

## Become a Catalyst for Collaboration

As a leader, you have three options when something needs to be done in your organization:

1. You can do it yourself.
2. You can delegate it to a specific person.
3. You can involve a group of people (two or more) to accomplish the task. This last option requires collaboration - perfect for when the task is:

**Complex** and requires expertise from a variety of disciplines. One person doesn't have all the information or answers.

**Non-linear.** The work occurs simultaneously and many different tasks, functions and people are linked together.

**High Stakes.** The problem or opportunity area affect more than a few individuals and people have a big stake in the issue.

**High Commitment.** The business results will require a high degree of involvement and buy-in in order to develop and implement the solution. That which people contribute to has a higher probability of being implemented by those same people. Collaboration is *not* the appropriate option when there is:

**No Time.** You may not be able to form a team when there is an immediate, full-blown crisis. But you can let others know what you did after the fact.

**Expertise.** One person has the knowledge and resources to accomplish the task. In addition, that person should have the power and authority to implement the decision with or without others' involvement, support and commitment.

**No Support.** If the organization doesn't support the team efforts, don't even bother with a collaborative approach. For example, if management isn't open to the team's suggestions, won't provide the resources, or can't accept the team's recommendations, collaboration is not the optimal strategy. Just because you put people on a team together doesn't mean they are going to collaborate. It may make perfect sense to continue treating each of your team members as separate



## From the Bookshelf

Over the summer, I devoured the book series *The Game of Thrones* by George R.R. Martin. Although I think there are some great lessons about teamwork in these books (great swashbuckling daring-do and Machiavellian scheming), I have read and re-read Harrison Coerver and Mary Byers latest book *Race For Relevance*. I found the book to be highly insightful into the issues facing associations today. As Immediate Past President of the National Speakers Association, our board is grappling with the issues highlighted by the authors - along with some tools and recommendations on how to stay relevant in this changing world. I have recommended it to some of my association clients, and they too are using it at the national board level to prompt meaningful discussions.

## Team Quotable

Great discoveries and achievements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds. *Alexander Graham Bell*

individuals, rather than artificially trying to weld them into a more cohesive team unit. The challenge is divert work to where it is best done - and with the highest probability of success.

[Contact us](#) today for more information about how we transform teams to be extraordinary.

## Understanding Your Audience

To be an effective, engaging presenter, you have to let go of your own internal conversations and focus on your audience. This means you have to care sincerely about and want to connect with each person in the audience. They need to know that you are putting their needs first. That means you need to know enough about them so they feel they can trust you and will want to listen to you.

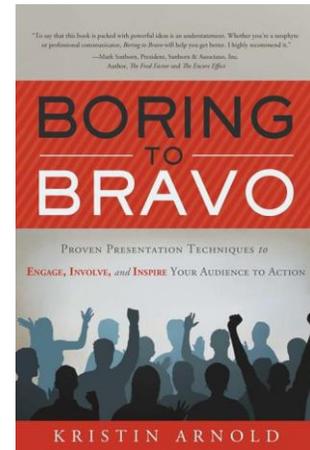
**Research.** We all despise the speaker who delivers his presentation on autopilot, never changing a word. It is the same presentation for one audience as it is for a completely different audience. To engage an audience, a presenter needs to find out their hopes, fears, and interests. Take the time to understand the people, their backgrounds, and the collective culture--often called the "personality" of the group--so you can connect your comments with what they care about.

**Content.** The actual message you share should address the issues that your audience cares about, not the ones you think they should care about. This is a subtle distinction with dramatic implications. If you do not address something that helps them make their lives better or improves the life of someone they care about, you are dead on arrival.

**Make It Personal.** Few things can help you bond and establish a connection with a group better than knowing and using people's names. Obtain a participant list ahead of time and read through the list out loud several times. If possible, learn the correct pronunciation of the difficult names. As you meet a new participant, say her name quietly to yourself a few times and make any associations that will help you recall the name later.

**More "We" than "Me."** If you are truly focused on the audience, you will use more inclusive language. Rather than saying "I did this" and "Look at me," you will inherently talk more about them, using either the words "you" or "we."

**Listen.** As you are speaking, shift your focus from how you are doing to how the audience is doing. When you "listen" to the audience, you are much more aware of their verbal and nonverbal reactions during your speech. Are they smiling and



## 2nd Printing!

We are pleased to announce Kristin's book, *Boring to Bravo: Proven Presentation Techniques to Engage, Involve, and Inspire Your Audience to Action* is in its second printing! [Order](#) your copy today!

## About Kristin

Kristin Arnold is one of North America's most accomplished professional meeting facilitators. A consummate author, speaker, and trainer, she is on a crusade to make all events in the workplace more engaging, interactive, and collaborative. Contact us for more information about how we transform your teams from ordinary to extraordinary!

nodding their heads? Yes; you are in the zone.

**Adjust.** As you listen to your audience, you can either continue as planned or adapt your speech. Because you aren't going to hit the mark all the time, always prepare a plan B to pull out of your back pocket. Audiences are quite forgiving as long as they know you care about them. They want you to succeed. So if one technique doesn't work, try another until you do connect. Check out our [book's website](#) for more great ideas on how to engage and interact with your audiences.

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