



Doppler Communications

# The Jesse Interviews

Speechwriting and presentation  
tips from a pro

# Introduction

Jesse Scinto, our head speechwriter and presentation trainer, is a faculty member at the Strategic Communications department at New York's Columbia University.

So, understandably, we are proud of him and happy to have him on our team.

In these interview highlights, Jesse discusses techniques for connecting with your audience, for persuading them over to your point of view, and for getting around the fact they tend to remember very little of what you say, no matter how good your presentation.

We hope you enjoy the highlights!

Best regards,

Matt Krause

Doppler Communications

# Presentation is not about informing



Highlights:

*“A lot of people think presentations are about informing, but here’s the problem with that view...”*

*“Audience members remember very little of what they hear in a presentation.”*

*“If the purpose really is to inform, then consider writing a document that you can leave with people.”*

Transcript:

Jesse: A lot of people think that presentations are about informing but, here’s the problem with that view. As I mentioned just a little while ago audience members remember very little of what they hear in a presentation. It’s just not humanly possible to remember that much, and people should know this from their own experience.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# A business story



Transcript:

Matt: ... But instead, let's do an example of a story about a restructuring. How could you tell a story about that?

Jesse: First of all, a lot of times, people are reluctant to include negative information in a presentation. In other words, if your organization had a restructuring at the beginning of the year and then by the end of the year, that restructuring was successful and now you're making profits again, people feel reluctant to talk about the past and what happened and to just focus on the positive things. Profits are way up. Everyone should be happy. When you do that, it's like there's an elephant in the room. Everyone in the organization knows that this restructuring happened.

All change has an emotional component to it and if you avoid the emotional component, if you avoid the negative parts of the story, then you leave people with the sense that you've left something out.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# Business stories are not fairy tales



Highlights:

*“When we’re talking about stories in a business context, we’re not talking about fables or fairy tales.”*

*“It’s a matter of how we organize our content.”*

*“We tend to file our knowledge away in the form of stories.”*

*“The big benefit in using stories in the workplace is that it’s a natural way for people to learn.”*

Transcript:

Matt: I understand the power of stories. When I tell a story to my daughter at bedtime, she loves it, but I’m a banker at work, and if I go up in front of a bunch of other bankers, and I start out my presentation with a story like once upon a time in a land far far away, there was this beautiful princess and this brave knight riding around on a big horse, they’re going to think I’m crazy.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# Call to action



Highlights:

*“One thing that every presentation should have is a call to action.”*

*“Make your call to action immediate and physical.”*

*“Get people to say specifically an action they are going to take when they leave the room.”*

Full transcript:

Matt: One thing that he mentioned is that it is very important for the show of commitment to be physical and public. Could you tell us a little bit more about that. You mentioned some very physical activities like raising your hand or handing somebody a piece of paper with a URL on it. These are very physical activities. That’s pretty important, isn’t it?

Jesse: It is extremely important. One thing that every presentation should have is a call to action. You want your audience to do something when you they get done listening to you.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# Commitment and consistency



Transcript:

Matt: There's this book, it's by this guy Robert Cialdini.

Jesse: A classic.

Matt: Yeah so the book is called Influence, it's a classic and when was that book written? That book was written in the 1980s, wasn't it?

Jesse: Yeah, I think it was around '86 or so.

Matt: Yeah, and in one of the chapters, I think it's chapter three. He talks about commitment and consistency.

Jesse: Yeah.

Matt: What does that mean, commitment and consistency?

Jesse: Great question. Consistency has to do with the fact that by nature, humans feel that it's necessary to be

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# The credibility of being human



Highlights:

*“When our audience can see that we have flaws, it really helps them identify with us.”*

*“You can’t learn anything from Superman.”*

*“The word expert and the word experience have the same Latin root.”*

*“You don’t become an expert by avoiding problems.”*

Transcript:

Jesse: I’m going to add something which is that there’s this idea that’s been researched and that Adam Grant talks about in his book Give and Take, a notion called the power of powerless speech. That sometimes when we look human or when our audience can see that we have flaws, it really helps them identify with us. That therefore makes our message more acceptable to them, they’re more willing to hear our message because we seem human.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# Using progressive complication



Highlights:

*“If you can arrange your presentation in that kind of fashion [using progressive complications], it’s really gripping for an audience.”*

*“One of the reasons [progressive complication] is gripping is they [the audience] are going to assume you have a solution, that’s why you’re there talking to them.”*

*“If [the audience] can hear how you got there [to the solution], then maybe that saves them a little bit of difficulty in their own life.”*

Transcript:

Matt: I have one more question related to your hooked seminar.

Jesse: Okay.

Matt: You mentioned the phrase, “Progressive Complications,” you remember that?

Jesse: Yes.

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# The benefit of talking about challenges



Highlights:

*“The benefit that you get is a better connection with your audience.”*

*“A story generally isn’t interesting without a complication.”*

*“When we’re listening to other people we’re looking for ways to handle life’s challenges.”*

Transcript:

Matt: One thing that you mentioned in your seminar at Columbia, you mentioned the conflict resolution thing. You know talk about a conflict and then talk about a resolution. Talk about a conflict and then talk about a resolution. I’m kind of worried. The risk is, I think that my audience they’re going to think that I’m a loser if I keep talking about this conflict and stuff. It feels kind of risky for me. If I take this risk what am I going to, what benefit am I going to get?

[Click here to continue reading or to see the video](#)

# Complication and resolution



Transcript:

Jesse: Most of us learn a pretty straight forward logical form of structuring our information where we have a thesis, some supporting evidence and a conclusion. It could be more interesting and hold your audience's attention better if you organize your information into a problem and solution structure or a complication and resolution structure.

# Ready for more?

If you'd like more presentation tips, sign up for  
our Tips & Tricks email:

[Sign up here](#)