

presents

Words of Wisdom

Wisdom

1. Accumulated philosophic or scientific learning: Knowledge. 2. The ability to discern inner qualities and relationships: Insight. 3. Good Sense: Judgment.

Webster's Dictionary

Most speakers would agree that being a great presenter requires a personal blend of knowledge, insight and judgment. But where does a speaker get that? One answer: Experience. The members of the Professional Floral Communicators International are pleased to share their knowledge, insights and good sense with the newest members of PFCI's induction class of 2010. Members were asked to share their best advice to this new crop of professional speakers as a way to welcome them to the organization - we call it, **Project W.O.W.** (Words of Wisdom). With these words come our best wishes for a fantastic career in professional presentation! We applaud your induction!

This book is presented to the 2010 class of PFCI inductees as a special gift from the members of PFCI. Welcome to these talented educators and speakers:

Tom Butler AAF PECI Lorraine Cooper AAF AIFD PFCI NDSF Roger Dennis AIFD PFCI KMF Bert Ford AIFD PECI John Hosek aifd Cafa PECL MCF Alex Jackson aled peci-Jackie Lacey AIFD PFCI CFD Vonda LaFever AIFD PFCI Laurie Lemek AIFD PECL CED Leighsa Montrose AIFD PFCI CFD Julie Poeltler AIFD PFCI CAFA IMF Alice Waterous AIFD PECL CED MCE Brian Wheat AAF PECI Robert Williams AAF PECI Randy Wooten AIFD PFCI GMF

from James M. DelPrince Ph.D. AIFD PFCI

"There is no substitute for factual, educational information. Floristry is art, science and business. In order to approach the stage with full confidence, be able to explain the principles of floral design, the elements of floral design, and the interaction of the two; the science of floristry and correct procedures to increase floral longevity; and tips for better marketing and business management. If you are prepared, you can have fun."

from
Alan Parkhurst AIFD PECI

"Congratulations on becoming PFCI! The best words of wisdom I ever received on public speaking were 'Prepare, Prepare, Prepare.' You see, when you first start public speaking, instructors always have you speak about something you already are an expert about - likely yourself. And as you become more comfortable with public speaking, you notice that the reason you are more comfortable and a better presenter, is because you are confident about the subject matter you speak about. So, the mantra, Prepare, Prepare couldn't be better advice. And if those thoughts of self doubt creep back into your conscious mind while on stage, remember what Eleanor Roosevelt said a long time ago... 'No one can make you feel inferior without your permission!'"

from Heather de Kok AAF AIFD PFCI CFD

"The best way to a great presentation is showing off your **passion**. Show how much you love what you do and that feeling becomes contagious to your audience. They will see that twinkle in your eye and won't know what has hit 'em!"

from

J Schwanke, AAF AIFD CFD NSA PFCI

- J's TEN Rules For Great Flower Communication!
- 1. BE the BEST "YOU", You can BE! Don't try to be anyone else! There's Only ONE "YOU".
- 2. Dress for Success, and Your Audience! Don't Distract... The FLOWERS are the STARS!
- 3. Passion is Contagious and Infectious! Share your Passion for Flowers!
- 4. Don't be Condescending! Help your Audiences Bloom where they are Planted!

 The Flower Industry is Tough... AND Wonderful!
- MAKE Pretty Things... Nobody wants to see tortured Flowers!
 PRETTY Flowers are Universally LOVED and Admired!
- 6. Give Valuable, Solid, Profit-making Advice.
 - Remember to share YOUR Mistakes as well as your Successes... It makes you REAL!
- 7. BE POSITIVE At All Costs... Negativity is Nauseating!
- 8. LOVE your Audience... they know when you don't and YOU can't hide it!
 They are the ONLY REASON you are on Stage!
- They Came to Learn, and get Motivated... Offer Education and Inspiration! That's YOUR Job! Take it Seriously!
- 10. MAKE No Mistake...It's NOT about YOU... It's About the FLOWERS!

