

Chapter 5: Rehearsals

“The harder I practice, the luckier I get.”

– Gary Player (1935-), South African professional golfer

Tip 179: Practice, practice, practice	Essential
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After you have spent time researching your presentation, writing it and perfected the slides, you must now practice and rehearse your presentation until you can deliver it perfectly, fluently and naturally.

When you go to buy an expensive suit would you ever dream of buying it without trying in on first? No, of course not! The same is true with your presentation. Don't expect your audience to wear it before you have tried it on for size yourself.

The worst case scenario is that the first time you give the presentation is when you are in front of a live audience.

When you get there, you want to know in the back of your mind that you have already given that same presentation at least 100 times. Won't that give you some confidence?

There are no shortcuts to this process. You need to practice giving your presentation to the point that you can do it half awake with a blindfold on and no slides or props.

Tip 180: Use the practice to perfect the presentation	Essential
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It is amazing how you often I think that I have created a perfectly reasoned, argued and presented presentation on paper, but it is only when I stand up to practice it, and I say the words I am planning to say, and look at the slides I am intending to show... that I realise that there are big problems with my presentation and that a lot more work is required!

Your presentation may seem reasonable on paper, but you will find out what works and what doesn't work in real life only by performing it time and time again.

When you are doing a dry-run of your presentation you will inevitably get flashes of inspiration which compel you revisit certain sections and re-design them for the better. You should also become more relaxed and identify redundant or problematic sections in your presentation which may need more work (which *may* involve more basic research).

During this stage of the preparation, you also need to keep a look out for the following: