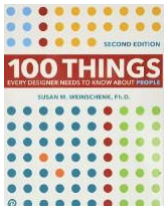


'CliffsNotes' Book Club Recap

DO YOU LOVE BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP, NEUROSCIENCE, AND BUSINESS, BUT NOT HAVE TIME TO READ ALL THE BOOKS?

Join the '**CliffsNotes' club**—where there's no pressure to pre-read the book, no membership required, no cost, and lots of discussion in just 90 minutes. Each month, you will hear a **summary of highlights** from a recently-published business book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. We'll keep you "in the know" on the latest and greatest concepts and models. **Register here** for upcoming events.



July, 2021

100 Things Every Presenter Needs to Know About People

By Susan Weinschenk

Discussion Highlights

Presented by [Chris Westbrook](#)

Susan M. Weinschenk has a Ph.D. in Psychology, is CEO of the behavioral science consulting firm Team W, and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Wisconsin. Other books she has written include *How to Get People To Do Stuff*, and *Neuro Web Design: What Makes Them Click?* She co-hosts the HumanTech podcast, writes her own blog, and has an online column for *Psychology Today*.

Thesis: To give a great presentation, you need to know a lot about people. The more you understand how people think, learn, listen, see, react, and decide, the better able are to provide a presentation that informs, inspires, and motivates.

How People See, Read, and Listen

7. Red and blue together are hard on the eyes. Red and green too, due to *chromostereopsis*: one color jumps out while the other color appears recessed.

9. The meanings of colors vary by group and culture. Also—color affects mood.

11. It's a myth that uppercase letters are inherently hard to read. All caps are great for drawing attention, e.g., in a title/headline.

12. Titles and headlines provide critical context. They make your information easier to grasp and organize.

13. Font size matters. Some fonts are designed to be easier to read on a screen: Tahoma, Verdana v. Calibri. Same 14-pt. font size—just a different “x-height.”

14. Hard to read = hard to do. Some fonts (especially script) interfere with the brain's ability to recognize patterns.

How People Think and Learn

18. People need context. People use different parts of the brain to process words, depending on what you're doing with them. Use *advance organizers*:

- Outline
- Diagram/chart
- Headers on slides

How to Grab and Hold Attention

Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening.

Dorothy Sarnoff

36. The unconscious directs attention. People can't resist paying attention to food, sex, and danger. Minimize distractions; use these concepts intentionally.

38. Multitasking undermines attention. This includes reading handouts.

- Provide a summary only or
- Provide a link with more information at the end or in an email or
- Ensure people have ability to take photos or notes.

The Power of Stories

Stories evoke a simulation of the event. Your brain is more active when listening to a story, and it reacts as if you were in the story and having the experience.

41. Dramatic arc stories change brain chemicals. Fashion your stories like this:

- Exposition
- Rising action
- Climax
- Falling action
- Denouement

How to Motivate People to Take Action—based on commonly known literature about motivation (e.g., Dan Pink).

How People Decide to Take Action

58. People make most decisions unconsciously. E.g., based on what most other people are using, as well as individual drives, motivations, fears.

- Know your audience and what factors they might use.
- Provide rational justifications.

59. Fear of loss might be stronger than anticipation of gain. Phrase requests for action based on fear of loss, e.g., possible problems if they don't change.

63. Mood influences the decision-making process. It's easy to influence people's mood: short video clip, music, activity.

67. When people write on something "permanent," it increases commitment. Writing actually changes brain processing.

70. People make decisions with System 1 (truthiness) thinking.

Ways to increase truthiness in your presentations:

- Repetition
- Photos combined with information

How People React to the Environment—Saved for when we're back to face-to face presentations.

How People React Emotionally

83. People are programmed to enjoy surprises. The human brain not only looks for the unexpected; the brain actually craves it. Build in small surprises:

- Demos of a product, website, principle
- News media
- Activities
- Provide only a high-level outline

84. People feel safe when things are predictable. Balance surprises with predictability. Provide predictability cues:

- High-level overview in writing or verbally
- Returning to that overview at various points
- Telling people what will happen next

86. People are happier when they're busy. Don't be the only busy one! Engage—especially with virtual presentations, where the rule of thumb is to engage **every five minutes.**

87. People react to beauty. Pastoral scenes—whether real or video/photograph—provide “attention restoration.” Design aesthetically pleasing slides.

- Reference: *Presentation Zen* by Garr Reynolds (New Riders, 2008)

90. The more scarce something is, the more valuable people will feel it is. Similarly, the more something costs, the more people think it's valuable. Charge for your presentations.

How People React to You

There are two types of speakers, those that are nervous and those that are liars.

Mark Twain

91. People “read” other people in an instant and unconsciously. First impressions tend to last throughout the presentation. Start strong.

- Have a credible person introduce you with text you provide.
- Watch your body language from the minute you walk in/appear on screen.

93. People assign meaning to your body positions and movement. When you feel certain emotions, your body shows those signs.

- Practice. Great reference: *Talk Like Ted. The 9 Public-Speaking Secrets of the World's Greatest Speakers* by Carmine Gallo (St. Martin's Press, 2014)
- Practice Your blocking.

95. People assign meaning to your tone of voice. Great presenters modulate, articulate, pause, and can be heard.

And, 100. People want you to control the room. Tips to gain and maintain control:

- Start and end on time
- Pace your presentation
- Respectfully control people who interrupt, ramble, etc.
- Take breaks at prescribed times
- Start your presentation on time after breaks

About the Book Club In this monthly club, a presenter shares highlights from a book related to leadership, business, neuroscience, or coaching. Membership is not required, and there's no obligation to pre-read the book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. [Register here](#) for upcoming events. For the full set of discussion summaries, [click here](#).