

Interaction Insights

A compendium of ideas to
engage your audiences (large and small)
in your keynote speech

*What I hear I forget
What I see I remember
What I do I understand.*

Confucius 421 BC



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About Kristin Arnold

president QPC Inc.

Kristin J. Arnold, CMC, CPF, CSP helps corporations, government and non-profit organizations achieve extraordinary results. With years of team-building and facilitation experience, Kristin specializes in coaching executives and their leadership, management and employee teams, particularly in the areas of strategic, business and project planning, process improvement, decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving.

In addition to facilitation services, QPC Inc. offers diversified programs around the team concept to meet the needs of CEOs, COOs, executives, managers and team members. Her highly customized speeches and seminars have become instrumental in achieving higher performance and results within the workplace.

As a master facilitator, Kristin also trains other facilitators. *“I train your people to do what I do—facilitate teams to higher levels of performance.”*

author & columnist

An accomplished author and editor of several professional articles and books, as well as a featured columnist in *The Daily Press*, a Tribune Publishing newspaper, Kristin is regarded as an expert in team development and process improvement techniques. Her experience and renowned passion for extraordinary teams have enabled her to build a solid clientele, primarily through referrals, that extends throughout North America and Europe.

education

Kristin graduated with high honors from the United States Coast Guard Academy. She also earned a Master of Business Administration degree, with an emphasis on Marketing Strategy, from St. Mary's College in California, again graduating with high honors.



credentials

Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) from the National Speakers Association (2002)
Certified Professional Facilitator (CPF) from the International Association of Facilitators (2002)
Certified Management Consultant (CMC) from the Institute of Management Consultants (2002)
Qualified to administer the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (1999)
Certified Kolbe Consultant (2004)

NSA

Kristin served as President of NSA-Virginia in 2000-2001; Lab Faculty for the Facilitation Skills Lab in 2000; Founding member and Chair of the Facilitators Professional Experts Group (PEG); Lab Chair for the Interaction Skills Lab. She currently serves on the NSA Professional Development Council as the Lab Director for all Labs in 2003-2005.

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Our Starting Assumptions

You are in the “B” Business a la **Scott Halford**

- ◆ Be more creative.
- ◆ Be more interactive.
- ◆ Be confident in your expertise and skills.
- ◆ Be _____.

You have complete and utter confidence in your topic.

- ◆ You must have depth of material.
- ◆ You must know where you are going...where you are going to take them...and what you are going to do with them...in order to inspire them to follow you.
- ◆ If you make a mistake (and you will), make sure the audience understands it is a mistake of the head and not the heart...that there was no malicious intent.

It’s all about them, not you.

Bob Pike says, “There is a balance, as to all things in life. Generating maximum involvement is a participant-centered approach where your primary purpose is to assist the participants in gaining insight into how they learn, solve problems, developing their own answers, apply tools and techniques and tapping their own resources and those of their colleagues to reach solutions that work. We limit lecture and maximize discovery and participation. You’re a facilitator of insight, change and growth who teaches that answers come from within.”

Suit your style.

In order for you to be able to “pull off” interaction, you must feel comfortable with the technique or activity. It might not feel that natural at first, but with a little practice, it just may grow on you! However, if you still don’t feel comfortable with it after three attempts, try something else. There are plenty of options.

Set the Tone for Interaction Before You Even Show Up!

Research	Ask your client for their annual report, newsletters and other pertinent information. Go to their website. Do a web search for current events and other tidbits you can weave into your speech.
Teaser	Send a postcard, flyer or something unusual that provokes interest/sets the tone for interaction.
Interviews	Interview three of the “heavy hitters” within the group (who will also most likely be in a position to hire you!).
Survey	Letter with self-addressed postcard or Web-based questionnaire.
ID Participants	Work with the client to identify “participants” for a signature interaction.
Room Logistics	Plan on how you will make the room look and feel different.
Theme It!	Create a theme and extend it throughout your presentation.

