

First impressions

'You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.'
Anonymous

OVERVIEW

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LISTENING AND DISCUSSION

First impressions in presentations



Anneliese Guérin-LeTendre

A Discuss these questions.

- 1 What reasons can you think of for giving a presentation to an audience?
- 2 What is the hardest part of giving a presentation?
- 3 How can you secure your audience's attention at the start of a presentation? Think of three useful techniques.
- 4 Have you ever heard a speaker who you felt was truly inspirational? What techniques did they use to engage the audience?
- 5 What, for you, are the ingredients of a great presentation?
- 6 What impact do you think body language can have on a presenter's success? Think of some examples of good and bad body language.

B CD1.1 Anneliese Guérin-LeTendre is an intercultural communications expert who works with Communicaid, a culture and communication-skills consultancy. Listen to the first part of the interview and answer these questions.

- 1 What percentage of communication is said to be non-verbal?
- 2 How do audiences form a first impression of a presenter?

C CD1.2 Listen to the second part of the interview. What four aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication does Anneliese talk about?

D  **CD1.2 Listen again and complete these tips with one word in each gap. Which tip do you find the most useful?**

- The way you stand, known as¹, is important. Try to be² but not rigid. Take³ of the space and don't hide behind the table or⁴. Use a remote to 'liberate you from your laptop'.
- Use eye contact to⁵ the whole room, not just the first few rows.
- The way you use⁶ and intonation can produce all sorts of light and dark⁷ in your voice that add interest and get the audience paying attention. Avoid shouting. Try out the microphone beforehand.
- Control your gestures so that they don't become a⁸ to the audience.

Watch the interview on the **DVD-ROM**.



E **What do you think these words from the second part of the interview mean? Match the words (1–4) to the definitions (a–d). What examples did Anneliese give of these?**

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1 mannerism | a) keep moving your hands or feet because you are bored or nervous |
| 2 flick | b) slight movement of something you are wearing so that it is neater or more comfortable |
| 3 fidget | c) way of speaking or moving that is typical of a particular person |
| 4 adjustment | d) make something move with a sudden, quick gesture |

F **What other examples of distracting gestures and behaviour have you noticed in presentations? What else can distract you?**

G **What do the verbs in this box mean? Use them in the correct form to complete the advice below.**

lean lean towards nod nod off slouch stare wander



Decoding the silent signals

You can also improve your presentation by noticing the messages your audience sends back to you through their own body language. Check out their reactions to what you're saying. Are people¹ their heads in agreement or are they²? If they look puzzled, stop and allow them to ask questions.

Watch for signals of boredom or misinterpretation. Are they³ you to listen or are they⁴ back with their arms folded? When members of your audience are⁵ in their seats letting their eyes⁶, it usually means they're uninterested in what you're saying. But if they're sitting with their arms folded across their chest,⁷ at you, they may have been offended by something you've said. If you're paying close attention, you can catch this and clarify your statement without any negative feelings.

H **Is this advice true for audiences in your country? What other types of behaviour indicate an audience's reaction to a presentation?**

I **Prepare a two-minute introduction to a presentation on one of these topics.**

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| A passion of mine | What I love about ... |
| My ideal weekend | A memorable business trip |
| A special occasion | Three important moments in my life |

J **Watch your colleagues' presentations. Make a note of two positive aspects of each presentation and one possible distraction.**

READING AND LANGUAGE

A What do you understand by the expression *It's not what you know, but who you know that counts*? Do you think networking is more important in some of these professions than others?

accountancy banking the civil service law
the media medicine politics teaching

B What are your views on networking? To what extent do you agree with these statements? Compare and discuss your answers.



	strongly agree	partially agree	disagree
1 Networking just means socialising with my colleagues and friends.			
2 Networking is all about finding lots of useful business contacts.			
3 Networking with business contacts is insincere and manipulative.			
4 Online social networking is as useful as face-to-face networking.			
5 Networking involves getting lots of help from others.			

