



SESSION 9

PIZZAZZ

Learning Objectives

As a result of this training experience, each participant should be able to:

- ◆ Understand what pizzazz is.
- ◆ Explain what pizzazz is.
- ◆ Describe why pizzazz features are an important part of every training course.
- ◆ List some pizzazz features that could be added to their training.

Method

Demonstrations throughout the day, talk

Faculty Preparation

Review the *Cub Scout Songbook*, *Boy Scout Songbook*, and *Group Meeting Sparklers* for material for jokes, stunts, run-ons, skits.

Work with the conference director to integrate “pizzazz” activities into the agenda. Time for pizzazz has been scheduled at the beginning or end of most sessions.

Review the “[Training Methods](#)” session for tips on talks and demonstrations.

Materials

- ◆ Song sheets
- ◆ Run-ons
- ◆ Skits
- ◆ Stunts
- ◆ Props for skits and stunts

- ◆ [BSA 500 Answers sheet](#) for each steward
- ◆ Trophies or other prizes for winners of the BSA 500

Overhead

[BSA 500 Questions](#)

Handout

[“How to Enhance Presentations and Training”](#)

Time

15 minutes

Introduction

Say or paraphrase,

Why is pizzazz important? According to the dictionary, pizzazz means *vigor and style*. Outstanding speakers exemplify these qualities.

Today, more than ever before, we are inundated with information. This is not a news flash. It is, however, a reminder that your message, no matter how important, is competing for space in your listeners' attention span.

You may not care how carefully your doctor chooses words or how dynamic she is when she says you are going to recover from a serious disease. However, let that same person tell you why doctors need a pay raise. Then the message had better be in well-crafted language and be enthusiastically delivered.

To understand the challenge you face as a presenter, consider the tidal wave of information you present during a training course compared to the poor listening habits of your audience.

Public speaking can be intimidating to inexperienced or new leaders and frequently results in a dry, monotonous presentation. Even experienced trainers sometimes fail to maximize their teaching potential. A few strategically placed techniques would certainly enhance the learning experience. Adding pizzazz to our training events and presentations encourages

and strengthens the purposes and concepts of BSA programs, motivates participants, and helps us accomplish our objectives more effectively.

What makes a training session or presentation effective, memorable, entertaining, stimulating, or just plain fun?

The Experience

Explain that adults seem to learn best when they are enjoying the training experience. Ask participants to think of those sessions where you came away energized and motivated as well as informed. What was happening? Chances are they will remember stories that clarified the points being made, metaphors that linked concepts to simple examples, visual props, humor, games, and songs. Perhaps they felt entertained as well as taught. Ask,

What have you seen and heard in this training today?

Allow the participants to answer and quickly recap the pizzazz techniques and methods used throughout the day.

As trainers, we are given the opportunity to provide important program information to volunteers. How do we effectively communicate this information?

Explain that they can have effective presentations and training sessions by being creative. To be creative they need to consider techniques that at one point they might have considered too outlandish for a trainer. They must stretch their limits and provide effective, enjoyable presentations and training sessions.

Also explain that we are not implying that simply “being crazy” is a solution. Their commitment to Scouting drives them to provide experiential learning where participants truly understand and learn the material. So if a strategically placed gag, run-on, story, song, or metaphor helps, they should use it. If they can get the audience to “feel” what they are saying to them, participants will probably understand it better and remember it longer.

Handout

Distribute the “[How to Enhance Presentations and Training](#)” handout.

Explain that the following ideas and techniques are not intended as the “be all and end all” list for effective presentations. The list simply includes a collection of interesting ideas that can help them give better presentations and have more effective training sessions.

Believe in Your Message

Explain that when your audience senses that you live and breathe your message, your credibility instantly goes up. Conversely, if you are trying to present a message that you don't totally support, it takes a real acting job to pull it off. Usually you can't because people see through the act quickly.

Tell participants that the best way to start to develop their own dynamic presentation may be to first work on themselves and how they feel about their message. If they have some doubts about the message, they should study, experience, and practice it until they are confident about how they feel about it. Audiences usually forgive mistakes in presentations if they sense the speaker deeply believes in the message.

Be Yourself

Describe how acting naturally and being oneself is the best way to avoid appearing stiff and boring. (Don't try to be something you're not.)

Change Your Public Speaking Attitude

Trainers should learn to re-program the "fear of public speaking" into the "the excitement about public speaking."

Explain that fear and excitement have different physiological responses that can either enhance a talk or destroy it. With fear, one's throat and voice are harder to control, the heart races, palms sweat, eyes blink rapidly, and the face looks pale and more drawn. Excitement and fear induce some of the same responses, such as a racing heart. With excitement, however, people usually have more control and enjoy themselves. People will clearly be able to tell the difference between fear and excitement in a trainer. Excitement seems to mobilize; fear immobilizes, and the trainer loses control.