Set the Tone for Interaction Right Before You Start

Observe	Observe the group’s dynamics and events/speakers that precede you. You may need to realign expectations, so setting the tone is even more important!
Mingle	Mix with the participants and get to know names. Ask if they have ever attended anything like this before. What they liked/disliked. What their expectations are.
Music	Have upbeat, appropriate music playing (don’t forget to license your use of that piece of music!).
Video	Have an appropriate video running (like today!).
Slide Show	Create a “looping” PowerPoint file.
Handouts	Place the handouts on the chair or hand out as the participants enter.
Interact	Do something interactive <i>immediately</i> . At the onset, make it clear that you are there to interact versus espouse your wisdom.

Use Inclusive Language

Audience-centered speakers use inclusive language that draws in the participants.

We, Us, Our	Collective words that include everyone in the room.
You, Yours	Words directed at the audience.
I, Me, My	Words used by the speaker, usually in telling a story about themselves.
Personalize	Use people's names.
Call Back	Referring to another statement that was made or event that happened earlier in the program.
More We than Me	Have a 4:1 ratio of inclusive words vs. speaker-centered words.

Use Inviting Gestures and Movement

Gestures and movements indicate receptivity toward interaction.

Eye Contact	Be sure to look at all your participants.
Facial	Smile, Nod, Raise eyebrows, Open eyes wide etc.
Gestures	Open arms wide enough to embrace the audience.
Pause	Let them think and catch up with you!
Share a Secret	Speak directly to one audience member. "Sharon, this is just between you and me."
Sidebar	Step to the side and clue the audience in on something you just did.
Walk About	Get out from behind the lectern, off the podium and walk into the audience.

Use Props

Props are visual mnemonic reminders of the points we make or the story we tell. They strengthen an audience's ability to visualize, accept, and understand an idea, concept or theme during your program.

Enhancers	Used as metaphors to make/reinforce your point.
Theatrical	Assists them to realize the image.
Prizes	Reward audience responses with a freebie (that promotes you and a message from your program).
Signature	Uniquely created props that reinforce your message (and don't you even think of replicating/plagiarizing or stealing them!).
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Agree on something in their mind...◆ Get them to nod...◆ Show it. Rather than talking about a magazine article, show the article. Solving a problem is like solving a rubic's cube (hold the cube up).◆ Introduce the prop.◆ Start small and build.

Give Prizes/Rewards

Recognize good behavior with a compliment or positive reinforcement.

- ◆ Make your comments sincere.
- ◆ Tie your prizes into your topic or comments.
- ◆ They must do *something* to get the prize.

Reward Early	Give a prize to the first person who offers an answer or comment.
Treasure Hunt	Tape your business card underneath several randomly selected seats.
Reward Risk	Reward people for smart risk-taking – asking a question, volunteering or offering a differing opinion.

Refer to Visuals

Use visuals (overhead transparencies/slides, PowerPoint or multimedia) to stimulate thinking and encourage audience discussion.

- Be Abstract** **Thiagi** projects a Salvador-Dali-like piece of art, asking the audience to explore what they see in the picture.
- Use Cartoons** Use a cartoon every once in a while (make sure you have permission!).
- Have Surprises** Project zany, funny, animated slides that your audience *does not expect...*
- Pictures** Use pictures to emphasize a point. Take pictures of the participants.
- Visualization** Ask the audience to picture a specific situation...to picture in their minds' eye. "Picture this..." or "Remember when..."

Autoresponders

Autoresponses inspire the audience to respond with a specific answer.

- Cheer&Clap** **Bill Cordes** has a "signature" clap: Clap, clap ugh. Giddy up. Raise your right hand. Click your fingers.
- Sing-a-longs** Have the audience follow/sing along with you.
- Repeat After Me** "I do solemnly swear..."
- Expressions** Create a specific "tag" such as an expression or physical movement.
- Headlines** Reduce the major points to "headlines" that the audience can recall or revisit.
- Fill In The Blank** Let the audience finish your sentence with a well-known phrase or answer.

