

Every Ten Minutes is a New (or Lost) Opportunity



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Here's some information you probably already knew, but might have forgotten. After ten minutes of a presentation, the majority of an audience (your staff, your docs, your board, your referrers) tune out, or rather, their brains turn off. BusinessWeek's Carmine Gallo recently wrote about John Medina's book *Brain Rules* and the ten-minute rule.

If you want to hold people's attention, I recommend you introduce some sort of engaging device at or shortly before each 10-minute increment of your presentation. This device doesn't have to be complicated. A simple story will suffice, as will a review of the past 10 minutes. In my presentations, I often tell a relevant story, or better yet, show a video clip that is relevant to the previous discussion. If you're [presenting via Webinar software](#) (BusinessWeek, 4/18/08), you can use a tool to push a poll or a question to your audience. Again, be sure to plan these exercises at 10-minute intervals. – Carmine Gallo

Some things I've used successfully to break up relatively dry information in staff meetings:

- short dance break to wake everyone up (James Brown's "I Feel Good" is a classic favorite)
- passing out party hats to everyone to announce a special event (can get silly)
- visual interest slides at intervals – optical illusions ([the gorilla on the basketball court](#) is a classic but I

don't know if it's available for groups unless you buy the DVD)

- telling a tasteful joke if you can deliver it well – I personally can't tell a joke to save my life
- teach desk exercises to stave off stiff necks and sore backs
- show pictures or movies from the last staff event, holiday party, etc.

Read the complete article [here](#) and let me know what you do to keep people from tuning you out.