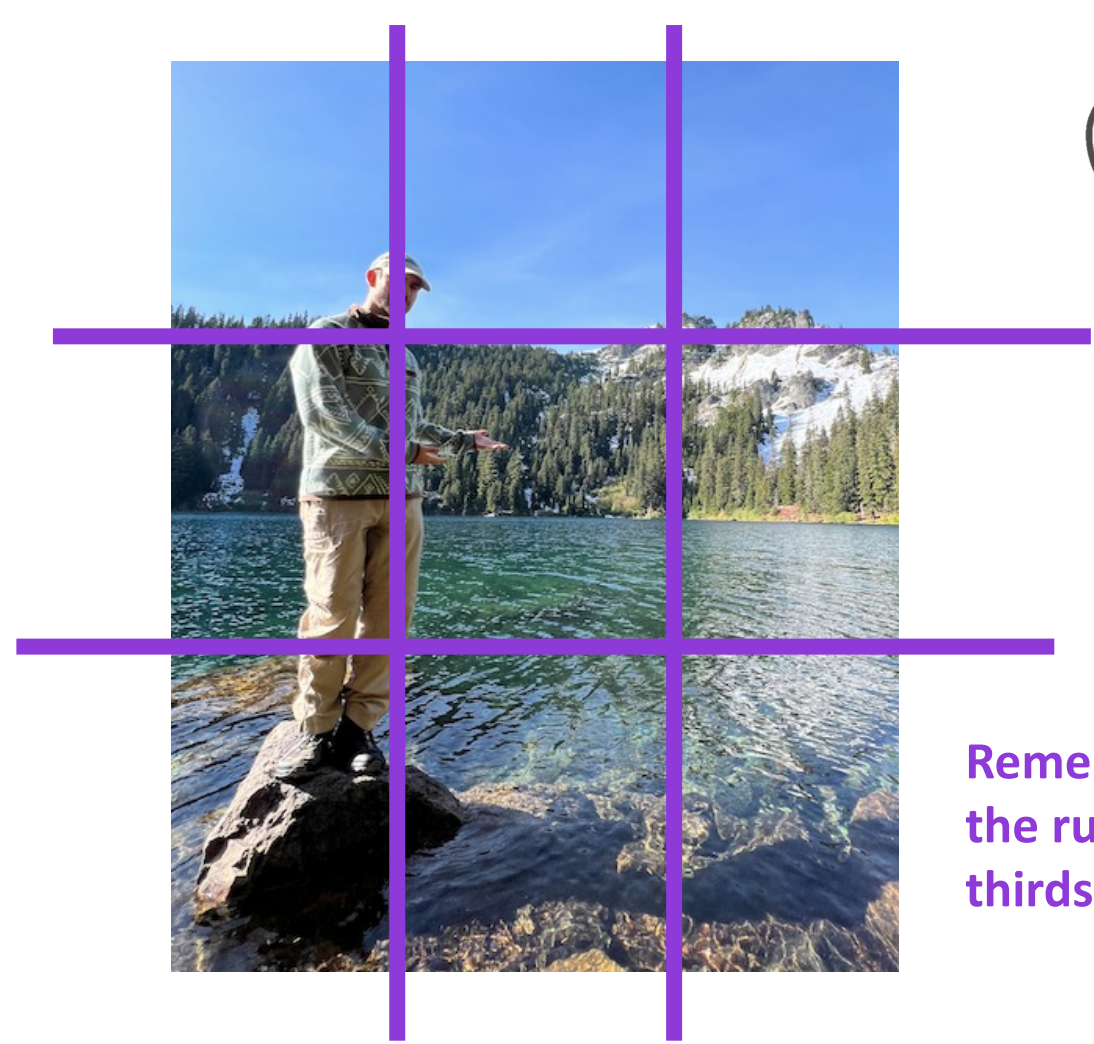
Use our font style (bernina Sans)

