"Killing me Softly"

"The art of convincing others with tact and diplomacy in English..."

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

The objective of this workshop will be to teach you new techniques and vocabulary for public speaking, meetings, webex situations etc.. in English, to be persuasive.

Introduction: Discuss;

★When was the last time you had to persuade a group of people about something
★When was the last time you had to introduce a new idea at work?
★Do you feel that people around you are good at convincing you of change and new ideas.
★Is it necessary to be convincing in your job?
★How do you feel about having to convince people or defend your ideas or introduce and present new ideas in English.
★Do you value tact and diplomacy? Do you think that the way you present ideas is important in your job?



Activity One : Read the short text:

Sometimes you have to take the **softly softly** approach when you want to get your way.
This involves being diplomatic, positive and persuasive. Showing **tact** is **all about** empathy. It means that you take other people into consideration in your way of explaining things. It's a great tactic in fact.. If you are positive and diplomatic, and don't **rub people up the wrong way**, then you are more **likely** to get them on your side and **get their support.**

Activity Two: Now use the following idiomatic expressions in different sentences:

- To get your way
- To involve
- To take the softly softly approach
- to rub someone up the wrong way
- to be likely to
- to support someone
- to struggle
- to switch off
- by now...

Activity Three: Techniques.

Here are some **techniques** to help you to convince and persuade people when speaking English:

1/ Be clear - Short sentences and '**pitch** and **pause**' help you to make an argument clear and concise which means people won't **struggle** to understand you or start to **switch off.** Always choose linking words which help you to construct short sentences. Never translate from the French. Favor short simple sentences every time over long drawn out ideas.

2/ Use stress - As you know **by now** English is a stress based language which means that we use intonation and pitch (the volume, length, rhythm, highs and lows of our voice) to stress important words and phrases in our sentences. This is a valuable tool which makes it much easier for people to understand you and which gives you a lot of extra options and choices to help emphasize important points.

3/ Use 'flags' to make people pay attention - Certain introductory words lend authority to what you are saying and make people listen attentively to what comes next.. (Words like, ultimately, basically, in all honestly, the crux of the issue is, it's essential too, it seems clear that, obviously, it's absolutely essential at this point that, as you all know, as experience has taught us, as we have just illustrated.. etc.)



4/ Paint a picture - If people can imagine what something will mean to them, and they imagine it as something positive, then you have already won them over. To help them, you can paint a mental picture with introductory words like: Imagine a situation where, just stop and think about.. Imagine if.. Wouldn't it be great if.. of course in a situation where... everything would be much easier... Use images and comparisons to help people to understand what a difference your idea could make to them and how it would affect them.

5/ Sound harmonious - If people enjoy listening to you then they are more easily convinced by what you are saying. If your words melt together thanks to your use of alliteration, mirrored vowels or matching consonants and even rhyming then you sound smooth and in control and it's a pleasure to hear you speak.

6/ Use the rhythm - You can really engage people's attention by using a regular rhythm in your sentences. A pattern of sound which makes people hang onto your every word.. The length of syllables, the word stress use choose to use and the intonation you use all help to develop this pattern. You can almost start to rap! You can achieve this with parallel sentences, mirrored words and repetition, or rhyming.



Activity Four - Take turns reading from this famous speech as an example of great, harmonious, catchy rhythmic language used to talk about a sensitive issue and demand change.

MARTIN LUTHER KING...

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

Activity Five - Role plays - Let's try out those techniques! Be diplomatic and convincing in the following situations.

1. You have been asked to present a new system for communicating between departments which has a very special code. You have to convince your colleagues how much easier their work life and communication will be after this is implemented! Be as creative as possible.

2. Your colleague takes too many smoking breaks and is not doing enough work. Your boss has asked you to talk to them and to persuade them in the most diplomatic way possible.

3. One of your older colleagues is having difficulty finishing their work on time, so you have been asked by your boss to talk to them and find out how you can help with her workload. Be sure to explain to your colleague how this will help her and keep her work more organized. Present a plan for sharing the tasks.

4. You are proposing a major change in working methods. From now on everyone will work from home with virtual meetings, dematerialized 'paperwork' and no more company cars. All communication will be via webex or Skype and the carbon footprint of the company will be drastically reduced as a result. You need to be very inspiring to introduce this new concept.

Roberta Flack - Killing Me Softly

Activity Six: Listen to the song and NUMBER the images in the correct ORDER. (As you hear them in the song.)












learning objectives

How far have you got?

Fill in the bars to show your progress

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Solutions simples, accessibles et sur mesure pour réussir en anglais