6 memorable ways to close a speech

The closing of a speech should be “stirring, inspirational, and upbeat,” says Robert Rackleff, former Jimmy Carter speechwriter. Here are some of Rackleff’s ways to dress up the ending.

1. Joke. An appropriate joke can let the audience relax and renew its attention to your remarks. “A laugh or a chuckle here can help signal the end of the body of a speech, and lets the audience shift gears for the rest of the ending.”

2. Personal anecdote. An anecdote might also reveal the personal association of the speaker to the industry group he or she is addressing, or the city where the speech is delivered.

3. Inversion. “You figuratively turn the coin over and describe what will happen if you don’t do something—or if we do something that is both dramatically different and effective.”

4. Outcomes. Whatever you’re proposing, end your speech by re-emphasizing its importance to your audience and how it will make their lives better.

5. The right word. Look for the word or phrase which crystallizes thoughts and moves people to action.

6. Quotation. A stirring, evocative, eloquent quotation can provide a lift that sends the audience out ready for action.

Subject lines that sell

Your subject lines have to work doubly hard when you are writing for member email blasts or promoting service, product or event. Remember these rules for “must-open” promotional subject lines:

- Feature benefits. Make sure your subject line broadcasts a member benefit. For example, “25% of new subscriptions is more powerful than “special offer for new subscribers.”

- Make it short. To increase your open rate, craft a subject line with fewer than 35 characters. Metrics compiled by MailerMailer found that these shorter subject lines has an open rate 28% higher than longer ones.

- Avoid come-ons. Don’t use teasers (“Special offer—limited time!”) that require the leader to click to find out what you are promoting. Readers find it annoying to have to click and wait for the message to open to find out what you are offering. Bottom line, they won’t bother opening if you make them wait.

Source: 199 Ideas, Member Service & Engagement, The Centre for Association Leadership, ASAE

Creating your path to the four E’s of social media

Social media is a powerful tool for any organization to promote its products and services as well as its advocacies. There are 4 primary strategies that your organisation can deploy in your social media initiatives—the 4Es of social media:

- Education - enriching your target community’s knowledge with information and resources for them to better understand you.

- Entertainment - creating fun, sticky and memorable content that allows them to associate the image or message to your brand or organisation.

- Engagement - engaging the community by recognizing their presence, contributions and inputs.

- Empowerment - give your target community the power to play an active role in what you are doing.

Source: http://knowhownonprofit.org/
Avoiding the afternoon slump

For many employees and managers, the beginning and end of the afternoon are the least productive times of day. To avoid the afternoon slump, www.ragan.com, writes “line up your most important and most difficult jobs for the morning, when your energy is highest. Use the afternoon to follow up on assignments, return calls and emails, gather information to work on the next morning, and plan your next steps.

Source: http://www.managebetter.biz/

Knowing when your boss can help resolve a conflict

Sometimes it’s better to address a conflict indirectly. For example, if you’re working in a culture where group harmony is important, you may not be able to directly confront someone about an issue. And sometimes people are more willing to take feedback from others – either someone more powerful or a close confidant. In these cases, it’s best to get a third party involved. Go to your boss and explain the problem. If a colleague is preventing you from running a successful meeting, your boss can step in and move the conversation along. Or if you and another team member don’t agree on how to spend your shared budget, you might ask your boss to make the decision. That way, neither of you loses and you’re just carrying out your manager’s orders. In Western culture this indirect approach might be frowned upon, but in other places it’s more effective for handling disagreement.

Source: Management Tip of the Day from the Harvard Management Review

How not to fail on the big state

More often than not, we are more likely to choke under pressure if we focus on how big our next event is, e.g., annual conference, board of directors meeting, etc. Sharing Parrish writes that one tactic to avoid this is to trick your mind and body into relaxing by imagining that what’s coming up isn’t a big deal. She adds that the next time you have an important meeting/interview/presentation, counter-intuitively tell yourself it’s not that big of a deal.

Source: https://www.farnamstreetblog.com

Be cautious with ‘if/then’ rewards

The “if/then” model for rewarding employees works—but only sometimes. Scientists have found that promising people a reward for completing a task (“If you do X, then you’ll get Y”) is most effective for simple, short-term activities; better to promised rewards. You may want to break complex tasks into smaller segments and reward each milestone instead of waiting for the end. You could also focus on the value of ultimate achievement instead of offering a reward to motivate people to do their best work for a longer period.

Source: http://www.managebetter.biz/

Keeping employees engaged with simple questions

Employee surveys can be useful tools, but they’re not enough to help you know what your people are really thinking. There’s no survey, assessment or app that can take the place of a manager finding a few moments of quiet, pulling an employee aside and asking: “Hey, how are you making out around here? What kinds of dragons have you had to slay today? Do you have all the tools and resources you need? Are you seeing any challenges on the horizon that you’re going to need help with? What can I do to support you?” Once employees start to open up, the most important thing the manager can do is to shut up, listen, take notes and take action.

Source: www.ragan.com

Getting the right people

In sports, the coaches with the best records are usually the best recruiters. The same thing applies to the workplace. If you get the best talent, you have to spend less time “coaching” their performance. Getting the right personnel starts with your recruiting efforts. It continues through the screening and in-person interviewing stages. This part of the process involves using criminal, credit, motor vehicle, education and/or other background checks that are legal and appropriate for the position you are seeking to fill. It also continues through the introductory period of employment in which you are trying to figure out whether you made a good decision to hire the new employee.

Source: http://exclusive.multibriefs.com/

Three benefits of visual communications

In this information age, there is no end to the torrent of content that floods our email inboxes, social media feeds and preferred websites. If you find yourself stopping to focus on messages with powerful images, you aren’t alone. Adding visuals to your communications will:

1. Burst through the online noise. Good design and organized graphics are more enticing than the average written post.
2. Get the message across. Complex data and corporate-speak become clearer when paired with relevant imagery.
3. Tell a story. When you put your voice into images or videos, your audience will come to recognize your brand and vision. Incorporate visuals into your communications strategy to stand out in the digital landscape.

Source: http://www.ragan.com/SocialMedia/Articles/50230.aspx

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