

## Energize Your Training! - By Katie Mangett

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A trainer who has the proper tools to become a great orator is a better teacher. At CHART's semi-annual training conference in Boston, Katie Mangett presented these great ways to energize training, to make it more fun for both the trainers and the trainees. With her background in theater, Mangett shared ways to use acting and theater skills to become more effective in the training arena. When you energize the trainer, you energize the audience as well.

So many people become trainers because they really know and understand a particular topic. But just because one knows a subject inside and out, doesn't mean they are good at communicating the information. The first step in becoming a good communicator is 'shock prevention'. Many people experience what is often referred to as 'stage fright' or topophobia--the thing that is feared most is public speaking. Stage fright is most evident before speaking and 30 seconds after actually beginning to speak. But there are ways to control stage fright.

Accurate perception of the situation may help the speaker to overcome the fear of public speaking. The key to controlling stage fright is to understand the cause and the effect of your fears. One needs to identify the fear and then assess how the body reacts to it. Adrenaline is involved here and it does have specific physical affects such as a pounding heart, shortness of breath and sweating. One of the ways to combat these affects is to use vocal exercises, stretching and breathing exercises before speaking.

### **Physical Power Surge**

Use your body to energize yourself and combat stage fright before you speak, but also use movement during your speech to keep both yourself, and your audience, energized. Gestures are very important. Make sure they are simple and away from the body, and that the gestures you use enhance what you are trying to say. Don't clasp your arms in front of you or put your hands in your pockets which communicates that you are insecure with the material. Above all, make sure you make eye contact. This is very basic in public speaking. Don't just focus on one person or talk only to the right side of the room, a very common habit for right-handed people (the opposite is true for left-handed individuals).

### **High Voltage Vocals**

Using your voice properly is another basic public speaking tool and way to energize yourself. When speaking, vary your voice. Everyone's voice has the potential for tremendous variety. You control how quickly you speak, how loudly you speak and how carefully you speak. Use the following variation in your voice:

**Volume:** Better a bit loud than too soft. If they can't hear you, they can't learn!

**Pacing:** Better a bit quick than too slow.

**Pausing:** Pause after major ideas. Do not be afraid of a little silence.

**Pitch:** No monotone delivery! Vary the inflection in your voice.

**Pronunciation:** The act or manner of uttering words. Pronounce words properly.

**Enunciation:** Be sure to articulate words.

It is also important to get rid of the 'um's', 'uh's' and the rest of their nasty family (so, like, you know, well, yeah, ahh, mmm, boy). Everyone has some vocal pauses. It's all about practice. Listeners won't hear your vocal pauses unless you use too many, but once they notice, they will hear every one. To prevent using these pauses, prepare and practice in front of someone who will tell you if you have a noticeable pause.

### **Energize the Learner**

Now that you have energized yourself, it's time to energize your audience. First and foremost, you need to make a connection with your listeners. Let them know right away the WIIFM-what's in it for me! Question your audience, asking them what it is they want to get out of the presentation. Then, try to connect with them through all three different learning styles: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Electrify the learner with pictures and graphics, use music and your own electrifying vocal variations to engage their hearing, and get them up and moving and doing!

An exercise that gets everyone in the room involved is to assign one learning style to each of three groups and have them present a lesson using the teaching style they have been assigned.

In any presentation, people will begin to zone out. That is when you need to use some tricks to prevent power outages. One of the basic tools is to use questioning techniques. Beginning trainers should plan and write down questions ahead of time. Open-ended questions are most effective and keep people involved in the learning. Make sure to ask questions to a variety of people in the room, not just one person or one group.

During questions, I often use a Koosh ball, thrown to different people, to keep people engaged. I also may do stretches in the middle of class to get people back into their brains. While the group stretches, each participant states one thing they learned or answers questions.

Here are some of my favorite tools. Some I have developed myself, and others are from training books and my favorite author/trainer Sharon Bowman.

### **Opener/Closer**

œ 'I Am A Rock' Show and Tell

Have a variety of fun objects on the table or in a basket.

Have each participant select an object.

Each participant shows the object and explains one of the following:

- How the object relates to them
- How the object relates to their goal for the workshop
- How they will apply it in the future
- A story that relates to the object

Example:

Object - Tennis Ball 'This tennis ball is like me because I am able to roll with the changes and move quickly between tasks!'