C Read the article on the opposite page and compare the writer's views on networking with your own. What points does he make in relation to the five statements in Exercise B?

D Read the article again and find words or expressions which mean the following.

- 1 met someone you know when you were not expecting to (paragraph 2)
- 2 develop and use fully (paragraphs 3 and 5)
- 3 morally doubtful (paragraph 3)
- 4 not related to anything previously mentioned (paragraph 5)
- 5 when you recommend someone to another person for work (paragraphs 6 and 7)
- 6 move from one place to another in large amounts (paragraph 10)
- 7 caring about other people more than about yourself (*two expressions*) (paragraph 10)

E Look at these extracts from the article and indicate where the adverbs in brackets should go. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

- 1 We have enough friends and contacts. (*already*)
- 2 You have more than 150 close contacts. (*probably*)
- 3 The dilemma is how to leverage existing contacts. (*successfully*)
- 4 It is important to determine how well your contacts understand what you do. (*also*)
- 5 One investment bank had a system for asking for two referrals. (*merely*)
- 6 The chances of receiving a referral are increased if they understand what you do. (*greatly, exactly*)
- 7 High-level networking is a face-to-face activity. (*primarily*)
- 8 If you connect with your network on this beneficial basis, the financial rewards will flow. (*mutually*)

➔ Language reference: *Adverbs* page 126

It's not what you know

by Mike Southon

It is often said that your personal value is not what you know, but who you know. This is powerful motivation for recent graduates to build their personal networks. But some of us may conclude that we already have enough friends and contacts – the challenge is making the best use of those that we already have.

Mathematics supports this argument. If you have been in business more than 20 years, you probably have more than 150 close contacts – people you like and respect and would recognise if you bumped into them out of their work context. If you add to this all the people in *their* close networks, this aggregates to potentially more than 20,000 agreeable and interesting people.

It is not a problem to identify other networking prospects. We all have a drawer full of business cards and often a large number of online connections. The dilemma is how to successfully leverage existing contacts without appearing sleazy and manipulative.

The most important lesson to learn from the best-connected individuals is that little of their networking activity is carried out with any specific business goal in mind. They concentrate their effort on people they most like and who seem to like them back.

Even for the shyest individual, all that is required to leverage their network is to generate a list of people whose company they enjoy and invite them to a private dinner. This would be apropos of nothing in particular other than the pleasure of good company.

The tools for engineering a mutually successful outcome of such events are well explained by one of Europe's leading business networking strategists, Andy Lopata. His website explains that connecting is not enough; it is important also to determine how well your contacts understand what you do and then



Andy Lopata, Networking Strategist

how inspired they might be to provide a referral.

Lopata provides networking training and is always amazed to discover how few companies have an effective referral strategy. One investment bank merely had a system for asking for two referrals at the end of every meeting, regardless of whether they had built up any trust with the client. Lopata says the chances of receiving a referral are greatly increased if they understand exactly what you do and the problems you solve, have a high level of trust and understand how you help people. Your chances of receiving a referral are increased if you are also perceived to have a wider purpose to your working life.

Lopata recommends making a detailed assessment of your best contacts, the people they know, their willingness to refer you to them and how you might inspire them to make

that introduction, for free. While some people offer direct financial rewards for referrals, seasoned networkers mostly make introductions on the basis that everyone gains a benefit, including the prospect of referrals in return.

While high-level networking is primarily a face-to-face activity, Lopata agrees that online tools accelerate the process.

Expert networkers work on the basis that if you connect with your network on this mutually beneficial basis, the financial rewards will flow. Successful networking should be selfless and altruistic, giving referrals without remembering your simple favour, and receiving them without forgetting their kind gift.


F Which of the networking strategies mentioned in the article do you find most useful? Which do you think you will probably never use? Why? / Why not?

BUSINESS SKILLS
Networking



A Work in pairs. Look at these tips on networking with people you don't know, or don't know very well. Which of them are essential, desirable or best avoided in your culture? What other useful tips can you think of?