from

Bob Hampton AIFD PFCI AAF

- "Words from the road on being a successful Presenter:
- 1. Begin with stating the value of Education and its effect it will have on each of us. Always include yourself in this statement and site a few specific points you have gained sitting in an audience yourself. We are here to share, discuss, communicate with each other on the topic of (state your topic here). Outline a few keys areas you will discuss and explore together... then hit it with your first preset designs.....people like to look at something while they wait for event to begin.....you always need a design as a teaser on stage to set the expectation.
- 2. Speak with conviction, confidence and most of all **sincerity."**

from

George Mitchell AIFD PFCI AAF

"When doing shows throughout the country, some designs you are asked to speak about may not be the best teaching examples. If you review the work ahead of time, (backstage, of course), you will know what is coming and not be blindsided. Find some principle of design in that arrangement to feature. It may just be the container featured by the Wholesaler that weekend—always a good talking point. **Be diplomatic** and never laugh at the design or embarrass the designer. (If all else fails--drop the damn thing backstage! Oops! Just kidding!)"

from

Lou Lynne Moss aifd aaf pfci

"This is it! You've prepared, you've rehearsed, and now it's time to takeoff! Grab the audience's attention in the first three minutes and they'll stick by you even if something goes wrong later.

Every audience loves... First, **Respect**; Second, **Rapport** between the speaker and themselves and Third, **Reality**-BE YOURSELF with passion and conviction.

Always give of yourself and share what is within you. I love this quote-"You were born an original. Don't die a copy!" from John Mason.

The final stanza of your presentation should appeal to their emotions and with enthusiasm challenge them to ACTION." "Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow." Ralph Waldo Emerson.

from Damien Koh PFCI AIFD CFD

"Never under estimate or over estimate your audience. You need to ask questions, check with the organizers about who is attending and prepare your presentation to meet the needs of that particular audience.

My questions to myself are always the five W's. Who? What? Where? When and Why?"

"Why am I where and when to deliver what to whom?"

from

Sylvia P. Nichols AIFD PFCI

Let thy speech be short communicating much in few words.

"I remind myself of this, though often not entirely successfully, every time I speak. Remember, just because **YOU** know everything there is to know about flowers, design, customer service, sales, marketing etc. it doesn't mean that you have to share it ALL every time!!!! Stay focused on the topic! Be succinct but passionate, paint word pictures."

Above all - SMILE!!!!!

from

Frank Laning AAF AIFD PFCI PFD 1999 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

Keep your audience occupied visually.

"I will often begin a program by demonstrating a hand- tied "Tuzzy-Muzzy" and explain the brief history of it. Audiences love to watch your hands moving and they will tune in and listen to what you have to say.

To make a point, if you wear glasses, drop them on your nose or remove them in your hand and make the point.

Never tell your audience if you had a problem (with flowers or shipping) The audience does not care and it diminishes your presentation. Go on stage like nothing went wrong and give a good sincere smile."

Always end on a high note!

from Jimm Wright AIFD PFCI

Welcome New Members to PFC!!

"I would encourage you to get out there and **be yourself**. Let your personality show through. Enjoy the audience and provide the information that they need to hear. Get to know the designers before the show so you can share on a personal level. A sense of humor is stellar and don't be afraid to laugh at yourself. Always remember that the audience is on your side and they want to see you succeed. Do your homework before the show and be sensitive to the needs of your sponsor, always being aware of what they want you to convey to your audience.

Best wishes for much success!"

from
Tim Farrell AIFD AAF PECI

"When planning what to say......concentrate the majority of your content on the material that you know the best. Your comfort level with the material you present is directly related to how credible you will appear as a speaker. Then choose to elaborate on the points that you feel most passionate about. Your enthusiasm for the subject matter will then be contagious and your audience will come away with new ideas and viewpoints from **your** presentation. Always stay focused on **your** goal......that is to communicate the beauty, the skill, the components and the intention of the design."

from John Klingel aaf alfd pfcl

Where would humanity be if ideas were ever locked up in a cold, dark space?

"A Cold Dark Space

I entered a cold, dark space with only a candle and a match. After lighting the candle I discovered other candles in the dim light. Gradually, I transferred the flame from candle to candle discovering more, and more candles. In no time **the room was filled with light**. The brilliance from so many candles warmed my face and heart.

