

Being Clear

ELIMINATE TECHNICAL LANGUAGE

Be aware of anytime you slip into an industry term that doesn't mean anything to anyone else outside your trade or industry, such as BIM and fenestration. Don't assume people know terminology that's common to you. **Speak plainly.**

BE SPECIFIC

Instead of "delivering telecommunication services," tell them it's "high-speed internet and phones." The more concrete you are, the clearer your communication. "This design will make the room cooler in a shorter amount of time." Tell them **how they will personally experience** what you're saying, "If we speed up this process, I can pay you more quickly."

USE METAPHORS

It's much easier to understand a technical topic if you can **relate it to an everyday example**. "Energy modeling is checking to see if you're really getting 35 MPG in your car." People can relate to HVAC and electricity in their homes. Build on those analogies. Water tends to be an effective metaphor: "We want to control the pressure in the room, but don't want to take the plug out of the bathtub."

RELATE TO THE AUDIENCE

You'll connect with your audience if you use **terms and metaphors that are common to your audience**. Financial people relate well to structured explanations that are put in terms of numbers. Contractors will more easily understand something that's related to how a building is constructed.

DRAW IT

Sketching on a white board or flip chart provides several benefits: it helps people visualize what you're saying, it provides a framework for you to build on, and it takes the pressure off the presenter to rely on explaining solutions clearly with words. **A picture is worth a thousand words.**

CHECK IN WITH THEM

If you're observant, you can tell if someone is not tracking what you're saying. The pupils dilate, they might squint or grimace, they may take in a deep breath or simply have that lost look on their face. **Stop and ask** if you're getting too detailed or technical. Re-group and try again.



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