Break the Ice

Explain that the first few minutes of a presentation are very important because that's when the trainer establishes a relationship with the audience. The participants can sense whether the session will be formal, loose, fun, or boring. The beginning is also the point at which the speaker is most anxious and tense. That's why it is a good idea to design and plan a beginning that loosens up both you and your audience.

Explain that a great start can be made in many ways, including:

- ◆ Begin by asking the audience some questions and get them talking. This can relax you and take some of the burden off of you to do it all.

- ◆ Take a quick demographic check to assess the make-up of the audience. Ask, for example, how many have received other training.
- ◆ Tell a story related to your message. You might tell a personal experience about what initially interested you in the subject. Personal stories are easy to tell because they come from your own experiences.

The point is to do something early in the presentation that establishes a relationship between the trainer and the audience. The trainer should do something that puts both at ease.

Find Out What the Participants Want to Know

Explain that one of the most important steps in creating a successful training session is to find out what the participants want to learn. A trainer should have an agenda. But what do the participants want to know about the message? When the trainer has identified and addressed the needs of the participants, they will feel the training is particularly useful to them.

One technique is to give the participants advance warning that they will be asked for their expectations of (or objectives for) the session. Then they have time to think about it during the opening remarks. The trainer might put colored felt-tip markers and sheets of paper on the tables. After presenting the training agenda, he or she could then ask the participants to use the paper and felt-tip markers on their tables and write down one or two expectations or questions they would like to have answered. After hanging all the papers on the walls with masking tape, the trainer would enlist the participants' help in meeting all of the objectives. As the training progresses, the participants take their papers off the walls as their objectives are met. It's an excellent way to see if people are getting what they need. The exercise serves other uses as well. For example, removing their papers gets the class up and moving around early in the session (a "pattern break," which will be discussed later).

Theatre

Ask what participants think is the best method to teach how personal values and beliefs affect behavior. The answer should be that a simple lecture probably won't do it; the audience has to "feel" the effect their beliefs have on behavior.

Trainers can "trick" an audience by wearing clothing other than the proper uniform. They can elect something bizarre, such as two different shoes, odd socks, patterned pants/shorts, a clashing shirt, a pink paisley tie, or a pink hat. The trainer who is dressed oddly should arrive before the training starts. The behavior of the participants will be different than it is when the trainer wears the proper

uniform. Participants probably will ignore or talk about that trainer before the session, but they probably will not say anything directly; they'll just behave differently.

The session begins with a definition of the values and beliefs of Scouting. Then the trainer asks participants if they notice anything strange about the trainer. Usually they'll say nothing. Probe further. Someone will usually break the ice by remarking about how the trainer's clothes look, and soon there will be consensus.

The trainer then takes the bizarre clothing off to reveal a uniform underneath (or steps out and quickly adds the missing uniform parts). The participants were probably worried that the "weirdo" was the trainer. In just that few minutes, the participants are put in touch with their belief systems in such a dramatic way that they will never forget it. The trainer has quickly set the stage for meaningful discussions on beliefs and behaviors. This dramatic technique sensitizes participants to the effect their beliefs have on their interaction with others.

This technique may be uncomfortable at first, but it is one of the most powerful forms of teaching. Trainers should not underestimate the use of drama and acting to sell key points.

Magic

Magic is another technique that can be used to train. Magic has entertainment value. Magic has a positive effect if a trick can be linked to the concept or message being taught.

Trainers can learn magic in any number of ways. The simplest way is to visit a local magic store, looking for tricks that are highly visible (a benefit for larger audiences), easy to perform, and that can be connected to the message.

Participation

Explain that people have so much more to contribute if we'll just let them. That is especially true during training courses.

In Scouting, audience participation stunts are available that provide a break from the actual training material and inject a bit of fun. Point out some that were used earlier in the day, or demonstrate one now.

Explain that the presenter should provide opportunities for participation during the actual training sessions by using exercises that reinforce training points.

When audiences participate in experiential learning, everyone benefits. More knowledge and insight is shared within the group. People enjoy the opportunity to participate. Audience participation relieves the trainer of the responsibility for doing everything.

Pattern Break

Explain that when people sit for any length of time, energy levels tend to drop quickly.

One of the best ways to re-energize an audience is to have what we call a “pattern break.” These breaks alter the pattern of attention and help the listener’s brain to re-activate. There are many ways to inject pattern breaks. For instance, the presenter can

- ◆ Change the tone of voice or pattern of speech
- ◆ Moves to a different part of the room
- ◆ Use props, videotapes, or music
- ◆ Use stunts, games, or songs
- ◆ Use audience participation

Explain that one of the best times to plan for a pattern break is right after lunch. That is when audience energy levels drop the most severely because of the digestion of heavy food. Training sessions with the most active and entertaining exercises should be scheduled right after lunch.

