

What presenters do that turns you off...

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– [Ron Katz](#)

Speakers who advertise how great their services are from the stage and call on plants in the audience to validate them. Also, spouting your political beliefs from the platform. Recently saw a speaker who used his last five minutes to rail about health care reform! Keep those thoughts to yourself when onstage!

– [Maggie Chicoine](#)

- Name dropping
- Name dropping AND quoting text (as if the celebrity had personally given the speaker permission to use the quote).
- Not adhering to time limitations. Finish 3 minutes before, not 15 minutes after. Timing, timing, timing!

– [Kenny Zail](#)

Don't ask a question to the audience unless the answer is very obvious. People don't want to be told they're wrong in front of their peers.

– [Lynne Waymon](#)

Speakers who yell, "Hello" and want the audience to respond and then say, "I can't hear you" and want another audience response. Makes me feel used and manipulated and is a huge waste of time for everyone.

– [Shirley Frazier](#)

Copying someone else's Internet-posted slide to your PowerPoint presentation and then not being able to answer questions about it when attendees ask for clarification. It makes no sense if you cannot explain what's shown, so please, don't add it.

– [Patrick Lee](#)

Making a presentation, no matter how good, to my group that could also be given, almost word-for-word, story-for-story, to the insurance association, the amalgamated widget manufacturers association, all civic organizations and most corporate groups. Instead of regarding both speech and audience as unique, both are treated as commodities.

– [Vickie Sullivan](#)

I can't stand emotional manipulation some speakers do just to get sales. Great example: insinuating that "you are a loser if you don't buy my stuff." If our products are really all that and a bag of chips, then we don't need to manipulate people to get sales. One word: karma.

– [Sandra Shelton](#)

- Citing facts as truths but with no resource. Quoting is great if you tell us from whence the quote came or lead us to more information about the content with a link or some other tie-back.
- Misusing the Mehrabian statistics: 7% Verbal 38% non-verbal 55% body language. Read *Silent Messages* by Albert Mehrabian and discover those stats are only for one type of communication, not ALL communication.
- Walking the room and forcing participants to squirm to keep eyes on you and call it "interaction." We are supposed to communicate effectively. not simply put our body in gyrations for the participants to follow and get lost in discomfort rather than hearing a message. Or maybe that is the reason for the revolving speaker, that is, content is weak and the fluff is needed to fill the time and "tantalize" the audience.
- Putting the audience into your time constraints as if it is their fault. Leave it to the amateurs to do that.
- Making excuses about why you cannot tell them the whole story or give them the research right now. Professional speakers should be able to fill whatever time given and have people walk away with something that adds value. If participants want to go further, they will find a way. But, to continually say things like, "If I had more time I would tell you ..." or "I was late starting because of the last session so let's cut out" Each presentation is a whole unto itself and needs to stand for something. If you've done a good job, they will ask you back for more or ask questions after the session.
- Doing therapy from the platform. Don't use a personal illustration that is still "raw" to you or unresolved, one that still angers you or drives you to negative criticism. Had a 63-year-old speak for a meeting supposedly about how to get tough in this economy. What he talked about was his tough upbringing and how his father beat him. He relived it as he "bravely" told us his story of abuse. Unacceptable content except for a counselor's couch.

– [Michelle Cubas](#)

- Asking questions speaker already knows the answer to, e.g., "How many have ever heard"
- Not allowing time to process after asking a question. It's as if the speaker doesn't care.

– [Rita Risser](#)

- Fill in the blank workbooks. What is the ____ that goes here? Demeaning.
- PowerPoints with useless animations. Wastes my time. I wonder why the speaker wasted their time doing it.
- PowerPoints with too many words, font too small, etc. Get PowerPoint for Dummies, dummy. Even better, read *Zen Presentations*.
- Old jokes. Not funny.
- New jokes unrelated to content. Wastes my time.
- Over-enthusiastic. No one is that enthusiastic. I assume it's a big front and in fact you suffer from depression.
- Insulting people when they leave the room. Yes, we are leaving because we can't stand your presentation.
- Giving a canned speech. Not even acknowledging, much less integrating, what has gone on before.
- Selling from the platform.

- Long personal stories that have nothing to do with content.
- “I don’t know about you....” Why not? Do a survey.
- Asking for a show of hands to a stupid question such as, “How many of you would like to make more money?”
- Asking for a show of hands to a good question and then doing nothing to integrate that information into the presentation.
- Not engaging audience by asking them to think or do. Talking at them.

– [Ron Rosenberg](#)

Here’s my “off-putting” technique: “If you can hear me, clap once; if you can hear me, clap twice; if you can hear me, clap three times...” I used to use different versions of this myself until I sat in the audience as this was done from the stage and realized how poorly it was received despite “appearing” to be effective.

– [Ken Braly](#)

As with all of these, I recognize that some other speakers do these all the time, successfully. That they turn me off is probably my hang-up.

- Having fill-in-the-blank handouts. These seem like elementary school lessons, not adult learning.
- Asking me to stand up/introduce myself to others/or take some other significant action at the beginning of a presentation. To me, a speaker must earn the right to ask me, as an audience member, to do something. That can sometimes happen quickly, but it often takes some time.

– [Jolene Brown](#)

What irritates me is when a preceding speaker refers to my upcoming segment, telling the audience, “During Jolene’s presentation, she’ll cover _____.” Or, “This afternoon, Jolene will show you how to _____.”

Yes, I’ve worked with this speaker a number of times, and yes he has an idea of what I will cover, but now I get to deal with the audience’s expectation of specific content. Perhaps with my revisions and updating, I wasn’t even going to “go there.” This is where I find that flexibility, depth of content and a good sense of humor come in handy.

– [Rebecca Morgan](#)

- The speaker instructs, “Turn to a stranger and tell them [something inauthentic, as you’ve never spoken to them before, e.g., ‘You’re fantastic.’ ‘I’m glad you’re here.’ ‘You’re full of great ideas.’]”
- Making the audience do your work: “One representative from each table needs to come get the handouts.” Why can’t you put them out in advance?
- Creating scarcity to produce a feeding frenzy: “I only have a few of these articles here, so come to the front and get one if you want one.”
- Going overtime, which then throws off the whole meeting. No matter how much your ego thinks they are loving it and they want you to continue, stop when you are supposed to stop.