More images, less sentences

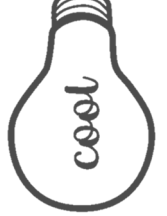
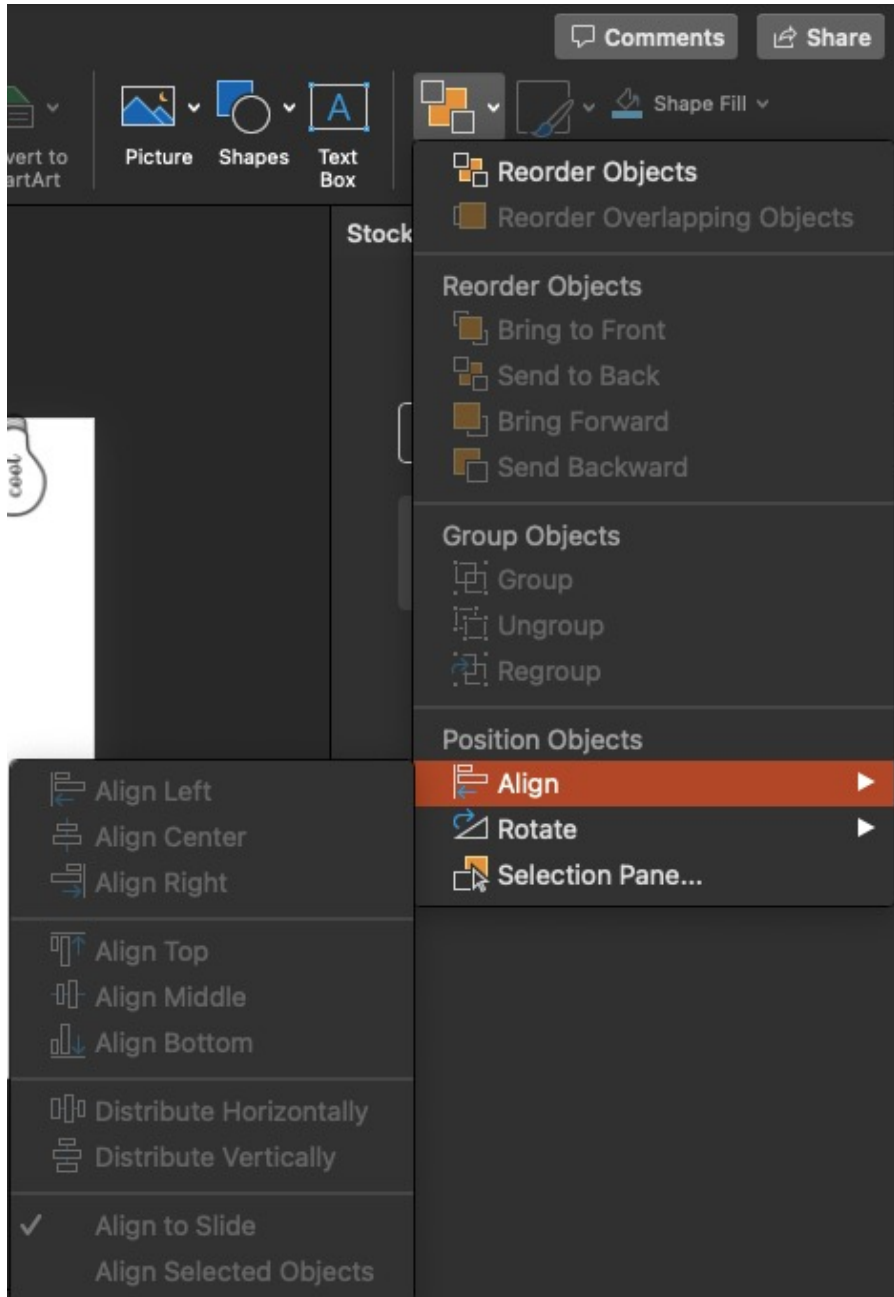
More words = more trouble

reading, distractions, overwhelm

Note: If you *need* bullets, you may be using too many words



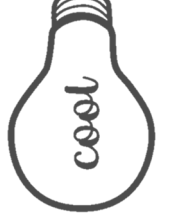
**Remember
the rule of
thirds**



When you have to get it right

Use Arrange

→ Align



Challenge 6: The Fabric

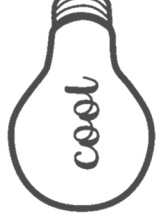
Make a visually attractive presentation

1. On a piece of paper landscape, or on a slide
2. Make lines at the thirds
3. Put content such as words and pictures at the intersections and in the empty spaces

Bonus: Open View → Slide Master and create different types of slides such as titles, activity, graphics, etc

