

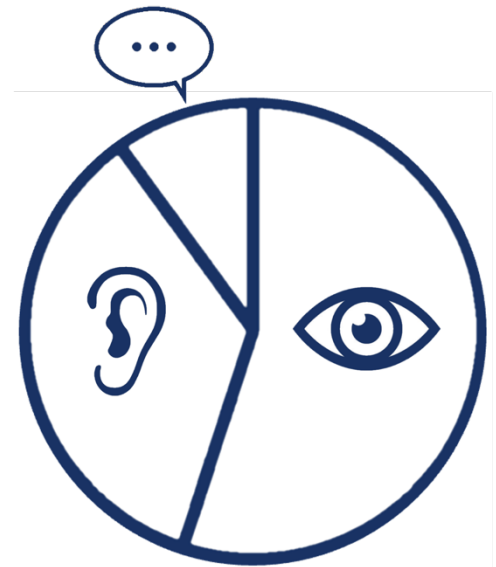
“Leadership is a performing art.”

*Professor Alexander B. Horniman
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When delivering a presentation, it is not enough for leaders to merely convey information. Rather, leaders need to **perform** in order to engage audiences effectively. Why? Because audiences make important judgments about the speaker and whether to pay attention in the first seconds of a presentation. And those judgments are based on what audiences notice.

When watching a speaker deliver a presentation:

- **55% of what audiences notice is what their eyes see.** Visual stimuli include the speaker’s body movements, the visuals behind the speaker, and the speaker’s mastery of the space.
- **35% of what audiences notice is what their ears hear.** Auditory stimuli include vocal intonation and variation.
- **Only 10% of what audiences notice is a speaker’s content.**



To get and keep an audience’s attention, leaders need to package their content in an engaging visual and auditory stimulus. In other words, leaders need to deliver an engaging performance.

When it comes to performance, audiences respond best to speakers who exhibit the middle ground between rigidity and arbitrary movement. This middle ground is best understood as **fluidity**: of body movement, of voice, in alignment with each other, and in alignment with the content.

Speakers who achieve fluidity convey confidence and transmit verbal energy that grabs an audience’s attention. Specifically, speakers who achieve fluidity create dynamic variation in three dimensions of voice: **pitch, speed, and volume**.





Achieving fluidity and transmitting verbal energy is a three-part process:

Stable Base: Stable base grounds speakers to the floor, unlocks fluid arm movement, and thereby engages the abdominal muscles.

A stable base when standing:
feet farther than shoulder-width apart with one foot slightly forward.



A stable base when sitting:
sitting upright, leaning slightly forward at the edge of the seat with the soles of the feet firmly planted.



Full Arm Gesture: Gesturing with your full arms away from the body optimally engages abdominal muscles, activates the diaphragm, and unlocks facial muscles - creating engaging vocal variation. Gesturing with full arms also has a biochemical effect on blood chemistry, naturally helping speakers feel less stressed, less anxious, and more in control. And gesturing with full arms has a neurological effect on word choice, enabling speakers to choose the right words and fewer words to convey the same meaning and without filler language.



Engaging Facial Expression: An engaging facial expression such as a smile conveys warmth and confidence and enhances vocal variation.

