

**Managing the Audience**

**What If?**

**What if . . .**

**Someone walks out?**

Acknowledge with a smile, continue to speak to the group.

**Someone starts dominating?**

Acknowledge the person, address them briefly, move on. If it is something that will require a lengthy explanation, address it briefly then ask if you can talk afterwards and get additional information.

**Someone continues to interrupt?**

Indicate the need to complete the presentation for the benefit of the group as a whole. Ask politely if you can get together with them after the meeting to answer their questions.

**Someone refutes the accuracy or validity of your information or asks an inappropriate question?**

Don’t engage in debate – it is not about being right or wrong, but providing resources to give information.

Avoid showing you feel the question is inappropriate, stupid or poorly timed.

Answer the question if possible – do not divert.

Stay on topic – do not go off on a tangent.

**Someone makes a critical comment about you as a presenter or talks over you?**

Acknowledge the person and ask for their cooperation so you can do the presentation.

Make the individual’s problem the group problem by saying, “That’s an interesting question. Do you mind if I ask the other people here for their impressions?”

**Overall:**

Use a casual style avoiding a commanding, patronizing or condescending tone of voice. Don’t take it personally! Look for the opportunity. Be the role model for the type of behavior you desire.

**Answering Questions with Tact and Skill**

The Rs of Questions

 • Repeat it (you).

 • Reflect – hmmm – how does this relate to the theme and core messages?

 • Respond (It's okay to say "I don't know”).

**Answering questions using elements of persuasion**

 • Address the emotional and intellectual – people need to hear both

 • Give examples they can relate to – your story

 • Provide social proof – testimonials

 • Speak to their pain to create empathy

 • Use data that backs you up, you become the expert, have authority

 • Tell a story -- lies at the heart of what persuasion really is. Stories allow people to persuade themselves.