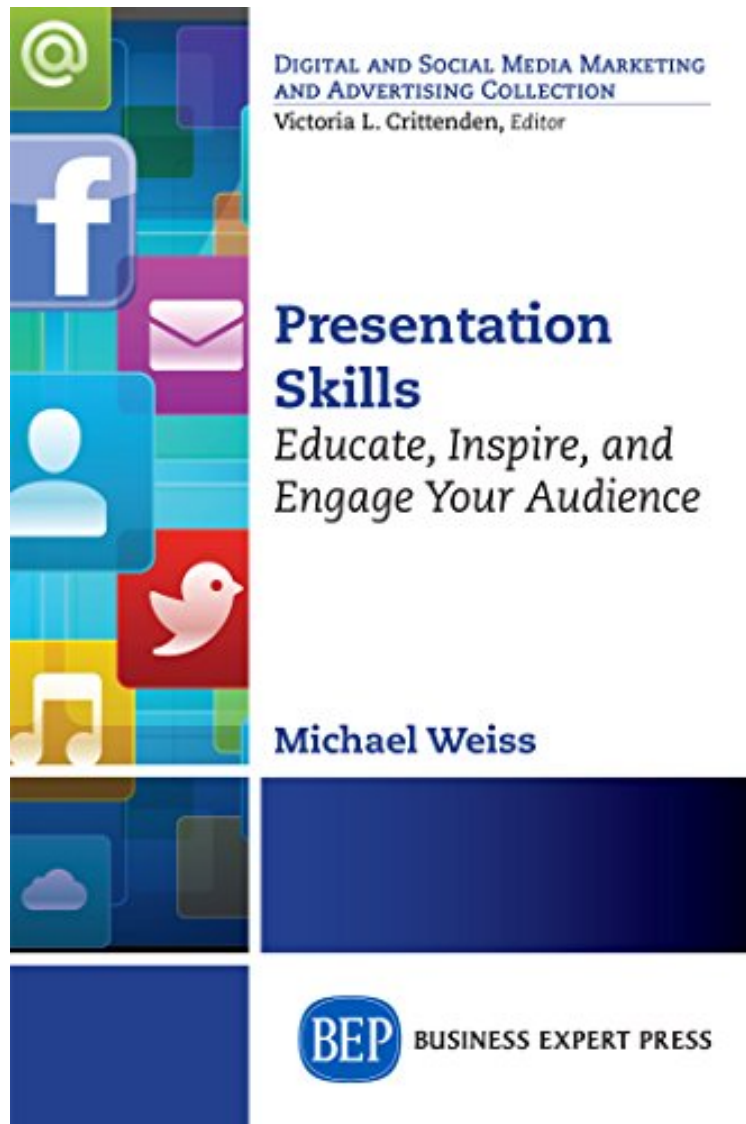


Presentation Skills: Educate, Inspire and Engage Your Audience

Michael Weiss

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Michael Weiss : Presentation Skills: Educate, Inspire and Engage Your Audience before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Presentation Skills: Educate, Inspire and Engage Your Audience:

The popularity of the TED talk has raised the bar for public speaking and presentations. Audiences expect to be educated, inspired and engaged whether they are sitting in a conference room or an auditorium. Yet too often presenters lack the skills to take command and deliver persuasive and entertaining pitches and presentations. The

audience is the hero of the story and the presenter is their guide to take them on a journey. Like a one act play, a presentation is not a meeting, it's a performance. And it is the job of the presenter to respect the audience's wishes, wants and needs. With the advent of smartphone, the job of the presenter to keep the audience's attention on them rather than on the tiny device in their hand has become increasingly more difficult. The purpose of this book is to inspire you to take the next step in your presentation skills and practice.

From the Author I love to perform. Whether it is presenting at a TEDx event, an industry conference, a pitch meeting, or a corporate event, I simply adore being on stage. It comes natural to me, and I have been performing since I was in the crib. I started playing in rock bands when I was 11 years old. By the time I was 14, I was playing all over Boston on the college circuit to crowds as large as 2,000 people. I am very comfortable on stage, and I truly believe that in every performing situation it is my responsibility to engage and entertain the audience. It is as simple as that. For many people it is not so simple. They are not comfortable on stage or in front of an audience. In fact, some people are downright frightened to speak in front of people. And it is becoming harder every day, mainly because of two things: The TED talk and the smartphone. TED talks have set a bar that most people will never reach, yet audiences come to expect presentations to be TED worthy, even if the situation does not call for it. While there are thousands of TED talks that never make it to the TED website, the fact is that the TED talks we do see are the cream of the crop; these are talks given by some of the best presenters in the world. The smartphone is a totally different story. The smartphones that people hold in their hands have become the presenter's biggest obstacle because these can distract even the most engaged audience member. Whether they are checking e-mail, texting, or playing Candy Crush, every audience member is only a nanosecond away from losing interest in what you are saying. It is a huge task to try to bring them back once you have lost them to a text from their mother or their move on Scrabble. Your first goal as a presenter is to be so engaging that you let the audience keep the smartphones where they belong--in pockets and purses. Frankly, I think too many presenters are failing at doing just that. They do not take the time to create a presentation that goes beyond just sharing data and information. Their presentations are flat, boring, and lack any kind of inspiration or call to action. Many of them are simply reporting and news casting, rather than taking a chance or quite simply--telling a story. Time and time again in this book, you will hear me saying that a presentation is not a meeting; it is a performance. Your job as a presenter is not to lecture; it is your job to engage and inspire. I want your audiences to leave the room educated and ready to take action.