PRESENTATIONS ARE A PIECE OF CAKE

Sustaining Interest
being unpredictably predictable

WRITTEN BY
TONY ENG

SCRIPT AND ART BY
JESSICA TANG

THANKS TO
SEAN LIU AND
MITCHELL HWANG
Sometimes the content of a talk is captivating enough that it alone can keep an audience engaged.

Especially if the content is dense.

But other times, or the delivery is lackluster.

You may need to find a way to help your audience stay attentive...

Try being unpredictably predictable!
BE PREDICTABLE BY MEETING YOUR AUDIENCE'S EXPECTATIONS.

BE UNPREDICTABLE BY INFUSING A BIT OF THE UNEXPECTED

INTO YOUR (I) SLIDES, (II) CONTENT, AND (III) DELIVERY.
Your slides should visually complement your spoken message.

But if the look of every slide is predictable, the audience might zone out.

So instead of using only bulleted lists, vary the way information is presented.

And design your slides with a consistent theme.

So that it's clear they belong to the same slide deck.
AS FOR CONTENT,

BUILD VARIATION INTO YOUR TALK SO THAT YOU AREN'T JUST LECTURING AT YOUR AUDIENCE.

SURPRISE THEM WITH ...
These break up the monotony in your talk.

And can even buy you time to breathe and gather your bearings.

While the audience remains engaged in your talk.
Finally,

Delivery matters.

How you say something matters.

It is the vehicle through which your content is transmitted.

Poor delivery can interfere with the audience's reception and understanding of the content.
You might have said it comes out mechanically.

But they didn't hear it.

Because they didn't know what was important.

The audience can't separate the signal from the noise.

At the same volume, pace and pitch.
The solution? Help your audience by using vocal variation to verbally punctuate your message.

Three ideas you can try:

1. Phrasing

Instead of a steady stream of words, group words into bite-sized sound chunks. This makes it easier for your audience to process what they hear.
EMPHASIS

STRESS

CERTAIN WORDS TO SIGNIFY IMPORTANCE, TO CREATE CONTRAST

OR TO HIGHLIGHT A CHANGE IN TONE.

RIISING TONE

COMING UP IN TONE TOO OFTEN, ALSO CALLED UPSPEAK, ESPECIALLY AT THE END OF EVERY SENTENCE

WILL MAKE YOU SOUND UNCERTAIN

BUT ITS USE AT THE END OF A PHRASE,
Holds the audience in temporary suspense

And indicates that there is more to come.

Besides these three, you can make other choices including:

- Tone of voice
- Volume
- Pauses
- Pacing
- Word duration

And many more

All of these can be combined in different ways to add vocal color to the black and white word.
VARIATION

IN SUMMARY
IN SLIDES, CONTENT, AND DELIVERY

MAKES IT EASIER FOR YOUR AUDIENCE TO PAY ATTENTION AND GET YOUR MESSAGE.

BEING UNPREDICTABLY PREDICTABLE CAPTURES THE AUDIENCE'S ATTENTION

KEEP THEM WONDERING

BECAUSE THEY ARE CONTINUALLY SURPRISED.

WHAT YOU'LL DO NEXT!