

How to find and refine your presentation toolbox

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If you have been trying to frame and communicate your message in an effective way and you have been running into brick walls, there are helpful and proven tools you can use to eliminate fear, frustration, and the probability of embarrassment.

Many of these resources are aimed at people outside the legal field. Even though they do not seem relevant to lawyers, there are enough practical tips and data to make the resources useful to lawyers. A bit of translation is all that is necessary.

It is really important to start your thought process effectively. That way is to focus on presentation design. The focus of the weblog Presentation Zen <http://www.presentationzen.com> is on the planning of the message you want to communicate.

Then, it is prudent to consider resources, examples, and other materials to define your project and find templates so as to try not to reinvent the wheel. It does not hurt to call or e-mail the people whose examples you discover to see if you can find out what was effective for their purposes and what was not. You will find over seventy examples and resources for presentations (and ultimate follow up) at <http://meryl.net/2008/01/10/70-powerpoint-and-presentation-resources-and-great-examples>.

Manage Smarter, at <http://www.presentations.com>, is the central portal for five magazines that offer practical tips for all kinds of presentations. These trade journals include /Sales and Marketing Management, Incentive, Potentials, Presentations,/ and /Training/. You will find valuable tips for all of your communications from electronic mail through conference rooms, lecture halls and court rooms. Recent posts include such topics as Presenting Smart: What Story Do Your Graphics Tell?, Four Best Practices for E-mailing Sales Presentations, and Business in a Knapsack: Six Keys to Clear Virtual Communication.

Tucows, at <http://www.tucows.com>, is one of the oldest software sites on the Internet and is a repository of many solutions that will work on systems that are old. The software is organized in sections for the Web, Windows, Macintosh, Linux, and PDAs.

Old Version at <http://www.oldversion.com>, is a repository of old versions of current software. One of the frustrations that we often face when we are using used hardware is that current applications are too big or require computing resources that our current computer cannot handle. Old Version rescues us by providing access to older versions of software that take fewer computing resources to use so that our clients may be served with relevant applications on the hardware that we already have.

The Trial Lawyer Resource Center weblog, at <http://www.tlrcblog.com>, has a Presentations section full of helpful tips that one may reach quickly. The postings go back to 2005.

Presentation Pointers has a helpful article exploring Courtroom and Boardroom Presentations: Comparing and Contrasting, at <http://www.presentation-pointers.com/showarticle/articleid/215/>. The web site includes some strategic and tactical information. It includes sections on communicating effectively, building presentations, and planning a presentation.

American Lawyer Media, at <http://www.alm.com>, brings a number resources together under its wing. As the portal for its publications /The American Lawyer, Corporate Counsel, IP Law & Business, The National Law Journal,/ and /Law Technology News/, you will get access to many tips, software downloads, and white papers describing ways to resolve many of your communication challenges.