Share your ideas with love and light. Congratulations!"

from

Sylvia A. Bird AIFD PFCI NSDF

"Your audience is there because they came to hear you and/or watch your practical presentation. **Never talk down to anyone**. Remember that you once sat where they are now sitting. They want to learn and benefit from all you have to share.

Know your subject well, your knowledge and experience are yours to share. Be prepared to answer questions – they show the audience is interested in what you are saying. You can never tell how varied and 'weird' the questions may be... which is the adventure of it. Inspiration is a wonderful quality."

from

Rich Salvaggio AIFD PFCI AAF 2009 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"How can I control those pesky nerves, fear and stage fright right before starting a program? Always remember that it's a good thing to get the shakes right before a program, but use them to your advantage. Roll your arms and shoulders in a circular motion a few times to release the tension and then take 5 or 6 very deep breaths – inhale and exhale as deeply as you can through your nose and mouth. Now, go out there and WOW that audience!

Tip for success: when you stop getting those nerves before a program, it's time to stop doing programs – that rise in adrenaline in your system will keep the excitement level of your presentation at its highest point."

from Susan Wilke PFCI

"There is something unique and remarkable about becoming a PFCI member. For one thing, it really is an organization whose "membership benefits" are more than just having your name on mailing list or receiving periodic newsletters and information. **Becoming a PFCI member you don't belong to it- it belongs to you**. Be kind; Be Positive; Remember, Poise Under Pressure!

During media interviews, hold your ground, use empathy, pause before answering and most of all clarify unclear questions and keep your cool. When the media or wholesaler or the retailer calls for direction or advice, or a story, you know you can feel confident that you are someone who is knowledgeable about all facets of the industry or you have numerous connections to find the right answers, use the connections. Call your PFCI family, we'll help

Do whatever you need to do to connect to the audience, I often share personal stories, situations, funny things that happened to me to feel more at ease on the stage or TV. It brings me back to center to re-focus. Also <u>Get Involved!</u> Our State Floral Organizations need us. We need to help maintain our Professional Floral Industry, we need to keep promoting our businesses or they too will be gone!!!!"

from
Brian Vetter AAF AIFD PFCI

"Being a great PFCI Speaker is easier than you might think. Be prepared, be well versed on your subject, be professional, but above all... be yourself! No one likes a stuffy "speaker." Everyone however, enjoys a relaxed, smart, funny, interesting speaker. Don't let nerves get in the way of just being you. The humble-heartfelt approach is much more well received than the holier-than-thou approach.

People love to be shared with, but dislike being talked down to."

"Congratulations to you all!"

from
Tony Huffman AIFD PFCI

"BE FLEXIBLE. Prepare, practice and plan for the presentation as well as you possibly can. You can never over prepare. But remember, not every program will be presented EXACTLY the way you thought it would. There are just some things that will be totally out of your control. Just get over it, be gracious and move on. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU, IT'S ABOUT THE TEAM. Sure, there will be some personal experiences you can share, but your main focus is to educate and motivate the audience, and encourage and build-up the design panel. The hosts and the sponsors certainly need their fair share of recognition, as well as recognizing comments from the audience and encouraging their participation."

from

Jim Morley AIFD PFCI AAF 1996 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"There has always been one guiding principle or rule that has served me well over my speaking career. No matter where I go or what the subject is – I find it works because the audience gets it. Here's that rule: When speaking to an audience of five or 1500, speak to them as if they were guests sitting in your living room. As crazy as that sounds, it works because you want the audience to be comfortable, to show them respect and you want to impress them with your hospitality. Most of all you want them to leave the experience richer than when they came – as special cherished friends."

from

Dean White AIFD PFCI AAF CAFA 1984 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"Early in our commentating career, my wife Joyce and I learned to play to the audience, connect with the attendees, entertain, seek responses and try to make each person feel a part of the show, maintaining their attention.

Everyone has an idea to share. Ask the audience for written questions, then give a quick review of these questions and offer help, guidance or answers. This awakens the audience and will make the participants open their minds to commentary and new ideas.

