

Rapid Ideation and Creative Problem Solving

How to Communicate Creative Work: Facilitation & Presentation

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Overview

- Presenting
 - Goals
 - Importance of Presentation Structure
 - Methods of Presenting
 - Understanding Your Audience
 - Body Language and Control
- Scenarios as a Presentation Method
- Facilitating
 - Coordinating a Group
 - The Power of Creative Activities

What's the point of a presentation?

What's the point...

At the kickoff?

After some work has been developed?

At the end of a phase?

At the end of a project?

You must have a goal.

Every presentation you give, meeting you schedule, or activity that you perform with a client must have a goal, and you need to be able to articulate the value of the activity to the client succinctly.

“The goal of this presentation is...”

“We’ll have succeeded with this presentation if, when we’re done, we’ve...”

What's uniquely difficult about creative?

What makes a presentation focused on creative work particularly difficult?

What's unique about the audience?

What's unique about the artifact or product?

What's unique about the language you must use?

We take for granted that we have been living with our products for the past 7 weeks.... most people haven't.

Don't rely on your audience to fill in the blanks, or have any idea what you're talking about.

Methods of Presenting

Method One: “Here’s the solution”

1. Introduce your team
2. Show some slides with images from a web site
3. Show a few screens from the final UI
4. Spend a lot of time explaining small details of the UI, or detail about how it’s built (while the audience snores)
5. End with “and that is our product.”

Method Two: “Here’s what I did”

1. Describe the problem statement
2. Describe your research
3. Show sketches of your ideation
4. Show some prototypes
5. Show photos of some user studies
6. Show the final interface

Method Three: “Here’s my idea – and here’s my justification”

1. Set an agenda
2. Jump into several real life scenarios of use, with your product at the core
3. Backtrack to talk about your process
4. Reflect about the importance of process in guiding your design
5. Conclude

Methods of Presenting

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them. Explain exactly what you want from them; creative feedback? To help them become more familiar? Money?
2. Working from a very high, abstract level to a very low, detailed level, show how the design fits in the life of a real person.
3. Talk about the design process, and rationalize your design decisions. Ground your decisions in your research, your process, and your understanding of business and technology.
4. Discuss the differences between a creative process and other disciplines. Clearly articulate the creative need.
5. Design is never done. How can this design continue?
6. Tell them what you just told them. Always end on a positive note.

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Understanding your audience.

Each time you present, you must tailor your work and content to the people that will be seeing it.

- Do they understand design?
- Do they understand technology?
- Do they understand the background of the project, including the specific goals you've been tracking towards?
- Do they know anything about you?

Try to imagine the lens they will view your work from – how will they evaluate you? What will they pay most attention to? Why?

Let's try the following situations:

Situation:

You aren't confident with the work you are presenting.

Situation:

You are worried about the amount of time you have, both on the project and in the presentation.

Situation:

The person you are presenting to is an asshole.

