

TEN COMMON COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

- 1 Disconnected Audience.** An emotional connection is never established with the audience. Without it, very little of what is spoken is remembered. One way to establish an emotional connection is to use humor, related to shared values or a common need.
- 2 Static Speakers.** An enormous amount of data is conveyed in our body language and many speakers fail to gesture and move. Movements should be smooth and fluid.
- 3 Excuses and Apologies.** Audiences typically want the speaker to succeed, but that grace can be abused by excuses, apologies, dwelling too long on a mistake and poor preparation. Audiences are rarely forgiving when a speaker apologizes continuously.
- 4 PowerPoint Autopilot.** PowerPoint is only a visual it is never the presentation. Long after they have forgotten the slide content they will remember how they felt about the speaker's performance. In the preparation process, when the slides are done - then the real preparation (i.e., rehearsal) begins.
- 5 No Rehearsal.** Preparing for a presentation requires far more than simply reading the slide notes or written remarks. Speakers must practice speaking the words over and over out loud to develop the muscle memory needed to deliver a polished performance. *Knowing* the material is not enough.
- 6 Lack of Facial Expression.** Most of what is referred to as body language comes from the face. Yet many speakers present without much expression. Speakers need to smile, frown, open their eyes, and look around the room. Direct eye contact is essential to engaging an audience.
- 7 Boring Vocabulary.** Using a boring (i.e., common) vocabulary can put people to sleep. No need to drown people with overly *erudite* words - but using language in an *enthraling* way can make a big difference.
- 8 Low Energy.** The speaker sets the level of energy. Speaking with energy, projection, movement, and a varied voice tone (not monotone) is critical to engage an audience.
- 9 Lack of Clarity.** You never want the audience to wonder "What is this presentation supposed to be about?" A lack of clarity on where the speaker is headed causes listeners to disengage. We want a road map, clear identification of key takeaways and a consolidating conclusion so we know we got it all.
- 10 Noticeable Nervousness.** Being nervous is normal, but audiences typically cannot see our internal anxiety. It is important for presenters to project confidence and energy to create an engaging presentation. This is why preparation is so important!