Commentary is a sharing tool. Use it to help each person grow, learn new techniques and moneymaking ideas."

from

Marie Ackerman AIFD PFCI AAF 2002 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"The most powerful thing I have learned about presentation is to watch your own 'background thinking.' I find it can be the most empowering or derailing part of a GREAT presentation. What you believe about yourself, your subject and your audience can change how you present material and thus change how you are perceived by an audience. At least for the moments you are on stage, you MUST sincerely, deep-in-your-soul believe you are the best person to be there, with a power-filled, content-rich message to share... a message that will make a difference in the lives of those who hear and comprehend it."

from

Jerome Raska AAF AIFD PFCI MCF

"Know your style. Every professional presenter has a style, otherwise known as a comfort zone. For example, some present with a studious educational feel, others present with light-hearted laughter and fun. Whatever your comfort zone/style is, know it and develop it, **make it your signature**. Be yourself, know your topic and present with YOUR style even though we need to adjust for specific audiences. Developing our style allows us to diversify and still be ourselves."

from

Ardith Beverage aaf AIFD PFCI CAFA BFA MNCF SDCF

"Remember to be who you are... be present, aware, creative, knowledgeable, and organized. Watch, listen and learn from everyone you know. Create your own "style." Continue evolving, practicing your diction, delivery, enunciation, rate of speech and inflection. Read books and articles, keep current with industry standards and terminology- above all, be real.

You have infinite possibilities and an infinite source of support from PFCI members. You are your best marketing tool, our industry's best marketing tool. It is a privilege and honor to welcome you into PFCI. Now go sell some flowers."

from

Wilton Hardy AIFD AAF PFCI 1994 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"I believe that once you connect, you have to keep the audience on the line. I often use an object or a bold statement to grab them and then go on with commentary, referring back to it often and then using it as a closing.

I think that the most important advice that I ever received was, from Frankie Shelton AAF AIFD PFCI. She said "It is better to be a first class you, rather than a second class someone else." We all have people we admire and would like to emulate, BUT you will never be them. Find your comfortable style, be excited about what you are talking about and give credit to those who have helped you. Just be YOU!"

from

Carmen M. Nelson AAF AIFD PFCI mmfd

"I would like to share some words of wisdom that a dear friend shared with me many years ago and they have served me well all these years.

When you walk out on that stage and you scan the audience remember one very important fact. Each and **every person in that audience wants you to be successful**, they do not want you to fail, they are all pulling for you. And most of all, if you make a mistake it's okay. It shows you are human!!

I remember one time I was speaking in front of my peers and my mind went blank, but instead of losing it, I just went with it and asked the person sitting the closest to me to help me out. He did and the words came back and all was great. Bonus - I instantly made a new friend!!"

from
Vince Butera AIFD PFCI

"As a professional floral communicator, strive to be the **best** you can be; constantly learn from others; stay ahead of the trends; be excited about what you do; and most importantly...be yourself!"

from

Ralph Null AIFD PFCI AAF 2001 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"It is a big responsibility when you have the opportunity to be a spokesperson for the floral industry. It is natural to be nervous and have a certain level of anxiety. I have found there are a few things that always seem to work for me in overcoming these obstacles to success.

- Talk about what you know, not about you.
- The audience is only one person and it is a collection of many 'ones.' Speak to them as
 one.
- Focus on someone in the audience that is responding, you can always tell by their expression – and it will help build their confidence.
- Keep eye contact throughout the entire audience so that all feel involved.
- Lower your own voice if the audience is noisy. Do not try to out scream them. Those listening are a much better source for asking for quiet than your scolding them from stage.
- Do not ruin an effective presentation by not knowing when to shut up and sit down."

from Lisa Weddel AIFD PFCI

"When addressing your audience, be one of them--not above them. Your audience will respond to someone who is talking with them and helping them be a better designer, florist, etc. When you go above their comfort level, you lose many as they just aren't feeling comfortable with the terms, level of expertise and ultimately, the whole program. **Be who you would want to listen to**--informative, fun, interactive and "one of the gang"-- just with a little more speaking experience!"

from

Mary Lee Evans aifd aaf pfCI

"Think about the impression you want to make before you dress to be on a stage. I try to keep up with the times so I don't appear dated. I check the colors that the color experts say will be good this year and buy accordingly. You never want to clash with the staging and arrangements – they are the stars of the event. You can also check with bridal consultants, they also use a lot of the preferred colors of the day.

