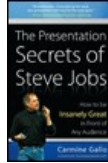


# Chapters *To Go*



## The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs: How to Be Insanely Great in Front of Any Audience

by Carmine Gallo  
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# Prologue—How to Be Insanely Great in Front of Any Audience

## Overview

**A person can have the greatest idea in the world—completely different and novel—but if that person can't convince enough other people, it doesn't matter.**

—Gregory Berns

Steve Jobs is the most captivating communicator on the world stage. No one else comes close. A Jobs presentation unleashes a rush of dopamine into the brains of his audience. Some people go to great lengths to get this hit, even spending the night in freezing temperatures to ensure the best seat at one of his speeches. When they don't get that buzz, they go through withdrawals. How else do you explain the fact that some fans threatened to protest Jobs's absence from a conference he had keynoted for years? That's what happened when Apple announced that Jobs would not deliver his traditional keynote presentation at Macworld Expo in 2009. (Apple also announced that it would be the last year in which the company would participate in this annual trade show produced by Boston-based IDG World Expo.)

Apple vice president Phil Schiller filled in for the legendary presenter. The expectations were nearly impossible to meet, but Schiller performed admirably *precisely* because he used many of Jobs's techniques. Nevertheless, Jobs was missed. "The sun is setting on the first generation of rebellious whiz kids who invented the PC, commercialized the Internet, and grew their companies into powerhouses," wrote reporter Jon Fortt.<sup>[1]</sup>

A Steve Jobs keynote presentation is an extraordinary experience, and he doesn't give many of them. Although fans, investors, and customers hope to see more of him at Apple events, given his leave of absence in 2009 for medical reasons and Apple's withdrawal from Macworld Expo, there might be fewer opportunities to see a master at a craft he has honed for more than three decades. (It was later confirmed that Jobs had undergone a successful liver transplant and would return to work.) This book captures the best of Jobs's presentations and reveals, for the first time, the exact techniques he uses to inspire his audience. Best of all, you can learn his skills and adopt his techniques to blow away your audience, giving people a high they will crave again and again.

Watch a Macworld keynote—"Stevenotes," as they are known among the Mac faithful—and you will begin to reconsider everything about your current presentations: what you say, how you say it, and what your audience sees when you say it. I wrote a column about Steve Jobs and his presentation skills for [BusinessWeek.com](http://BusinessWeek.com). It quickly became hugely popular around the world (Daniel Lyons, aka "Fake Steve Jobs," even featured it). It appealed to Mac and PC owners alike who wanted to improve the way they sell themselves and their ideas. A select few readers had seen Jobs in person, while others had watched video of Jobs online, but the vast majority of readers had never seen him give a keynote. What they learned was eye-opening and forced many of them to go back to the proverbial drawing board.

For educational purposes, use YouTube as a complement to the techniques revealed in the pages to follow. At this writing, there are more than 35,000 clips of Steve Jobs on YouTube, a far larger number than for most other high-profile CEOs, including Virgin's Richard Branson (1,000), Microsoft's Steve Ballmer (940), and the former head of General Electric, Jack Welch (175). In this case, YouTube offers a rare opportunity to read about a particular individual, learn about specific techniques that make him successful, and see those techniques in action.

What you'll learn is that Jobs is a magnetic pitchman who sells his ideas with a flair that turns prospects into customers and customers into evangelists. He has charisma, defined by the German sociologist Max Weber as "a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."<sup>[2]</sup> Jobs has become superhuman among his most loyal fans. But Weber got one thing wrong. Weber believed that charisma was not "accessible to the ordinary person." Once you learn *exactly* how Jobs crafts and delivers one of his famous presentations, you will realize that these exceptional powers are available to you as well. If you adopt just *some* of his techniques, yours will stand out from the legions of mediocre presentations delivered on any given day. Your competitors and colleagues will look like amateurs in comparison.

"Presentations have become the de facto business communication tool," writes presentation design guru Nancy Duarte in *Slide:ology*. "Companies are started, products are launched, climate systems are saved—possibly based on the quality of presentations. Likewise, ideas, endeavors, and even careers can be cut short due to ineffective communication. Out of the millions of presentations delivered each day, only a small percentage are delivered well."<sup>[3]</sup>

Duarte transformed Al Gore's 35 mm slides into the award-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. As with Al Gore, who sits on Apple's board, Steve Jobs uses presentations as a transformative experience. Both men are revolutionizing business communications and have something to teach us, but where Gore has *one* famous presentation repeated a thousand times, Jobs has been giving awe-inspiring presentations since the launch of the Macintosh in 1984. In fact, the Macintosh launch, which you will read about in the pages to follow, is still one of the most dramatic presentations in the history of corporate America. I find it amazing that Jobs has actually improved his presentation style in the twenty-five years since the launch. The 1984 presentation was tough to beat—one of the greatest presentations of our time. Still, Jobs's keynotes at the Macworld Expo in 2007 and 2008 were his best ever. Everything that he had learned about connecting with audiences came together to create truly magnificent moments.