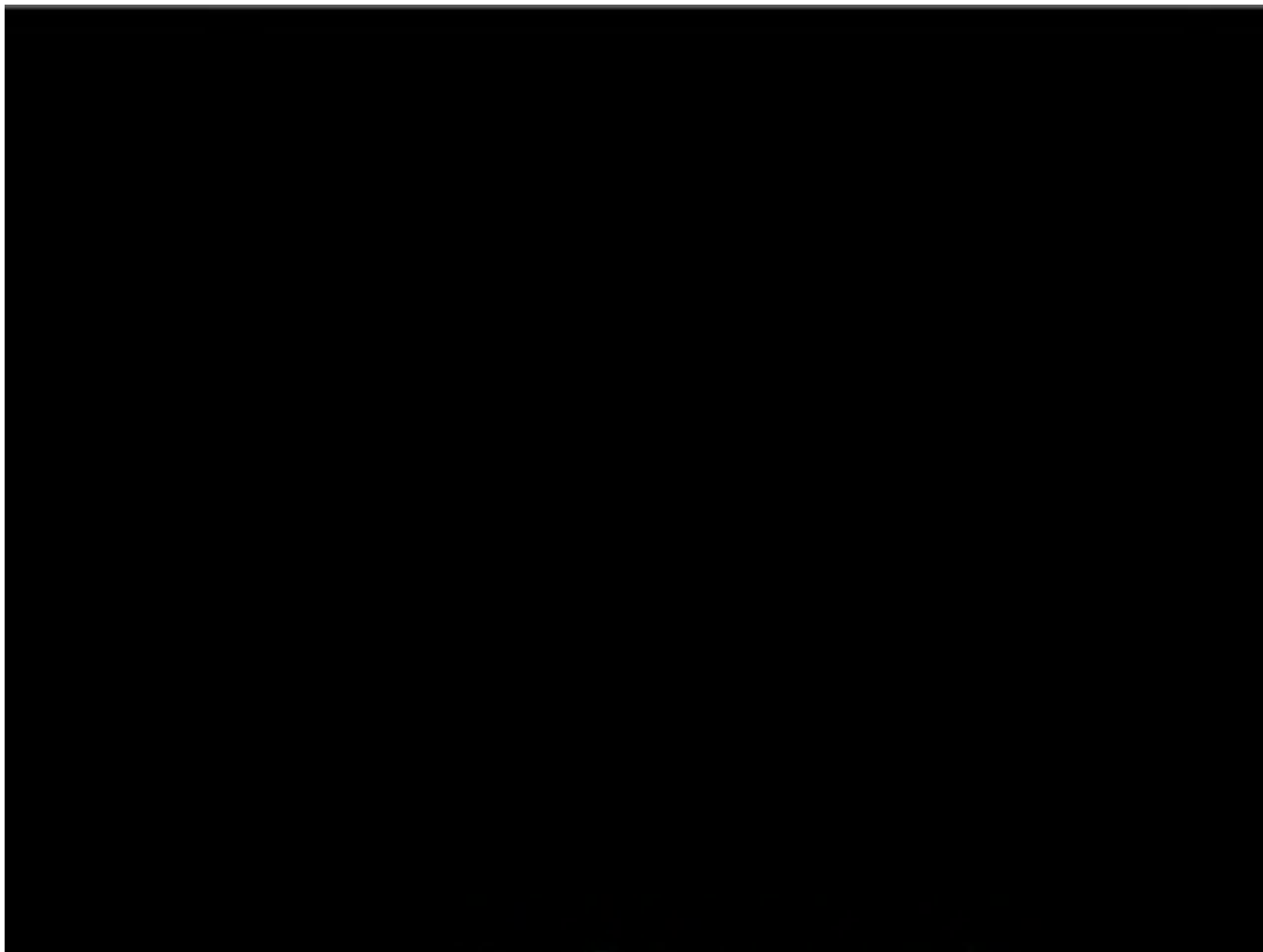
What, specifically, did **body language** do in each situation?

What, specifically, did **spoken language** do in each situation?

What negative repercussions are there for the project team, as a result of both?

How could each situation have been improved?

How you present and command the room is equally as important (if not more so) than what you are presenting.



Examining a Scenario-based presentation:



People make computers, or do computers make people?

- Begins with a hypothesis, a **research direction**
- Sets the scene for the material to follow

Narrator discusses how computers put us through their paces, reinforcing the concept direction

- Says the words “familiar”, mimicking the title and reinforcing the project goals



a familiar idea with technological might
a concept for intel

Examining a Scenario-based presentation:



Poses a challenge to the viewer:

We must question technology, to be sure that it is directed to a good use.



“How can we make computers move more smoothly with the momentum of everyday life, instead of us moving with the momentum of computers?”

The presentation’s central thesis is not about the pen at all!