Ladies, I know those earrings are your favorite accessories and they look great on you...but remember they clink and clang on the microphone! So does your favorite necklace. Always be aware of your jewelry. Less is more! Attire should not be a last minute thought!"

from

Richard L. Milteer AAF AIFD CFD PFCI TMF 2000 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"Your Most Valuable Tool as a speaker is... YOUR VOICE!

A professional communicator possesses many tools in their "kit" to aid in their presentation. The voice is the most important tool that for many is not fully developed. Studies show that we are five times as likely to be influenced by the vocal tone of a presenter rather than the actual words spoken. Consider the following:

- **Speak conversationally** as though you were easily talking with someone.
- Be aware of your voice how do you sound when you are speaking naturally loud, soft, slow, fast, mumbled words?
- Projection not just the degree of loudness but also the focus and the placement of your voice. Your goal is to reach those in the back of the room while maintaining the same level without shouting!
- **Expressiveness** is your personality and attitude you bring to the presentation. Exercise vocal variety giving some words more importance than others.

Finally, take care of your voice. Alcohol dries the vocal cords - don't drink or smoke. Rest your vocal chords when they tire. Avoid excessive clearing of your throat. Keep a glass of water handy during your presentation. Train your voice, take care of it and it will serve you well."

from

Joyce Mason-Monheim AIFD CFD PFCI AZMF

"A couple of discoveries I have made over the years is to speak often, as often as you can, to become comfortable and honestly... **BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!**

In order for your audience to take you seriously and believe in what you are saying is to first off believe in yourself. If you have the confidence in yourself and truly believe in your own message, that will come through as truly genuine and believable. Show your passion and the followers will come."

from

Michael Derouin AAF AIFD PFCI CAFA

"Preparation is key!"

"Know your topic well and be passionate about it - whatever it is! Understand who your audience is and what it important to them

- this makes you and your material relatable.

Greet them as you would greet your friends.

Be engaging - make eye contact and use emotion when speaking.

(Add humor if applicable.)

Observe your audience and watch their reactions, this will prompt you along appropriately. Above all, be yourself and give them the experience that only YOU can!"

from Kathy Petz AAF MCF PFCI

"All PFCI members live by the Boy Scout's Motto, '**Be Prepared**.' It's the one thing you can count on in a crazy show setting. Here's my list of things you should know –

- Know your sponsor and what they expect as a result of sponsoring you.
- Know your audience who they are and how varied their backgrounds and experience could be.
- Know the topic Be the best educated one in the room on the subject.
- Know the timing no one likes it when you go over the allotted time or end a
 presentation short.
- Know how to connect with the audience. Smile, make eye contact.
- Know how to follow-up with thank you's and notes.

Finally, know that **enthusiasm is contagious** – you've got to have it to inspire it. Welcome to PFCI!"

from Coby Neal AIFD PFCI

"Be polite to your audience, your vendors and your designers. When you show respect to others, the **respect automatically comes back**. Audience participation is always a sure way of a successful program. Always have a plan, but be prepared for the unexpected. It is usually the unexpected that adds humor and warmth to your presentation. The more you speak in front of people, the more confidence you will develop."

Welcome new inductees!

from Sharon McGukin AIFD AAF PFCI

"Occasionally during a demonstration, while a speaker is presenting products on stage, the audience will begin to talk among themselves. This can happen especially if products, such as bouquets, are being passed through the crowd.

