

Presentation Do's and Don'ts

The art of public speaking is governed by tried and true rules. It's not rocket science, but mastering the skill of presentation requires practice and guidance. Here's some do's and don'ts to perfect your delivery.

Do...

- Be yourself.
- Bring your expert authority and passion to the conversation.
- Stay on message.
- Draw upon a principal theme to thread throughout the interview; bullet key points, the message chunks, to carry the interview.
- KISS (Keep It Short and Simple) your way through; fewer words are always best.
- Bridge and pivot to connect the dots and redirect questions to your message bullets.
- Relax and own the moment; if you feel it, you'll show it.
- Embrace each presentation as the opportunity to tell your story as only you know how.
- Repeat your message during the presentation; repetition wins acceptance.

Don't...

- Bone up or over-prepare with subject-matter research; you are the expert and have been sought out because you know more than the interviewer or audience.
- Present "on the fly." Gather intel on the topic, format, interviewer, audience and other presenters/guests in order to be fully prepared.
- Use trade acronyms or jargon unless speaking with a trade media outlet.
- Fill a void or pause with conversation.
- Exhibit anger or sarcasm when rebutting or fending off confrontation.
- Be responsive to the questioner; be responsive to your *message*.
The challenge is to pivot to your message and avoid appearing evasive.
- Be afraid to practice your message delivery in the mirror and in front of people you trust; seek feedback and critique, and incorporate what works.