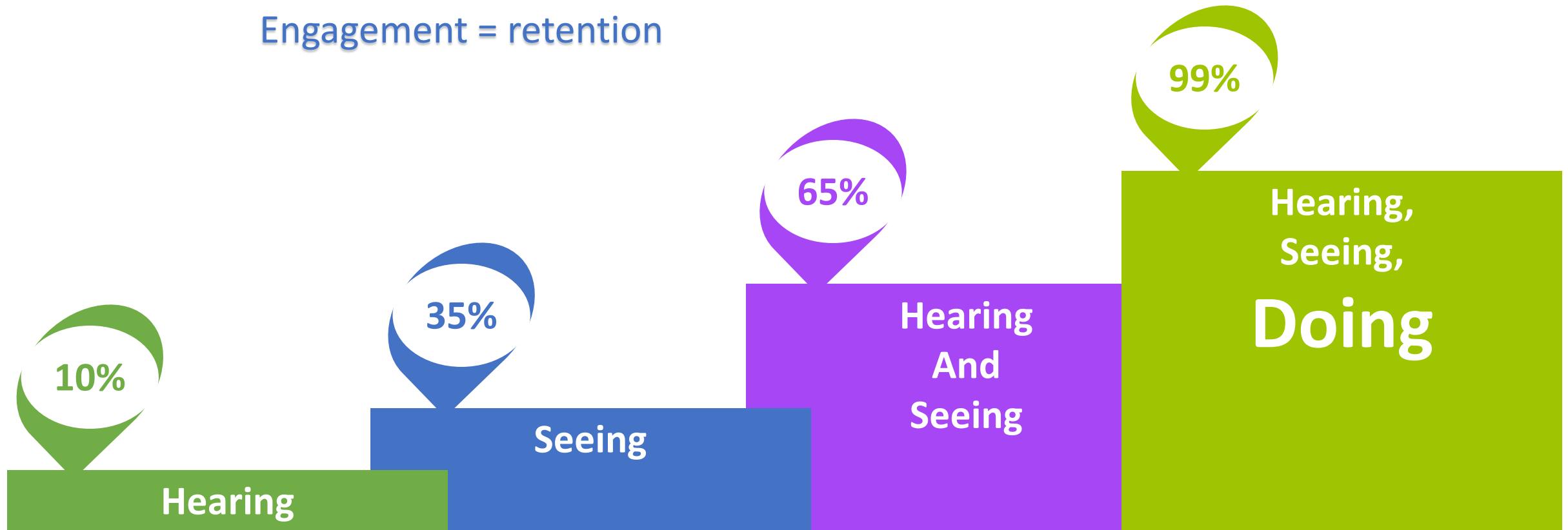
ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE





Why bother with visual aids and activity?

Engagement = retention



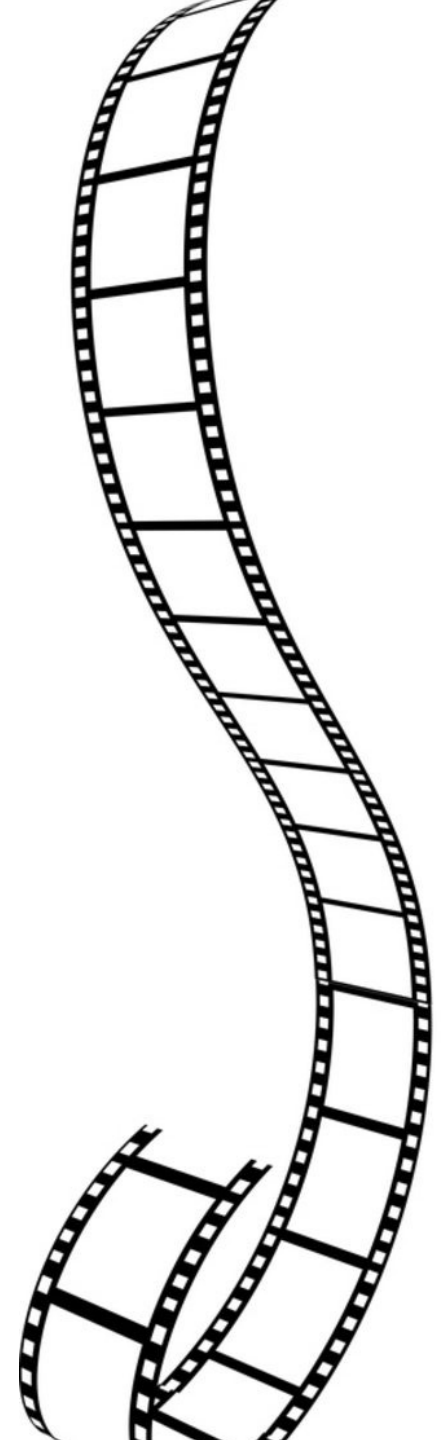
Animation

Transitions → Morph with some of the same items in slides will smoothly tell a story

