

Top tips for classy communication

 By [Sarah Heuer](#)

14 Sep 2015

Learn from the likes of Churchill and Martin Luther King, and you'll soon be on your way to realising the dream...

In order to be convincing, you need to have substance. Once you have that substance, and it's grammatically correct, you need to make it look as impressive as you know it to be. So, how have the best communicators succeeded in inspiring and persuading their listeners and readers? Let's take a look at some of the techniques that have been the building blocks of effective and meaningful content since Aristotle decided to classify the basic elements of the art of rhetoric.

1. Know your audience. If you're speaking to older generations, don't bombard them with techno-babble. And if your target group is educated, don't over-simplify. No one likes to feel either overwhelmed or underestimated, and younger generations are especially sensitive to a tone or style that doesn't ring true. Repetition can be a good thing, but use it selectively. If you hit the nail on the head too many times, it will bend or even break.



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2. Be sincere and even personal. Speak in the first person. Tell the truth, don't try to manipulate them, and DO make it real and relevant. By allowing yourself to be a little vulnerable, you'll get others to trust you and open up to your message. Like lovely little flowers looking to the sun.

3. Rhetorical tricks. Just because you're telling the truth doesn't mean it has to be bland and boring. Use an anecdote,

allow assonance or alliteration... create suspense. Group things in three (see what I just did there?). Find your writing rhythm, and if you're really motivated, there are many sites where you can research more time-honoured, classic rhetorical devices. And they've been working for centuries.

4. Specify and corroborate. Never be vague, and never claim anything that you can't back up with solid evidence. Your audience is hopefully not stupid, so don't try to brainwash them with half-truths and ambiguities. This is especially important when you're targeting millennials (aged 19-34) as they are likely to catch you out. We live in the information age, after all, and ethics are more important than ever before.

5. Get feedback and be flexible. Find out if what you're doing is working. Ask, run a survey, speak to people who will give you an honest appraisal. And if you're not getting through, hit that drawing board hard, instead of going back and hitting those nails out of shape. Remember that if it didn't work the first time, quantity will not serve as a replacement for quality. Try reading some great content by famous writers and orators to get you in the right frame of mind.

You'll nail it soon enough!

ABOUT SARAH HEUER

Has been in the language and communication business for 15 years. She holds Cum Laude Honours degrees in English Literature and Publishing. She has lectured Journalism, taught English, and written and edited in a variety of sectors, including law, the culinary world, secondary and tertiary education, psychology, the arts, finance and economics, and marketing. In her spare time, she toys with the idea of writing a best-seller. She is currently head editor and copywriter at inSite Innovative Education Solutions.

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