To regain control of the presentation, leave the demo area, walk to the front of the stage, and stand quietly until you have recaptured the notice of a large percentage of the audience. Then begin speaking quietly so that they have to strain to hear you. The quiet audience members will effectively silence the noisy ones themselves so that they can continue to hear what you are saying. When you have regained control of the group begin speaking at a normal pitch and return to the demonstration."

from Tom Bowling AIFD PFCI

"After a brief introduction, my first goal is to endear myself to the audience and close the gap between "him and us". While there does need to remain a level of professionalism, I want the audience to view me as coming from the ranks of retail, so I try to share a funny story from my retail days.

From here, it is about disseminating information that is relative to designers, sales staff, and the transportation engineers. Touching on all aspects of the design reinforces the fact that everyone is important and no one gets left out."

from Mandy Majerik AIFD PFCI

"One of the most remarkable traits you can possess in the PFCI organization is being a wonderful **STORYTELLER**. From childhood, we are trained to pay attention and watch the animation of a wonderful storyteller. Whether it is ghost stories, history lessons or personal experiences, a story can make an amazing impact on an individual and be a memory they carry with them forever. **Go out and tell YOUR STORY** – it is what makes you memorable, unique and creates the connection we all want to achieve."

from Paul Miller AIFD PECI

"Be Yourself, Be Real!

Do not try to be someone else. Learn techniques from many speakers and take the best from them and make the techniques your own.

Know Your Audience

Know the background on the audience. Are they beginners, advanced, or a mixed audience? Tailor your presentation to them.

Keep on Topic

I like to have a planned topic and also have a **planned tangent** to go off on without the audience knowing it was planned. Really touching on something else that is related or added information so **they think they got more than what they were expecting**.

Always leave your audience wanting more!"

from Darla Pawlak AIFD PFCI

"My best personal advice comes from a real turning point for me. It was when I learned that it is not about ME, but about my AUDIENCE. That 'ah ha' moment now drives my presentations. When I go into an area, the first thing I now ask the people in charge is "Who is my audience and what do you think they need from me?" There is nothing more useless then being irrelevant.

It has taken me many years to overcome my shyness and lack of confidence, but the best advice I can give on that is to be prepared. Cort Schwanebeck once told me it takes 10 hours of studying information to give a 1 hour program. Knowledge gives you freedom, not only in what you say but also in what you do.

The best advice I've received was from my mentor Bobbi Ecker AIFD PFCI AAF. I was doing a program and was stressed from not getting the product I had requested. Bobbi said (as only she can)"Oh, honey, remember - it's NOT what you SHOW them, it's what you TELL them!"

from

Deborah deLaFlor AIFD PFCI AAF

"Find a friendly face in your audience and focus on them. You know, someone who nods their head in agreement or smiles at your first couple of statements. With luck you'll find someone like this on each side of the room so you can move around and talk with the entire audience.

Engage the audience in your conversations. Have them repeat something you really want them to remember and take from your presentation. Compliment them – tell them how great they are and how talented and creative they are! Talk with them not above them – and slow down your delivery to increase comprehension! (This is really hard for me... especially because I get so excited about our great industry!)

Above all, talk about what you know, so your presentation is more natural. The audience can tell a fake in an instant! "

PASSION + ENTHUSIASM = GREAT FUN FOR YOU & YOUR AUDIENCE!

from
Tina Stoecker AIFD PFCI

"Relax, take a deep breath, smile and be yourself. To qualm the jitters, outline material in a logical sequence - determine what you want to say in advance. This type of preparation will **organize your thoughts** and allow your natural cadence and personality to shine through the content.

Never try to memorize material...It will sound stale when delivered! Finally....NEVER EVER try to talk about something you know nothing about. To be a genuine speaker you have to admit you will NOT know everything about anything and accept the audience's level of intelligence without reacting in a superior manner."

From

Carol Caggiano AIFD PFCI AAF 2008 Tommy Bright Award Recipient

"Not only do audiences want to hear what you have to say but they want to know "you" as well. Who you are is as important as any message you are prepared to deliver. Your credibility is imbedded in who you are and how the audience gets to know you. The audience will love your personality, sincerity, humor, energy, knowledge and wisdom as long as it's pure "you". Each of us has their own style and that is what makes each presenter unique and loved by their audiences. Always be the best "you" possible."