

What do Presenters and Poker Players Have in Common?

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Rexi Media has released PresenterPro for iPhone and iPod touch. PresenterPro is a robust repository of techniques for advanced presenters. These techniques spring from psychology, sociology, advertising, even poker. Edge shifts constantly. If you want to keep people's attention, you need to know how strong you are now. When you are only attending to the present, you also have more mental resources to cater to your audience and the environment, which should fuel the flow of your speech.

San Francisco, CA - In poker, there is a difference between playing well and winning, and in presentations, there is a difference between a good delivery and a memorable one. Rexi Media has released PresenterPro, an iPhone/iPod Touch app, with a robust repository of techniques for advanced presenters. These techniques spring from psychology, sociology, advertising, even poker. Here is what poker players can teach us about winning presentations.

* Don't believe in woulda, coulda, shoulda. Poker winners live in the moment. They may have had an edge a few minutes ago, but edge evaporates fast. Serious players know they win only they make good decisions "now".

It's the same in presentations. Who cares how strong you were a few minutes ago? Edge shifts constantly. If you want to keep people's attention, you need to know how strong you are now. One way to stay tuned to the present is to ask yourself frequently: "how am I relating to the audience right now"? This type of monitoring helps you ensure you are focused on a current task instead of allowing your mind to drift in the past or in the future. When you are only attending to the present, you also have more mental resources to cater to your audience and the environment, which should fuel the flow of your speech.

* Think holistically. Poker winners base their decisions on multiple sources of information, not just one input. For instance, if they look at the opponents' finger movement, they don't interpret them in isolation; they will link them with other body language cues, facial expressions, and even to other body movements observed in previous sessions. Winners do not oversimplify.

Advanced presenters also base their reactions on multiple inputs. For instance, if they see someone with hands folded across the chest means, they realize that the gesture may mean a hostile attitude only if combined with other cues, such as legs crossed, toes pointed away from the presenter, shoulders sideways, or pursed lips.

* Consider complexities. Poker winners know the danger of oversimplifying a game for which there is no simple formula or a short list of do's and don'ts. They know that the right strategy matches the right situation.

If you're an advanced presenter, chances are you ignore attractively simplistic lists and instead focus on studying hard and practicing even harder. And you crave complexity because, if there was one magical formula for presentations, everyone would present the same way and no one would stand out.

* Play mum poker. This is the famous poker face expression extended to the entire body, which means body language shows no complaining, no blaming, and no regretting. This type of control means knowing how to deal with denial, anger, and frustration. In high-pressure situations, poker winners know that emotions turn into enemies because they prevent them from acquiring information from the environment. When emotionally charged, they are prone to misinterpret what they see or hear, they don't act with confidence, and they give away

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too much information, looking foolish and vulnerable.

Advanced presenters also know how to keep emotions out of the "game". How do they do it? Discipline and realism are at the foundation of emotion control. Accepting a situation as is, not as they would like it to be, and depersonalizing any conflict are key ingredients to emotional stability and confident presentations.

* Are disciplined researchers. Serious players know they don't just play with cards, they play with people, which means they need to be excellent human observers. This is why poker winners go home after each game and write down what they saw at the table: habits, emotions, reactions, seating (even night-time vs. day time conditions!). They also note realistic details about their own performance, which helps them later to avoid selective memory and exaggerating their performance. Using this information, they seek playing with just the right types of opponents in just the right settings, so that their strategy matches the studied conditions.

Imagine if you had the discipline to write down details after each of your presentations. You would choose engagements that amplify your skills. Unlike poker, in such conditions, everyone wins. Check out Rexi Media's recent iPhone app, Presenter Pro, for additional techniques on delivering winning presentations.

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PresenterPro:
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