

Clear Communication Company

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Communication Quips & Quotes

Enthusiasm and Credibility

“Show more enthusiasm!” is one of my favorite pieces of advice to speakers. “I’m afraid I’ll hurt my credibility.” is often their reply. I have seen speakers whose enthusiasm is overpowering to the extent that we do not find them credible. On the other side I have seen speakers who are perfect models of credibility with every “t” crossed and every “i” dotted. They can put an audience to sleep! I recommend a middle ground. Here are my answers to some of the questions I get.

Is credibility essential?

Absolutely! We are going through troubled times in matters of corporate leadership and executive responsibility. Now more than ever we are seeking credibility and integrity. Whatever information you have, learn everything you can about it. When you present that information, be clear and to the point. Tell the truth; follow up; and keep your promises.

Should I be enthusiastic? -

Also absolutely! When transactions take place - products, services, plans, ideas - we “buy” from each other based in large measure on the

emotional connection of the other party. If you are enthusiastic about what you have, you encourage me to want some. You cannot sell something if you are indifferent about it.

Should I make a choice between the two?

Absolutely not! This is not an either/or; it’s a both/and. Credibility is your foundation - without it - your building crumbles! Do not “dumb down” or dilute your content. Now add enthusiasm. Don’t just tell the customer how your product is constructed but what it can do for them. Don’t just tell us what you know; tell how you feel about what you know AND how it’s going to make us feel! Enthusiasm is the fleshing out of your credibility. The best communicators start with credible information and then add bells and whistles. When your bells and whistles connect with your information...you are communicating!

Do Some People have More enthusiasm than others?

The answer is probably. All personalities are different. Some people are more outgoing. Some people are more low-key. The good news is that people judge us based on how we use our enthusiasm - not how we compare to others. (A six cylinder car can run on five, but it runs far better on six!) Your challenge is give us just as

much enthusiasm as your personality allows but never less! Use all of your cylinders. That’s why I keep saying, “Show more enthusiasm,” because the problem is not too much enthusiasm, but too little!

C. Mike Jousan

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