If a trainer can provide some form of pattern break at least every 10 minutes, the audience will stay energized throughout the presentation.

Prizes

Point out that people love prizes. Prizes make excellent incentives to enhance participation. You can use just about anything. Prizes need have no intrinsic value, and at first may not even appear to be much of an incentive. But after two or three are awarded to people who have contributed something to the session, others can’t wait to get one too. It’s not the prize they want. It’s the recognition.

Keep It Simple, Make It Fun (KISMIF)

Participants attend training sessions looking for practical and useful information, not theoretical constructs. Trainers should spend more time on practical applications than on theories. As a result, the participants know just how those theories should and can be applied.

Trainers should show participants obvious examples and provide plenty of pizzaz.

Humor

Explain that laughter has many psychological and physiological benefits. The most useful benefits to a trainer are fun and energy.

There are many ways to inject humor into a talk or training session. We have already discussed some of them. Many books with humorous stories and jokes are available. Listening to other trainers is another source for good humor.

Trainers shouldn't be afraid to be playful. If they can create a playful atmosphere, people will laugh naturally.

Another way is to tap into the good humor of the participants as it occurs.

BSA 500 Game

Place the BSA 500 questions transparency for this session on the overhead projector, but do not turn the projector on. Announce that when the questions appear on the screen, each team will have exactly one minute to answer as many of the questions as they possibly can. The answers are to be given to the race steward at each table by the team's crew chief.

Turn the overhead projector on. After exactly 60 seconds turn the projector off, and announce that time has expired. After the stewards have determined the number of correct answers for each team, allow a little time for the crew chiefs to move their teams' racecars along the track.

Determine and announce who the BSA 500 winner(s) are and present trophies or other prizes.

Summary

Say or paraphrase,

The ability to train and influence others is a powerful skill. Continuous improvement as a trainer means that you are always looking for ways to enrich your performance and what you can achieve. You should always be on the lookout for concepts and techniques that can add significant value to the training experience. If you approach training with true passion for helping and sharing with others, your abilities will grow naturally as you continually look for new ideas.

Thank participants for their time and attention.

Conclude on time.

To continue, scroll down to view session materials, or follow one of these links:

[Closing Period](#)

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PIZZAZZ

BSA 500 ANSWERS

1. What are three ways of injecting pizzazz into training?

- ◆ Games
- ◆ Songs
- ◆ Magic
- ◆ Stunts
- ◆ Run-ons
- ◆ Skits
- ◆ Applause

2. Name one pizzazz feature seen today.

- ◆ Run-on
- ◆ Song
- ◆ Game
- ◆ Skit
- ◆ Stunt

(Allowable answers may depend on presentations made for the day: Stewards be alert!)

3. Why add pizzazz?

- ◆ Provide motivation
- ◆ Enhance Scouting purposes
- ◆ Put life into presentation
- ◆ Energize participants
- ◆ Wake people up
- ◆ Create interest
- ◆ HAVE FUN!

4. Name four ways to enhance presentations and training.

- ◆ Believe in your message
- ◆ Be yourself
- ◆ Change your public speaking attitude
- ◆ Break the ice
- ◆ Find out what the participants want to know
- ◆ Theatre
- ◆ Magic
- ◆ Audience participation
- ◆ Energize with pattern breaks
- ◆ Use prizes as participation benefits
- ◆ Know your presentation tools
- ◆ KISMIF (keep it simple, make it fun)
- ◆ Add humor

PIZZAZZ

BSA 500 Questions

What are three ways of injecting pizzazz into training?

Give one pizzazz feature seen today.

Why add pizzazz?

Give four ways to enhance presentations and training.

HOW TO ENHANCE PRESENTATIONS AND TRAINING

Believe in your message. Live and breathe your message.

Be yourself. Don't try to be something you're not.

Change your public speaking attitude. Change fear of speaking to excitement about speaking.

Break the Ice. Ask the audience questions and get them talking. Take a demographic check. Tell a joke. Tell a story.

Find out what the participants want to know. Identify and address participant expectations.

Use "theatre." Show participants that beliefs affect behavior.

Magical metaphors. Magic aids retention and is entertaining.

Use audience participation. Involve the audience with participation stunts. Lead group discussions. Have question and answer periods. Use small-group breakout discussions. Employ problem-solving activities.

Re-energize participants with "pattern breaks." Change the tone of voice or pattern of speech. Move to a different part of the room, Use props, videotapes, or music. Change the pace with stunts, games, or songs.

Use simple prizes as participation incentives.

Know your presentation tools.

KISMIF (Keep it Simple, Make it Fun).

Use humor. Don't be afraid to have fun. Create an atmosphere where people are free to laugh.