- Tell the other person as much as possible about your products/services.
- Compliment the other person on their talk, clothes, appearance, etc.
- Ask the other person lots of questions about themselves.
- Arrange to go for a drink together with each other's boss.
- Introduce the other person to someone you know before moving away.

B  CD1.3, 1.4 Listen to two conversations between some conference delegates. Tick the strategies that you hear the speakers using. Which of them could you use as an ice-breaker? What other ice-breakers do you know?

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 Introduce yourself. | 5 Check the pronunciation of someone's name. |
| 2 Compliment someone. | 6 Swap business cards. |
| 3 Ask for an opinion. | 7 Refer to future contact. |
| 4 Agree with someone. | 8 Introduce someone to someone else. |

C  CD1.3, 1.4 Good networkers often ask open questions. Complete these questions. Which of them did you hear? Listen again if necessary.

- 1 What..... the conference so far?
- 2 in your part of the world?
- 3 most about living in your city?
- 4 for asking, but how much do you earn, by the way?
- 5 of any good places to eat near here, do you?
- 6 asking where you are from?
- 7 I didn't enjoy the dinner very much last night.?
- 8 I don't think you've met (*name of person*),?

D Work in pairs. Decide which questions from Exercise C you would use when networking. Think of five questions of your own. What kind of questions *shouldn't* you use when networking?

E  CD1.3 Listen to Conversation 1 again, or look at the audio script on page 167. What do the people say to break the ice and keep the conversation going?

F Look at the expressions in the Useful language box on the opposite page and answer these questions.

- 1 Which expressions did you hear in Conversation 2?
- 2 Which ones would you like to use next time you are networking?
- 3 What do you usually say to move away and start talking to someone else?

G Role play. Introduce yourself to another participant at an international conference.

Student A: Turn to page 149.
Student B: Turn to page 159.

Writing: formal and informal register

H Your local Chamber of Commerce has asked you to give a talk at an important business event on a subject of your choice. Complete each gap in this invitation using the most suitable words or expressions (a, b or c) below.

From: Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
Subject: 'Business Today' event

Dear ...,

.....¹ you that the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce is organising a special event from 17 to 20 November on the subject of 'Business Today'.

.....² if you could³ and give a talk to the local business community on a topic of your choice. We expect local businesspeople and dignitaries to be present, including the Minister of Business and Innovation.

If you⁴ participate in this prestigious event,⁵ confirm your attendance and the subject of your talk no later than 31 August.⁶ a speaker's proposal form.⁷ whether you wish to come to the charity dinner that will be held on the last day of the conference?⁸ any further details, please⁹ to contact me.

.....¹⁰ forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Gloria Patterson
Events Manager, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 a) I'm writing to tell | b) I am writing to inform | c) I'd like to tell |
| 2 a) We'd be so happy | b) It would be great | c) We would be delighted |
| 3 a) attend | b) come along | c) make it |
| 4 a) want to | b) wish to | c) feel like |
| 5 a) would you mind | b) can you please | c) I would be grateful if you could |
| 6 a) Please find attached | b) I'm attaching | c) Here's |
| 7 a) Please tell me | b) I'd also like to know | c) Could you also let me know |
| 8 a) If you want | b) If you need | c) Should you require |
| 9 a) just | b) do not hesitate | c) don't hesitate |
| 10 a) Looking | b) I'm looking | c) I look |

I Write a reply accepting the invitation, but requesting more information, e.g. ask about the event details. Use formal or semi-formal language.

➔ Writing file page 142

USEFUL LANGUAGE

ICE-BREAKERS

Excuse me, could you do me a favour and (pass the water)?

That's a great calling card, if you don't mind me saying.

Do you mind me asking where you're from?

And how's ... in your part of the world?

I don't suppose you know of any good places to eat near here, do you?

INVOLVING OTHERS

I don't think you've met (*name*) from (*department, company, etc.*), have you?