Tell Stories that Involve the Audience

Their Story	Based on your prework interviews and/or Internet research, weave their story and name into one of your stories (get their permission first!).
Observation	Based on your observations of the group, tell a story that you personally witnessed.
Chunk It Up	Bob Pike tells his story in chunks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Imagine this...tell chunk of the story at a time...step by step...with <i>them</i> in the story◆ Ask them to discuss how they would feel about the situation in small group.
Fill In Blanks	Tell the story asking the participants to “fill in the blank” with common, well known term(s).
Walk About	Walk into your audience while telling your story....
Cliffhanger	Paul Harvey tells part of the story at the onset and returns to the story later on.
Signature Stories	Evolve from years of telling personal stories. It is a piece of material that a speaker is well known for. Do not ever, <i>ever</i> copy another speaker’s signature story or interaction.

Skits, Role Plays and Demonstrations

Skits/Role Plays	Make up a story and give the audience members easy, but fun/funny parts to play.
Demonstration	A skillful performance of a task or technique showing precisely how it could be done involving one or a small set of volunteers from the audience.
Give a Task	As part of the demonstration, invite a participant to do a specific task.
Coaching	Ask for a volunteer to be coached through a specific task.
Magic	Use magic to demonstrate a specific point.

Take a Poll

Take a poll or informal survey on the spot/Quick Quiz.

- Be Meaningful** Speakers tend to overuse the informal poll as a rhetorical question. Take a poll if you really want to know the information.
- Show Hands** “Who here...” “How many...” Ask for a show of hands AND demonstrate what you want to see happen (e.g. raise your hand).
- Stand/Sit** Ask participants to stand up or sit down if they agree/disagree with a statement or find a statement to be true/false.
- Index Cards** Ask participants to hold up cards with an “A” for agree and “D” for disagree.
- Solicit Opinions** Choose four or five questions or statements designed to get participants to express their opinions about a certain topic.
- Report #s** Respond with the “results” as a statistic: “That looks like thirty folks, so that’s 10% of the entire group.” (Get help if you can’t count quickly!).

Audience Response Systems

An audience response system allows presenters to solicit instant, specific feedback.

Each audience member receives a keypad with numbers or a dial on it. The keypad is connected, either wired or wirelessly, to a computer outfitted with software that automatically tabulates the results. The data is then placed into a chart, table or other format for both the presenter and/or audience to view.

Take Questions from the Audience

Q&A is an opportunity to engage the audience one-on-one with the presenter.

Approach	Determine your approach and then stick to it! <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Hold questions until the end – OR –◆ Take questions as you go, but then expect to be interrupted! – OR –◆ Stop periodically and ask for questions.
Be Prepared	Anticipate their questions and develop your response.
Ask for ?s	Ask, “What questions do you have?” rather than, “Are there any questions?”
Be Interested	C. Leslie Charles says, “When a person asks a question or makes a comment, look alert and interested. Pay attention to your facial expression and body language. If someone asks a difficult or naïve question, keep your facial expression neutral. Face the person squarely.”
Index Cards	Use index cards to solicit questions, issues or concerns.
Repeat It	Repeat (and paraphrase) the question so all can hear it!
Boomerang	Rather than repeating the question, restate as an issue to the entire group.
Pause	Allow “soak” time before you rush to answer your question.
Ask the Expert	When appropriate, call on acknowledged experts in the audience to answer the question.
Park It	Use a “Parking Lot” concept.
Email Me	Offer to answer any questions the participants will email to you.

Ask Individuals within the Group to do a Specific Activity

Park It	Invite participants to “Park” it – write your question, idea, “magic phrase” on a stickie note and post it on a posted flipchart.
Take Notes	“Write this down.” Encourage taking notes since it helps with learning/retention.
Give a Job	Task individuals to do a specific task (prior to or during the presentation).
Fishbowl	“Fishbowl” when the group is too large to do the activity together, select some “volunteers” to do the activity while the others observe.

Interview an Audience Member

Have a conversation between the speaker and a participant.

Volunteers	Work with a person who is excited to talk with you and isn’t “prepped” ahead of time. You’ll get the most spontaneous of interactions – and they won’t be worried throughout the day!
Reassure	Tell them it’s going to be okay. That you’re not going to make them look silly or do something stupid.
Connection	Create a connection or rapport with the person.
Ask Good ?s	Ask the “odd” open-ended question: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Do you have any secret passions?◆ What’s so great about working with this group/organization?◆ If you weren’t here today, what would you be doing?◆ What do you do?
Headlines	Paraphrase participant responses, especially with large groups (and don’t forget to warn the sound guy!).
Thank ‘Em	For participating!
Be in the Moment	You can’t fake making a connection with an audience member. You must be completely, totally with and for that other person.