Examining a Scenario-based presentation:



Scenario 1

1:45-2:38 (53 seconds)

- Discusses a human need
- First mention of a “feature”
- Ties the technology directly to a humanistic usage



Scenario 2

2:38-3:14 (36 seconds)

- Introduces another “feature”
- Juxtaposition of the new method (digital ink) with the old method (a day planner)
- Positions the pen as a support for social interaction



Scenario 3

3:14-4:15 (61 seconds)

- Introduces another “feature”
- Emphasis is on the pen as an assistance to everyday life
- Uses a verry small animation to emphasize a detail of the pen, making it seem very real

Examining a Scenario-based presentation:



Scenario 4

4:35-5:18 (43 seconds)

- Discusses another “feature” (ability to write your own icons)
- Shows a “money shot” of the product in context



Scenario 5

5:18-5:58 (50 seconds)

- Introduces another “feature”
- Still humanistic, but shows more detailed technical aspects of the pen (Email appears serially)



Scenario 6

5:58-6:16 (18 seconds)

- Introduces an alternative use of the pen as a phone

Examining a Scenario-based presentation:



Ends with the “nitty gritty” – pseudo technical product specs

Shows product in its ink well – technical contextualization (this is still a product)

Illustrates a high level understanding of the technical implementation

Scenario-based Presentation.

The importance of an effective scenario increases as the complexity of your product increases.

Simple products

Established products

Details

What are some examples of these?

Complex products

New innovations

Concepts

What are some examples of these?

Scenario based presentations should present the design solution:

1. as if it already exists
2. in the physical and cultural context where it will be used
3. abstractly at first, getting more specific and detailed as the presentation progresses
4. in a humanistic manner

What's the difference between a **presentation** and a **facilitation**?

A presentation:

1. Is generally authoritative
2. Is focused on achieving a goal
3. Is fairly predictable
4. Is frequently about dissemination or decision making
5. **Requires thought, planning, role play, and empathy**

A facilitation:

1. Is generally collaborative
2. Is focused on exploring an opportunity
3. Is fairly unpredictable
4. Is about learning, trying, exploring, discussing, and reflecting
5. **Requires thought, planning, role play, and empathy**

How to Communicate Creative Work: Facilitation

Creative facilitation is helpful at various parts in the design process.

When can creative facilitation be helpful:

- At the beginning of a project?
- Right after doing some research?
- In the concept generation phase?
- During detailed design?
- After you've refined your product and have it ready to build?

How to Communicate Creative Work: Facilitation

You'll find yourself in positions to facilitate:

- **People.** This is often about fostering discussions, bringing different parties together, merging or considering opposing viewpoints, or merging or considering opposing cultures.
- **Decisions.** You may be in a position where you need a group to make a decision in order to move a project forward; this often requires defining criteria, exploring outcomes, and driving consensus.
- **Creativity.** You can use methods of design to help your stakeholders and various decision makers visualize and reflect upon the ideas they have.

Methods & Techniques of Facilitation

Here are some common and productive methods and techniques for facilitation:

1. You still need a goal and objectives. Set them first.
2. **Create “game” rules.** You might create an artificial working phase for the group where they must “suspend all judgment”, or where people are “only allowed to propose ideas, not respond to ideas.”
2. **Organize a generative exercise.** You might design an exercise intended to evoke responses, generate design ideas, foster team building, drive strategic alignment...
3. **Develop a toolkit.** You might design a series of physical manipulative that participants – who are not trained in any form of design – can use to better show and discuss their ideas.
4. **Ensure everyone is heard.** You might create a time-constrained exercise that forces each participant to articulate a view or opinion on a given subject.

Tracking the room's "temperature"

In any given facilitation context, you'll need to watch and manage these attributes:

1. Interest and engagement
2. Exhaustion and fatigue
3. Social, cultural, and political undertones
4. Distractions, like email or alternative meetings

Describe mitigation strategies for each item.

Let's Try it.

You are facilitating a creative brainstorm around iPhone applications based on extensive field research. There will be 10-12 clients in attendance, from VP-level down to Associate Designer level.

What should you do?

Think about...

- How many facilitators you need
- What you will be doing
- How long the session should be
- Anything else?

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