



Improve Your Presentations
with the Power of the Metaphor



The success of your presentation is determined by how well you can connect with your audience.

If you're able to **capture their attention and engage them** with your discussion, you're on your way to a great outcome.



So how do you capture their imagination?

THERE'S ALWAYS A METAPHOR



They equate certain ideas or concepts with images that people are already familiar with.

Since these concepts are often abstract and difficult to explain, metaphors help them reach out in ways that others can easily understand and relate to.

A quick example can be found in William Shakespeare's famous passage from "As You Like It":

All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances.



ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE



Instead of trying to endlessly explain the nature of life, **he chose an image that his audience were already familiar with.** Since they were already watching a stage play, the audience can easily see what he meant with his metaphor!



IMPROVE YOUR PRESENTATIONS WITH
THE POWER OF THE METAPHOR

Presentations Can Be Improved with Simple Metaphors

While we often associate them with artistic expression, metaphors also play out in our daily conversations. Expressions like "our hard work went down the drain" call to mind images that are familiar and relatable.

Certain metaphors can also convey a **more heightened sense of emotion** because they're described in a way that people can **easily call to mind**.

Presentations Can Be Improved with Simple Metaphors

Another example was brought up by presentation expert Nancy Duarte in an article for the Harvard Business Review. She writes,

"We [incorporate metaphors] naturally in conversation - for instance, the news hit her like a freight train.' By comparing the situation to something people already know or can at least imagine, we convey its intensity and urgency"





IMPROVE YOUR PRESENTATIONS WITH
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Presentations Can Be Improved with Simple Metaphors

Most presentations often end up as a dump of data and information that are too difficult to understand. If you can liken your new business model to a game of soccer, **your audience will remain intrigued and interested.**

**Turn the unfamiliar into something you know your
audience encounters in their daily lives.**

MOVING PAST CLICHÉS



How to Come Up with a Unique Metaphor

Not All Metaphors are Created Equal

How many times have you heard love likened to a red rose? Or, a business goal to a bull's eye? If you want to capture the imagination of your audience, you'll need to **create a metaphor that is unique.**



The most effective metaphors are **particular and specific** to what you're describing.

BRAINSTORM FRESH METAPHORS TO PUSH PAST CLICHÉS

Concept

GOAL

PARTNERSHIP

SECURITY

Cliché



Bull's-eye



Handshake in front
of globe



Lock & key

Unique



Maze/Threshold



Reef/Ecosystem
Fred & Ginger



Doberman Pinscher
Pepper Spray

Source: HBR Guide to Persuasive Presentations – Nancy Duarte

ALLOT TIME FOR BRAINSTORMING



Put all technology
and electronics away



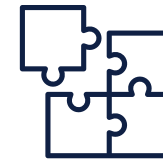
Sit down & list
everything that
comes to mind



Start with the clichés
and move on to
original ideas



Think of any word
connected with the
previous word written



Turn it into a
little game



Set a timer for 9
minutes and don't stop
until time runs out

Once you're happy with your list, **start pruning it down.**

Consider the Point of View of Your Audience

Once your list is finalized, **opt for images that are more unusual**. If you want to use a metaphor that references pop culture, make sure that it is **appropriate for your audience's demographics**.



For 'partnership' the Astaire/Rogers metaphor won't make sense to millennials, but perhaps a reference to the Avengers will.



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Incorporate Your Metaphor with Visuals

If you really want to engage your audience, your metaphor is a great way to enhance the slide decks you present. Instead of using stock images, you can perfectly illustrate your points with a powerful visual metaphor.

Urge Your Audience to Embrace Your Core Message

The best way to do that is by tapping into their imagination. Commonly used in artistic expression, **the power of the metaphor can also improve your presentations.**



Give your audience an opportunity to see a unique presentation by **translating your ideas** into something that they can relate to.