Don't overdo it! Stick to one or two types and use the same timing and effect options

Other method is to make each slide build like a film

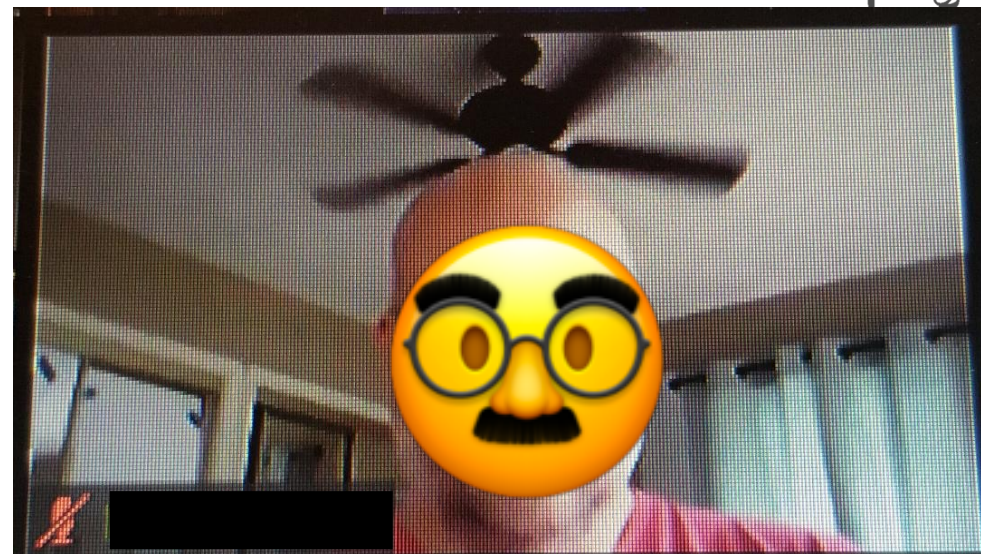
Note: Animations may make your file size larger



Background distractions



The Arch Angel

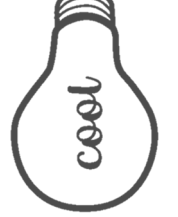


The twirly hat



The guitar head

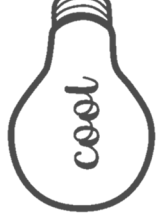




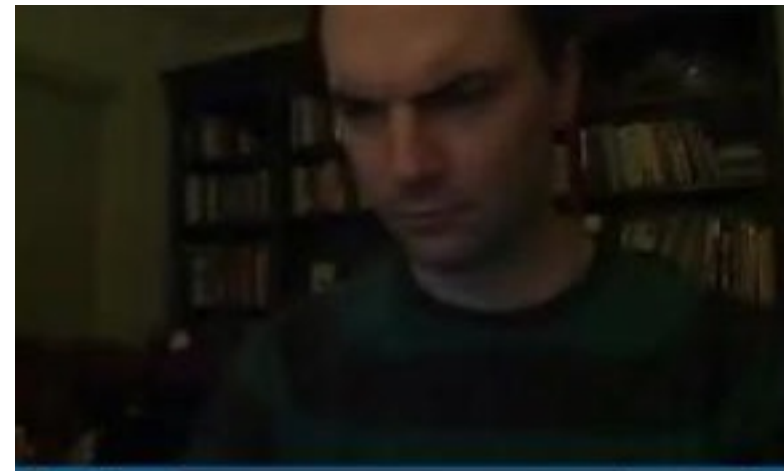
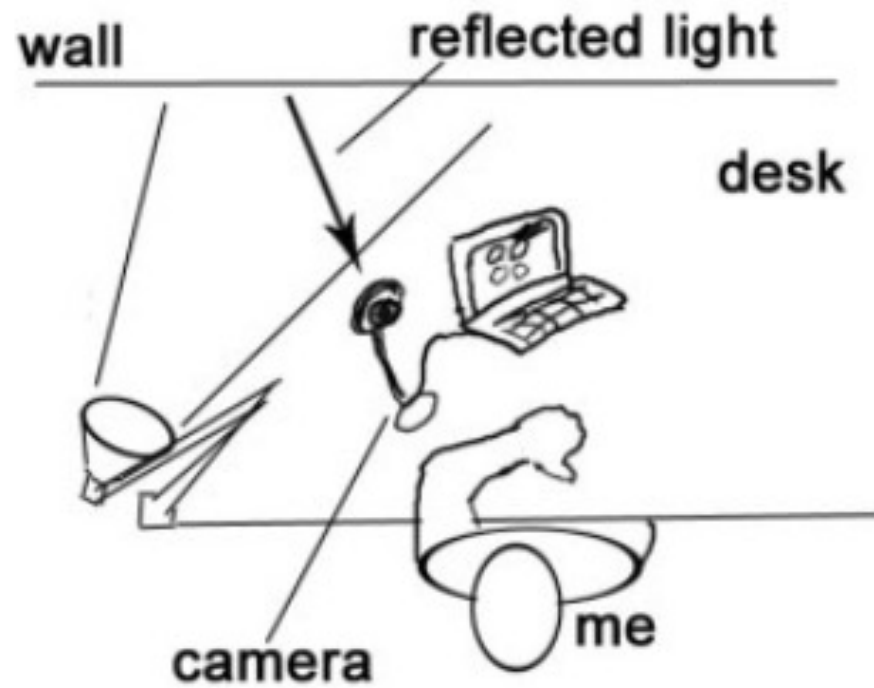
Notice examples from speakers and channels you like