Now the bad news. Your presentations are being compared with those of Steve Jobs. He has transformed the typical, dull, technical, plodding slide show into a theatrical event complete with heroes, villains, a supporting cast, and stunning backdrops. People who witness a Steve Jobs presentation for the first time describe it as an extraordinary experience. In a *Los Angeles Times* article about Jobs's medical leave, Michael Hiltzik wrote: "No American CEO is more intimately identified with his company's success . . . Jobs is Apple's visionary and carnival barker. If you want a taste of the latter persona, watch the video of the original iPod launch event in October 2001. Jobs's dramatic command is astonishing. Viewing the event recently on YouTube, I was on the edge of my seat, even though I knew how the story came out."<sup>[4]</sup> Jobs is the Tiger Woods of business, raising the bar for the rest of us.

Now the good news. You can identify and adopt each of Jobs's techniques to keep your audience members at the edge of their seats. Tapping into his qualities will help you create your own magnificent presentations and give you the tools to sell your ideas far more persuasively than you have ever imagined.

Consider *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs* your road map to presentation success. It's as close as you will ever get to having Jobs speak directly in your ear as you present the value behind your service, product, company, or cause. Whether you are a CEO launching a new product, an entrepreneur pitching investors, a sales professional closing a deal, or an educator trying to inspire a class, Jobs has something to teach you. Most business professionals give presentations to deliver information. Not Jobs. A Steve Jobs presentation is intended to create an experience—"a reality distortion field"—that leaves his audience awed, inspired, and wildly excited.

## Moving On Up

*As soon as you move one step up from the bottom, your effectiveness depends on your ability to reach others through the spoken and written word.*<sup>[5]</sup>

—Peter Drucker

Some of the most common terms used to describe Steve Jobs are “seductive,” “magnetic,” “captivating,” and “charismatic.” Other terms, typically related to his interpersonal traits, are less flattering. Jobs is a complicated man who creates extraordinary products, cultivates intense loyalty, and also scares the shit out of people. He is a passionate perfectionist and a visionary, two qualities that create a combustible combination when the way things are do not match the way Jobs believes they should be. This book is not intended to tackle everything about Steve Jobs. It is neither a biography of the man nor a history of Apple. This book is not about Jobs the boss, but about Jobs the communicator. And although the book will help you create far more effective presentations, it leaves the art of presentation design to more qualified authors whose life work is dedicated to the field of graphic design. (For more references, tips, and video clips of the presentations cited throughout the book, visit [carminegallo.com](http://carminegallo.com).) What the book does offer is the most thorough breakdown of exactly how Jobs crafts and delivers the story behind the Apple brand. You will learn how Jobs does all of the following:

- Crafts messages
- Presents ideas
- Generates excitement for a product or feature
- Delivers a memorable experience
- Creates customer evangelists

The techniques will help you create your own “insanely great” presentations. The lessons are remarkably simple to learn, but applying them is up to you. Speaking the way Steve speaks requires work, but the benefit to your career, company, and personal success will be well worth your commitment.

<sup>[1]</sup>Jon Fortt, “Steve Jobs, Tech’s Last Celebrity CEO,” *Fortune*, December 19, 2008, [http://money.cnn.com/2008/12/19/technology/fortt\\_tech\\_ceos.fortune/?postversion=2008121915](http://money.cnn.com/2008/12/19/technology/fortt_tech_ceos.fortune/?postversion=2008121915) (accessed January 30, 2009).

<sup>[2]</sup>Wikipedia, “Charisma,” includes Max Weber quote, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/charisma> (accessed January 30, 2009).

<sup>[3]</sup>Nancy Duarte, *Slide:ology* (Sebastopol, CA: O’Reilly Media, 2008), xviii.

<sup>[4]</sup>Michael Hiltzik, “Apple’s Condition Linked to Steve Jobs’s Health,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 5, 2009, [latimes.com/business/la-fi-hiltzik5-2009jan05,0,7305482.story](http://latimes.com/business/la-fi-hiltzik5-2009jan05,0,7305482.story) (accessed January 30, 2009).

<sup>[5]</sup>Stephen Wilbers, “Good Writing for Good Results: A Brief Guide for Busy Administrators,” *The College Board Review*, no. 154 (1989–90), via Wilbers, [wilbers.com/cbr%20article.htm](http://wilbers.com/cbr%20article.htm).

## Why Not Me?

When I appeared on CNBC’s “The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch,” I was struck by the host’s infectious energy. Deutsch offered his viewers this piece of advice: “When you see someone who has turned his passion into a profit, ask yourself, ‘Why not me?’”<sup>[6]</sup> I urge you to do the same. When you read about Jobs in the pages to follow, ask yourself, “Why not me? Why can’t I energize my listeners like Jobs?” The answer is, “You can.” As you’ll learn, Jobs is not a natural. He works at it. Although he always had a theatrical flair, his style has evolved and improved over the years. Jobs is relentlessly focused on improvement, laboring over every slide, every demo, and every detail of a presentation. Each presentation tells a story, and every slide reveals a scene. Jobs is a showman and, as with all great actors, he rehearses until he gets it right. “Be a yardstick of quality,” Jobs once said. “Some people aren’t used to an environment where excellence is expected.”<sup>[7]</sup> There are no shortcuts to excellence. Presenting like Jobs will require planning and practice, but if you are committed to reaching the top, there is no better teacher than Apple’s master showman. (See [Figure 1](#).)



