



SpeakingUp® Takes the Mystery Out of Presenting to Executives

There's a great scene in the 1997 movie *Contact*, in which SETI researcher Dr. Ellie Arroway (played by Jodie Foster) makes a final, desperate pitch for continued funds to a skeptical panel of corporate lackeys. After her impassioned speech, one of the panel member's cell phone rings. He listens, says "Yes, sir, yes sir," hangs up, then reluctantly says to Dr. Arroway, "You've got your money." Dr. Arroway looks up at the strategically placed overhead cameras in the room and immediately realizes that the mysterious person with the purse strings had been watching and listening all along. She doesn't care. She got her money.

While your next "big ask" for support from senior executives probably won't be as radical as funding the search for extraterrestrial life, the process is still daunting. The truth is, C-level executives demand a wholly different approach from presenters than does a general business audience. "You have to literally throw out everything you learned from traditional presentation training," advises Workato VP Markus Zirn. "It's not about making a speech that educates, persuades, inspires or leads. It's about raw decision making."

Technical professionals and even mid-level managers often do not have a clue how to successfully pitch their case to the CEO—or for that matter, to a roomful of C-level executives. And that alone can cost a company A LOT of money.

Question: What costs \$30,000 an hour and has a 67% failure rate?

Answer: If we consider the top five leaders of a mid-sized company (CEO, CFO, COO, CTO, CMO), with let's say, \$4 billion in revenue, and calculate what it costs to put them into an hour-long meeting, the numbers are shocking. Our calculations (based on SEC records) indicate that having those five people in a decision meeting costs the shareholders around \$30,000 per hour. To make matters worse, CEOs we've interviewed report that more than 60% of the presentations they sit through are total failures.

Data and insights from dozens of interviews with CEOs who know what it takes to succeed in executive presentations are at the core of **SpeakingUp®**. For example, there's the "First line, bottom line" rule, which says, don't build your case slowly, and don't clobber them with a 20-slide PowerPoint deck. If there's

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one thing C-level executives have told us again and again, it's that they want presenters to start with their bottom line, but be prepared with supporting data and answers to questions if they ask.

SpeakingUp® participants learn the ropes through watching video interviews with C-level executives and from actual boardroom presentations, as well as rigorous practice of skills by participating in two coaching sessions and two videotaping sessions with master trainers. They'll learn how to deal with intense discussions, flagrant politics, their time getting cut, topic changes, and the inevitable distractions in this high-stakes environment.

And here's the exciting news: **SpeakingUp®** is now available in **PowerSpeaking's Plus-Microlearning Videos** library. With a special digital key code, past and current participants in a **SpeakingUp®** workshop can access any of 38 topic-specific videos, such as analyzing your audience, managing energetic discussions, and dealing with disengaged executives. The videos, which can be accessed 24/7, average only five minutes each, so they are a quick, easy way to refresh specific skills introduced in the class. The actual class workbook is also available digitally.

Taken together, PowerSpeaking's live workshops, one-on-one coaching, video library and the digital workbooks offer a more layered, in-depth learning experience, one that meets you wherever you're at and travels with you as you progress. And that means a greater return on investment over a longer period of time, for your training dollar.

If you'd like to register for **SpeakingUp®**, access the **Plus-Microlearning Videos**, or if you have questions, email us at coordinator@powerspeaking.com

Oh, and if you'd like to revisit that dramatic scene in *Contact*, here it is on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnkEace3rb4>. It's a great lesson in being passionate about your cause, if nothing else!

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