Invest in lights, sound dampeners and a good mic

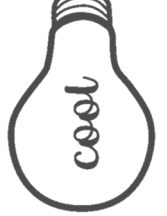
Consider zoom filters





Lighting



Note: Side or front lighting is the best. Avoid windows or lights behind you.



Other tools we like

-  [Miro](#) for interactive whiteboarding, clean leave behinds, plugs in with other meeting tools
-  For international and multilingual communication try navigating to Review → Translate for visuals or downloading [Translator](#) from Microsoft

Ready to be a
star?





Final Challenge

Starbursts

Watch a 10-30 minute recording of yourself and see how many points you can get

- 1 for every filler word/weak language
- 1 for every weak transition (so)
- +2 Captivating open
- +2 Strong Why
- +1 Each audience interaction (chat, laugh)

- 1 for every slide with >30 words
- 1 for anytime you have >3 key points
- +1 use of an image or icon
- +2 Close that matches Open
- +1 clear Call to Action

Imagination

Message clarity

Engaging opens

Inspiring closes

Structure

Visual aids

Relevance

Audience centric

Calls to Action

Evidence

Stories

Delivery

Interactivity

Research

Ethos

Adaptability

Data

Transitions

Enthusiasm

Feedback

Nonverbal

Lighting

There's a lot to keep in mind ... avoid the blackhole with a coach!



Julie Likam · 1st

Empowering Enterprise Organizations | Account Manager - Nutanix

February 1, 2022, Julie worked with Travis on the same team

 All LinkedIn members

Travis is who you want to collaborate with and you'll enjoy working with him. I've known Travis from being on the same Service Provider Channel Sales Team and his Enablement Role at Citrix. He is high energy and excels at running large scale workshops and end-to-end programs. One of my favorites last year was the Presentation Skills Training that made an immediate impact on my sales deals. Highly recommend him!



Aundre Larrow · 1st

Photographer and Director

October 16, 2023, Aundre worked with Travis but they were at different companies

When Travis and I met in college, we tried to diagnose what was wrong with a friends' car. It took all afternoon and many trips into the auto zone nearby. Because we had a rudimentary understanding of cars and limited resources, it took a few hours, but eventually that car was running.

Now in 2023, Travis and I collaborated on my 1 hour keynote at Adobe MAX and the partnership was similar. Gone are the days of rudimentary knowledge, Travis replaced that with a firm understanding of how to connect and engage an audience and brought those skills to my planning and pre-production for a keynote watched by thousands.

The talk was called Seeing the World Anew: Combating Erasure with Photography. I spent an hour presenting my work, my ethos and what I believe the responsibility that visual artists carry in the world. That talk, while being my words, had Travis' finger prints all over it. It had clear CTA's in each section, audience participation, as well as an understanding of how and when I should utilize my pauses to empower my audience. All of this came through his attentive and deliberate coaching.

My talk wouldn't have been as strong without his support and our collaboration. I can't stress enough, Travis Dobler is the right collaborator for you & your company to simplify and add punch to any presentation, speech or keynote.