### **Ongoing activities:**

œ Trivia A-Go-Go

- Do this activity at the end of breaks and after lunch.
- Trivia game played throughout the day.
- Write participants name on a flip chart sheet and clip large candy bar or prize to the flip chart.
- Ask a series of trivia questions concerning the company, policies, property and area.
- Read a question to the group and have the group record their answers. After asking 3-5 questions review the answers. You can keep individual tallies after each question or just take a total of correct answers from each person at the end of the round.
- The winner at the end of the day gets the posted candy bar or prize.
- May be played in teams.

œ The Tick- from the book 'Executive Marbles'

- May do this activity for one day or several. Make a 'Tick' from a clothespin. Decorate it so it would be hard to duplicate and moderately easy to see.
- Read the following instructions and rules to the group.
- Tick checks are done AFTER breaks and any time you see that glazed eye look.
- Be sure to have the 'Tick conditions' prepared! \* See next page

### **Instructions:**

You say:

'We are beginning an ongoing activity that will continue until \_\_\_\_\_. I have in my hand a tick. It is really a decorated clothespin that I will hide on someone or his or her personal property. That person may find it and hide it on someone else. When I call for a 'TICK CHECK', whoever has it will need to come up to the front of the room to choose a slip of paper that contains a group energizer that they will lead.'

Explain to the group how a tick check will proceed:

'I will call for the tick and say that I passed it on to John. John will stand up and say where he found it and who he passed it to. This will continue until the group reaches the unsuspecting tick carrier!'

Rules:

You may only hide the tick on someone from this group.

You must hide the tick in a public area. In other words, stay out of purses and backpacks!

When the tick check is officially called, the tick stays where it is.

It is important to stress that the 'tick' must not interfere with class time.

### **TICK CONDITIONS - CUT THESE OUT AND PUT IN A HAT OR BOWL**

Play music during these exercises to really boost energy!

LEAD THE GROUP IN THREE HAND, ARM OR NECK STRETCHES

MAKE A 'TOAST' TO THE GROUP

LEAD THE GROUP IN THREE BODY STRETCHES

LEAD THE GROUP IN THE 'HOKEY POKEY'

LEAD THE GROUP IN THREE ROUNDS OF 'THE WAVE'

LEAD THE GROUP IN TOE TOUCHES AND ARM CIRCLES

LEAD THE GROUP IN A CHEER LEAD THE GROUP IN THREE FACE STRETCHES

LEAD THE GROUP IN ROUNDS OF 'ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT'

LEAD THE GROUP IN A LOUD YAWN AND SIGHS

### **Review Ideas:**

Each One Teach One

- Pair the trainees, pairing returning or stronger trainees with less confident trainees.
- Explain that each person in pair is going to 'teach' the other how to do a specific procedure (trainer's choice).
- The person teaching should explain what they're doing as they go, and the person being taught may not interrupt the teacher unless they are specifically asked a question.
- After the first person finishes 'teaching', they reverse roles and do another procedure (or the same if the trainer prefers).

When everyone finishes, give a round of applause for the training skills displayed.

Stand Up, Sit Down

- After a period of lecture, ask group to stand in smaller groups of 3 - 5. Each person in the standing group tells the others one thing he or she has learned or remembers in the last segment.
- When each person has told the group one thing, everyone in the group may sit down.

### **Endings**

Close the day with a high energy, fun, whole group activity that celebrates the learning they experienced together. It's a great way to have fun and review!

œ Koosh Throw

Stand in a circle and toss a koosh ball quickly and randomly around the room as people share an insight they had, something they learned, a compliment to someone in the group, something they are going to do with what they learned, etc

œ Snowball Fight

- Each person writes on a blank white paper one thing they are going to do with what they have learned.
- Have the entire group take their papers with them and form a circle away from furniture. Tell them to crinkle up their papers into 'snowballs'.
- They will have about 30 seconds to hit as many people as they can.
- Begin Snowball Fight by throwing, picking up, and throwing the paper snowballs again.
- At the end of the time, use a noisemaker to get their attention. Ask them to pick up a snowball (it doesn't have to be their own), unfold it, and take turns reading their snowballs to the group.

œ Fortune Cookie

- Have each group member choose a fortune cookie.
- Open cookies and eat!
- Give trainees a moment to read their fortune and think about how it relates to what we talked about today.
- Have each participant read their fortune to the group and how they feel it relates what we learned today.

**Recommended Books:**

Presenting With Pizzazz - Sharon Bowman

How To Give It So They Get It - Sharon Bowman

Shake, Rattle and Roll - Sharon Bowman

Preventing Death By Lecture - Sharon Bowman

Big Book of Humorous Training Games - Doni Tamblyn and Sharyn Weiss

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