You might like to meet (*name*).

He's/She's in your field.

FINDING THINGS IN COMMON

I always enjoy her talks, don't you?

It's funny you should say that, I think my colleague might ...

I was there not long ago, actually.

I thought your face looked familiar!

That's a coincidence! So am/have/do I.

I know what you mean. Neither am/have/do I.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

I'll write down my details for you.

(Do) give me a ring when you get back, won't you?

You must call me / look me up if you're ever in (*town/city*).

We should do lunch one day.

It'll be great to hear from you.

GETTING AWAY

(It's been) good talking to you.

Excuse me, but I've just seen a friend.

I'll see you later, hopefully.

Excuse me a moment. I'm afraid I have to make a quick call.

Movers and shakers

An international aid organisation wants to raise its profile and build contacts with influential people who can help its work

Background

Logistaid is an international humanitarian aid organisation that provides emergency assistance in more than 50 countries. It transports food, clothing and medical supplies and gives logistical help to underprivileged areas all over the world, especially to those regions that have poor local infrastructure, have suffered natural disasters or that are in conflict.

Logistaid is currently trying to increase its donations from the public and attract well-known figures to take an interest in the organisation in order to raise its international profile.

A group of influential people has been invited to a charity dinner to increase public awareness of the organisation's work. The people invited to the dinner are 'movers and shakers' – successful businesspeople, sports personalities and politicians, as well as people who work in the media.

A planning meeting

Work in groups. You are employees at Logistaid. Hold a meeting to decide on the missing information in the formal invitation that has been prepared (see right) and discuss these questions concerning the charity event.

- 1 Which successful businesspeople and celebrities are you going to invite?
- 2 What else should you take into account when deciding on the ticket price?
- 3 Which members of Logistaid and/or guests should give a speech during the dinner?
- 4 What kind of entertainment will you provide at the event, if any?
- 5 What kind of follow-up are you going to have after the event?

Logistaid

12 September
Dear Sir/Madam

I am delighted to invite you to the event of the year, the **Movers and Shakers Gala Dinner!** This night to remember will take place at on Friday 14 October at Tickets are priced at €..... each and per cent of the proceeds will be donated to Logistaid.

Please find enclosed an information pack about our logistical work in over 50 countries and news of our latest projects. These have included getting essential medical aid and food supplies to earthquake victims in South-East Asia, helping refugees to build new homes in Central Africa, and supplying teachers and educators to local schools in remote areas in Central America.