Ask Questions of the Audience

Ask a question to the large group vs. one participant.

Rhetorical	You do not expect a direct response from the audience, but you do expect them to answer it in their heads.
Situational	Asks participants about their own experiences that are directly related to the content. Helps participants recall or envision times when they have been in similar situations.
Suffer Silence	Let the audience fill the space – patiently and calmly give the audience time to collect their thoughts and get the courage to raise their hands.
Acknowledge	Acknowledge the response.
Wrong Answer?	Be able to deal with “wrong” answers. Acknowledge incorrect answers with a positive response such as “That’s interesting,” “Let’s come back to that in a minute,” or “Thanks, Kristin.” You can also say, “That’s a great answer – but is wrong.”

Ask Provocative Questions

Ask the audience a strategic or provocative question that challenges them to think.

- ◆ Ask for real or hypothetical examples of your concepts.
- ◆ Ask for real stories that demonstrate your concepts.
- ◆ Pose an ethical dilemma and ask for their position.
- ◆ Present a case study and ask how they would respond.
- ◆ Ask great, powerful questions.

Shout it Out	Solicit their ideas.
Write It Down	Ask for them to write down their answers on the handout, a stickie note or (pre-printed) index card.
Dyads	Move into small groups (dyads then quads).
Debrief	See page 18.
Create Value	Create value with the results (information you gleaned).

Task the Entire Group to Do a Specific Activity

An activity done by the entire room to illuminate a point.

Before tasking the entire room to do a specific activity, think it through carefully!

- ◆ Do a “dry run” all the way through before you do it with a live audience.
- ◆ Write the instructions down.
- ◆ Consider “multi-tasking” to make sure there is no “downtime.”

Hands On Have them do stuff.

Follow Along Have them follow your lead, typically a tactile activity.

Play! **Matt Weinstein** is a master of playful activities.

Games/puzzles **Ed Scannell** has bazillion ideas in his Games Trainers Play series.

Appreciation Ask participants to put a sticker on someone’s nametag when they do/say something of value. They must explain why the dot was given.

Compete

Debate an issue

Quizzes

NOTE: if you are using an activity taken from another source, get permission/acknowledge that source. There is such a thing as a signature activity! See sources at the back of this handout.

Set Up Small Group Discussions

Set up	The larger the overall group: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The clearer your instructions must be.◆ The simpler/easier the logistics must be.◆ Consider having the instructions written out.◆ Consider having “facilitators” to assist.
Separate	Pairs (Dyads) or Trios (Triads). Quads – merge two dyads into a quad. More than four. Divide the room in half/sections.
Move!	Move to specific areas in the room and THEN give the instructions.
Directions	You can give directions verbally, or you may have them printed and handed out.
Assign Roles	If you will need a “leader” or “spokesperson,” help them to select one.
Questions?	Confirm understanding. Ask if there are any questions and invite them to play!

Facilitate the Small Group Activity

Roam	Roam around and listen to people during small group activities.
Be Accessible	Be available in case someone has a question.
Eavesdrop	Use information you overhear during the debrief. If you happen to hear a good comment or question, let the person know you would like everyone to hear what was said when you reconvene the whole group.
Warn ‘Em!	Give them a one or two minute (or 30 second) warning so they can finish their conversations (depending on audience size).
Bring ‘Em Back	Quickly refocus the smaller groups back to the larger group discussion.

Debrief the Activity

The debrief is a discussion to tie an activity to the key workshop objectives and to provide closure activities.

