

Creative talks any presenter can learn from

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When thinking of ways to blow your audience away, make sure you can actually execute your ideas. Practice everything in real-time to ensure success on presentation day.

If you're looking for inspiration, watch presentations given by the pros. One great example is **TED**. Organizations such as **TED** focus on making their conferences an emotional and memorable learning experience for their audience. By watching some of the best speakers give unforgettable presentations, you'll not only become inspired, you can also try to incorporate some of their techniques in your next presentation.

Here are some examples of presentations that use simple but powerful delivery techniques to create memorable "moments" for their audiences.

https://www.ted.com/talks/jamie_oliver?language=en

Using statistics. In his **TED** talk "Teach Every Child about Food," chef **Jamie Oliver** stated, "Sadly, in the next 18 minutes when I do our chat, four Americans that are alive will be dead from the food that they eat." The lesson: Open with a shocking and relevant statistic that communicates the urgency and importance of your presentation.

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Using story. In "The Danger of a Single Story," author **Chimamanda Ngozi** shared how the power of stories enabled her to find her unique voice in her work. **Lesson:** Use engaging and personal stories to emotionally connect with and motivate the audience.

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_epstein_are_athletes_really_getting_faster_better_stronger?language=en

Using design. In **David Epstein's** talk, "Are Athletes really Getting Faster, Better, Stronger?" he uses bold slide **design** to show how physical feats have evolved over the years. **The lesson:** Use high-quality slides that are purely visual and require little to no explanation to emphasize your point.

<http://youtu.be/pxBQLFLei70>

Using a thought roadmap. In his 2014 commencement address to the University of Texas at Austin, Adm. **William McRaven** identified and elaborated on ten different takeaways from Navy SEAL training. **The lesson:** When delivering a lot of material, condense it into points that are easily remembered and organized. Preview the number of points at the beginning of your presentation to give your audience a mental roadmap of where they are in the speech.

<http://youtu.be/Q3W58S29eSE>

Using suspense. In his iPhone announcement keynote, **Steve Jobs** introduced the iPhone by talking about three products and merging them into one. **The lesson:** Build up your points for a grand reveal of the big idea.

https://www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_unplugged?language=en

Using shock. In his **TED** talk “Mosquitoes, Malaria, Education,” **Bill Gates** released mosquitos into the audience to evoke the discomfort they should feel at learning the frightening truth about malaria. **The lesson:** Do something out of the ordinary to illustrate your point and dare to make your audience uncomfortable if it serves the message.

<http://youtu.be/2nr62XUtlU0>

Using props. We interviewed **TEDx** speaker **Dima Ghawi**, who talked about breaking out of her cultural limitations and discovering the leader within. In her **TEDx** talk, “Breaking Glass: A Leadership Story,” **Ghawi** spoke of how her grandmother compared a Middle Eastern girl’s reputation to a glass vase. If cracked or broken, it would always be seen that way. Later in life, **Ghawi** broke out of the imaginary glass vase of restraint. At the end of her **TEDx** talk, Dima broke a glass vase onstage, and gave each member of the audience small pieces of it, wrapped with a special message, “Remember to break through your limitations.” This helped the audience stay connected with her story long after the event.

The lesson: Use props or physical objects to illustrate your main points or call to action.

<http://youtu.be/D7TB8b2t3QE>

Using video. During a presentation at **Google I/O** 2012, the presenters showed a live video taken by a skydiver wearing **Google Glass** who landed at the conference. **The lesson:** Use video with emotionally resonant content to showcase how your product/service can change the lives of others.

https://www.ted.com/talks/maysoon_zayid_i_got_99_problems_palsy_is_just_one?language=en

Using humor. Comedian **Maysoon Zayid** performed a **TED** talk called “I Got 99 Problems ...

Palsy Is just One.” **Zayid** told her story of living with cerebral palsy with self-deprecating humor, charm, and wit, and the audience couldn’t help but fall in love with her. She used incredibly personal material that kept the audience hooked and laughing the entire time. **The lesson:** Be personal and not afraid to share your flaws in front of your audience. That will make you appear more human and relatable.

Using art. Graffiti artist **Erik Wahl** live-paints as he tells his story. You can use art to show firsthand the process of creating masterpieces or to tell a story through painting or drawing. **The lesson:** Watching a piece unfold before your eyes can be captivating for an audience.

https://www.ted.com/talks/arthur_benjamin_does_mathemagic?language=en

Using math. In “A Performance of: Mathemagic,” **Arthur Benjamin** explains how he can compute complex mental math after competing against a calculator. **The lesson:** Showing off amazing or complex skills gets your audience thinking, while also serving to entertain them.

https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin_zander_on_music_and_passion?language=en

Using music. **Benjamin Zander** played live music in his **TED** presentation, “The Transformative Power of Classical Music.” **The lesson:** Playing music isn’t just a way to entertain your audience; it is also a perfect way of showing rather than telling. Besides playing music, showing rather than telling can work for demoing a technological product.

https://www.ted.com/talks/john_bohannon_dance_vs_powerpoint_a_modest_proposal?language=en

Using dance. “Dance v. PowerPoint, a Modest Proposal” is a pathbreaking **TED** talk created through a unique collaboration between writer **John Bohannon**, choreographer/director **Carl Flink** and his dance company Black Label Movement. As a group, they used dance to make a point about the dullness of many PowerPoint presentations. **The lesson:** Don’t be afraid to visualize your points through actions.

https://www.ted.com/talks/keith_barry_does_brain_magic?language=en

Using magic. **Keith Barry** puts on an incredible magic show with audience members in “Brain Magic.” **The lesson:** Magic is a classic form of entertainment that can be used to make a point that will really stick with an audience. At the end of the day for any presentations, the audience wants to learn AND be entertained.

<http://youtu.be/ne6tB2KiZuk>

Using science. At the World Science Festival, Bobby McFerrin showed the audience how our brains are wired to the pentatonic scale. Locations onstage corresponded to certain notes. As he moved around the stage, the audience responded with the appropriate notes on the scale. By doing so, McFerrin effectively played the audience as a musical instrument. The result was astounding, and the audience loved it. You can watch McFerrin’s presentation on the **TED**

website under “Bobby McFerrin Demonstrates the Power of the Pentatonic Scale.”

The lesson: Engage and play with your audience. It’s important to have fun and make sure everyone feels involved.

Remember not to try to do too much. You don’t always have to give a **TED**-like performance every single time you present, but it’s important to allow yourself to be truly creative. Express yourself and give your audience a window into your passions. Doing something unique always makes for a memorable experience.

If what you already have effectively hits the point home, that’s fine. If you aren’t accomplishing anything significant by incorporating additional elements into your presentation, then include them. Ultimately, what matters is that the audience understands your message and acts on it.

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