Photo by Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

**Figure 1:** Apple’s master showman turns presentations into theatrical experiences.

<sup>[6]</sup>“The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch,” first aired on July 28, 2008, property of CNBC.

<sup>[7]</sup>Wikipedia, “Steve Jobs,” includes Jobs’s quote, [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/steve\\_jobs](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/steve_jobs) (accessed January 30, 2009).

## Performance in Three Acts

*The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs* is structured like one of Jobs’s favorite presentation metaphors: a three-act play. In fact, a Steve Jobs presentation is very much like a dramatic play—a finely crafted and well-rehearsed performance that informs, entertains, and inspires. When Jobs introduced the video iPod on October 12, 2005, he chose the California Theatre in San Jose as his stage. It was an appropriate setting as Steve divided the product introductions into three acts, “like every classic story.” In act 1, he introduced the new iMac G5 with built-in video camera. **Act 2** kicked off the release of the fifth-generation iPod, which played video content for the first time. In act 3, he talked about iTunes 6, with the news that ABC would make television shows available for iTunes and the new video iPod. Jobs even introduced jazz legend Wynton Marsalis as an encore.

In keeping with Jobs's metaphor of a presentation as a classic story, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs* is divided into three acts:

- **Act 1: Create the Story.** The seven chapters—or scenes—in this section will give you practical tools to craft an exciting story behind your brand. A strong story will give you the confidence and ability to win over your audience.
- **Act 2: Deliver the Experience.** In these six scenes, you will learn practical tips to turn your presentations into visually appealing and “must-have” experiences.
- **Act 3: Refine and Rehearse.** The remaining five scenes will tackle topics such as body language, verbal delivery, and making “scripted” presentations sound natural and conversational. Even your choice of wardrobe will be addressed. You will learn why mock turtlenecks, jeans, and running shoes are suitable for Jobs but could mean the end of your career.

Short intermissions divide the acts. These intermissions contain nuggets of great information culled from the latest findings in cognitive research and presentation design. These findings will help you take your presentations to an entirely new level.

## What Are You Really Selling?

Jobs is “the master at taking something that might be considered boring—a hunk of electronic hardware—and enveloping it in a story that made it compellingly dramatic,” writes Alan Deutschman in *The Second Coming of Steve Jobs*.<sup>[8]</sup> Only a handful of leaders whom I have had the pleasure of meeting have this skill, the ability to turn seemingly boring items into exciting brand stories. Cisco CEO John Chambers is one of them. Chambers does not sell routers and switches that make up the backbone of the Internet. What Chambers *does* sell is human connections that change the way we live, work, play, and learn.

The most inspiring communicators share this quality—the ability to create something meaningful out of esoteric or everyday products. Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz does not sell coffee. He sells a “third place” between work and home. Financial guru Suze Orman does not sell trusts and mutual funds. She sells the dream of financial freedom. In the same way, Jobs does not sell computers. He sells tools to unleash human potential. Throughout this book, ask yourself, “What am I really selling?” Remember, your widget doesn't inspire. Show me how your widget improves my life, and you've won me over. Do it in a way that entertains me, and you'll have created a true evangelist.

Along the way, you'll also discover that Steve Jobs is motivated by a messianic zeal to change the world, to put a “dent in the universe.” In order for these techniques to work, you must cultivate a profound sense of mission. If you are passionate about your topic, you're 80 percent closer to developing the magnetism that Jobs has. From the age of twenty-one when Jobs cofounded Apple with his friend Steve Wozniak, Jobs fell in love with the vision of how personal computing would change society, education, and entertainment. His passion was contagious, infecting everyone in his presence. That passion comes across in every presentation.

We all have passions that drive us. The purpose of this book is to help you capture that passion and turn it into a story so mesmerizing that people will want to help you achieve your vision. You see, it's quite possible that your ideas or products vastly improve the lives of your customers—from computers, to automobiles, to financial services, to products that create a cleaner environment—but the greatest product in the world will be useless without a strong brand evangelist to promote it. If you cannot get people to care, your product will never stand a chance of success. Your audience will not care, they will not understand, nor will they be interested. People do not pay attention to boring things. Do not let your ideas die because you failed to present them in a way that sparked the imagination of your listeners. Use Jobs's techniques to reach the hearts and the minds of everyone you hope to influence.

As Jobs often says to kick off a presentation, “Now let's get started.”

<sup>[8]</sup>Alan Deutschman, *The Second Coming of Steve Jobs* (New York: Broadway Books, 2001), 127.