Thank ‘Em	Thank them for participating.
Prepare ?s	Debrief an activity with key questions <i>you prepared</i> .
Big Picture 1st	Go from general to specific – What Happened? So What? Now What?
Anchor Ideas	Capture key comments on a visual for all to see.
Report Out	Ask the group leader to succinctly summarize (in less than one minute) the conclusions or discussion of the group. (Ask them to stand).
Emphasize	If you heard a great idea from a small group, you may want to ask the audience to “hang on to your ideas...as I was wondering around, I heard xyz and I want to share with you...”.
Application	Query application of concept/idea to their own business.
Reinforce	Reinforce key learning points. Have 6-7 stories in your pocket that you can go to after you have “debriefed” the audience.
Summarize	Let the audience summarize instead of you.
PDQ+R	Bill Cordes uses this process: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Make a Personal list – write three things.◆ Ask Dyads to combine and create (combine list with one another and add any additional items).◆ Move to Quads.◆ Reinforce key learning points.

Revisit (vs. Review)

Review is when the speaker reviews the main points. Revisit is when the audience does it. Periodically, revisit your program content.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Shout Out | Periodically ask your participants to shout out what they consider to be the most important point(s) made so far and how they can personally apply the information. |
| Partner Up | Ask your participants to talk with a partner or in a small group (three or four) about the most important point(s) made so far and how they can personally apply the information. |
| Challenge | Interrupt your presentation periodically and challenge participants to give examples of the concepts presented thus far. |
| Think Back | Encourage your participants to think about the new information and how it fits with what they already know. |

Closing Activities

Closing activities allow for celebration and action planning.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Reflections | Allow the opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning. |
| Action Plan | Create meaningful next steps as a result of the program and key learnings. |
| Share Actions | Ask for someone to share. |
| Accountability | Create a structure for participants to follow up on their actions. |
| Support 'Em! | Set up support tools/resources. |

All speech is vain and empty unless it be accompanied by action.

Demosthenes

Making Your Keynote Engaging AND Interactive

Inspiration

Where to get ideas to create interactive moments? Watch the world around you. Always be on the hunt. You'll find ideas where you least expect it; however, you must pay attention!

- ❑ Watch Bravo Channel's *Inside the Actors Studio*, *Who's Line Is It Anyway?* and other TV improv shows
- ❑ Activity books
- ❑ Be a voracious reader
- ❑ Observe other speakers for inspiration. But DON'T copy. Take the idea and make it your own!

Identify your objectives

- ❑ Set the tone for interaction?
- ❑ Open the program?
- ❑ Collect information about the audience and their knowledge level?
- ❑ Introduce a concept?
- ❑ Understand or demonstrate a skill?
- ❑ Reinforce content?
- ❑ Energize the crowd (esp. between 1-3pm)?
- ❑ Create an action plan – inspire application?
- ❑ Close the program?
- ❑ Other?

Do your homework

- ◆ Get to know your group!
 - Tolerance for interaction
 - Context/time of day
 - Audience expectations (historical and buzz about the program)
 - Occupations/education
 - Cultural/international flavor
 - Disabilities you need to be aware of?
 - Dos and Don'ts from the client/host perspective
 - Vocabulary
 - Pre-program questionnaire
- ◆ Alignment with the client/meeting planner
 - Expectations/desired results/tone
 - Room logistics
 - Seating
 - Lighting
 - Level of intimacy

Identify appropriate technique to reinforce the objective

- ◆ Think 1-2-3 minutes vs. 45 minute activities
- ◆ Appropriate to the size of the audience and your topic
- ◆ Move from low risk to higher risk interactions
- ◆ Change the pace/do something different every 8 minutes
- ◆ Keep it simple (KISS)
- ◆ Have a “back up plan B”

Do a dry run

- ◆ Family, friends, staff are great to start – it ALWAYS works better the second and third time you do it!
- ◆ Increases your confidence and ability to adapt
- ◆ Always have plan B in your pocket

Set up for success

- ◆ Handouts (fill in the blank!)
- ◆ Seating – especially if you will be using small group activities
- ◆ Lights
- ◆ Materials /Props/ Prizes
- ◆ Instructions – write them out

Go interact and have fun!

Reflections

The most important thing I learned this session...

What I liked BEST about this session....

I still have a question to ask...

Memorable Quote

Action Plan

Name two things you are going to do to make your presentations more interactive

- 1.
- 2.