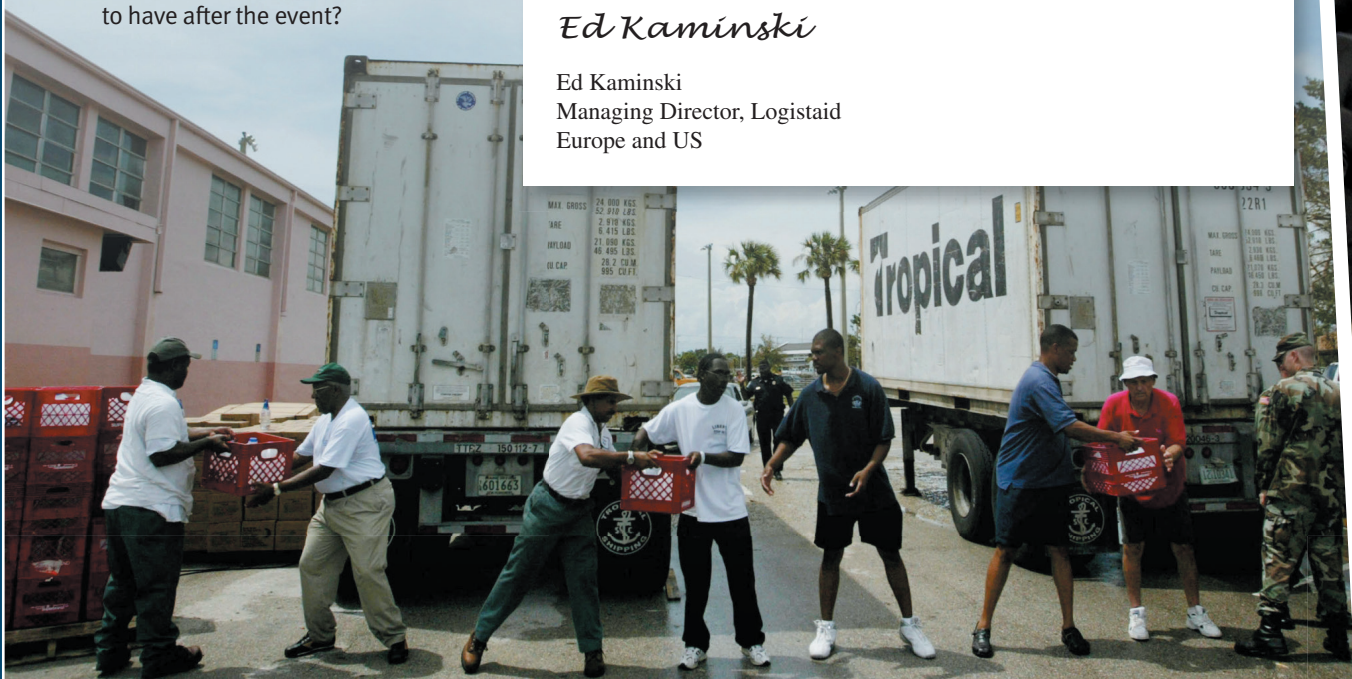
Please note that the Movers and Shakers Gala Dinner is a black-tie event and we are pleased to inform you that and will also be attending. We would be very grateful if you could reply in writing at your earliest convenience.

Should you require any further information about this special event, or wish to make a donation, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Ed Kaminski

Ed Kaminski
Managing Director, Logistaid
Europe and US



CD1.5 You are attending the charity dinner for Logistaid and are listening to the Managing Director, Ed Kaminski, giving a speech. When and why did he get involved with Logistaid? What doesn't he talk about in his speech? How effective do you think his speech is?

Task

Work in groups of six. You are networking with some of the influential people at Logistaid's charity event.

Student A: See below.

Student D: Turn to page 164.

Student B: Turn to page 155.

Student E: Turn to page 158.

Student C: Turn to page 163.

Student F: Turn to page 158.

Student A

You are a director of Logistaid. You need to raise the international profile of the organisation and increase public awareness of its work. You are also thinking of setting up a special educational programme dedicated to children living in remote areas in developing countries where there are few schools and those that exist have few teachers and little or no resources. However, Logistaid would need substantial funding to set up this kind of programme.

Network with as many people as possible and find someone who:

- 1 could finance Logistaid's educational programme;
- 2 would be able to help increase its public profile;
- 3 shares one of your personal interests, e.g. film, sport, food, travel, etc.

Once you find a useful contact, agree to a further meeting before moving on and talking to someone else.

What happens next?

You are staff from Logistaid. You meet the day after the gala dinner to discuss the success of the event and ideas for the next stage. Consider these questions.

- 1 Who will you choose to promote Logistaid's new educational programme and raise your profile?
- 2 What will be their role, e.g. visiting disaster areas in developing countries, filming promotional videos?
- 3 What kind of publicity campaign will you organise?

Watch the Case study commentary on the **DVD-ROM**.



Writing

You are the Press Officer at Logistaid. Write a formal letter to your chosen public figure on behalf of the Managing Director. Include these points.

- 1 Thank them for attending the charity dinner. Mention how much money was raised.
- 2 Say you are very happy that they have been chosen to promote Logistaid's new educational programme.
- 3 Briefly describe any forthcoming event(s) you are organising and invite your chosen public figure to discuss more details about the campaign.

➔ Writing file page 142

