

Speeches offer great opportunity

Monday, April 17, 2006

Do you have to resist the temptation to flee or feign a deathbed illness when faced with giving a speech?

Public speaking still ranks as the No. 1 fear for most people.

Well, you are not alone. The fact that this phobia ranks higher than fear of flying or death prompted the comic Jerry Seinfeld to observe that people would rather be in the coffin than deliver the eulogy.

We hope our monthly column on presentation skills will help you think differently about these "opportunities."

Rather than something to be avoided, think of a speech as an opportunity to:

- ▶ Showcase your expertise
- ▶ Create a favorable impression on potential clients or customers
- ▶ Persuade people to buy your service or product
- ▶ Make an impact as a thought leader
- ▶ Clarify issues and change opinions
- ▶ Motivate employees to take action
- ▶ Position yourself as a highly competent and dynamic leader

One of our clients is a senior executive in a health care system.

His system, like many others, is in the midst of huge change.

He has learned he can't persuade and motivate his teams to accept and adopt new behaviors by hiding behind the company newsletter.

His people need to hear it from him.

He is not a naturally gifted speaker, but has taken time to learn and practice the skill.

Good leaders are good speakers. A good speech puts you on the fast track to success.

McCarthy-Blanchard is an executive training firm specializing in presentation skills and executive presence. Call (517) 339-7447 or (313) 882-9200.



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