Speaking 101:

Tips and Tricks
for
Conference Speakers

Lee Copeland

lee@sqe.com

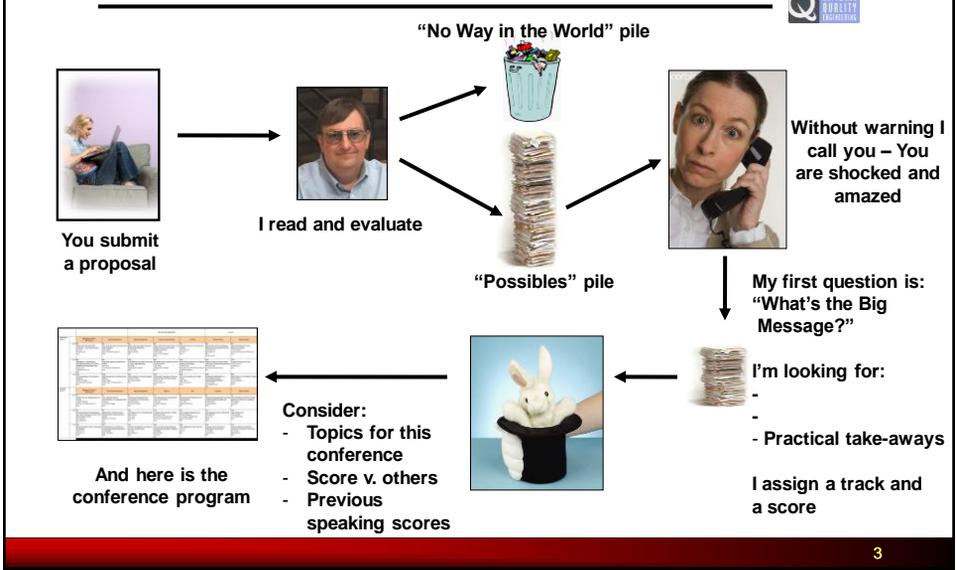SOFTWARE QUALITY ENGINEERING

Topics

SOFTWARE QUALITY ENGINEERING

- **Speaker selection process**
- **Developing content**
- **Preparing slides**
- **Preparing to present**
- **You're on**
- **Answering questions**
- **Practice, practice, practice**
- **Stuff goes right – stuff goes wrong**

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The Speaker Selection Process

"No Way in the World" pile

You submit a proposal

I read and evaluate

"Possibles" pile

Without warning I call you – You are shocked and amazed

My first question is: "What's the Big Message?"

I'm looking for:
-
-
- Practical take-aways

I assign a track and a score

Consider:
- Topics for this conference
- Score v. others
- Previous speaking scores

And here is the conference program

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What I'm Interested In

- **Topics you are knowledgeable about**

- **Topics you are passionate about**

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What I'm <u>Not</u> Interested In

- **How you overcame pathologically bad management to succeed** (Your success is impressive – but your bad management is the real problem and I'm just too old to care anymore)

- **Really niche topics** (<5% of delegates; "this presentation is aimed at quality managers of outsourcing companies in Vietnam using QTP")

- **Advocating anarchy** (no rules, no process, no commitments, no accountability)

- **Sales pitches** (disguised or blatant)

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What I'm <u>Not</u> Interested In

- **History lessons** (I'm a real fan of history, but it rarely helps you build better software)

- **Plans for things you haven't done yet** (but you're sure will be ready for the conference)

- **What everyone else says about the topic**

- **Don't leave me in suspense** (if your presentation is titled "The Five Greatest Things Ever to Hit Software Development" then tell me what the five things are)

- **Too simplistic** ("*x*" is good; we should do it)

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What I'm <u>Not</u> Interested In

- **And finally, just plain bad ideas**

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Developing Content

- **You don't have to be the greatest speaker if you have great content**
- **Key questions:**
  - **What is the Big Message you want to present?**
  - **Does all your content support the Big Message?**
  - **Can you illustrate your message with examples, metaphors, and stories?**

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Preparing Slides

- **Use readable fonts at readable sizes**

- **Check the appearance of your slides – are they aesthetically pleasing? Strive for a consistent look. Are they readable from a distance? How will they look projected?**

- **Include only key points on the slides – add the details in your presentation**

- **Include images that support your presentation**

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Preparing Slides

- **Some of my favorite images**

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Example Slides

- **Let's look at some real examples from a previous conference**

- **What's good and what's not so good?**

- **You don't have to be a trained graphic artist to identify or avoid these mistakes**

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What is a release?

- A release is defined by

•The Date it is needed

•High level Themes from the Product Roadmap

•A Planned Feature Set - called the Release Backlog

•The release team(s)

- Can be an internal or external release

- Has a customer

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The Seven: Lean manufacturing establishes seven disciplines

- Eliminate Waste
- Amplify
- Learning/Increase feedback
- Delay Commitment
- Deliver Fast
- Empower the Team
- Build Integrity In
- See the Whole

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# Partially done work means value that can't be delivered

80% of the components 100% tested versus 100% of the components 80% tested

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Advantage – non-intrusive, access to data types and structure of the system
Disadvantage – limited code coverage, result evaluation based on quality of faulty response

```
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 2    <definitions xmlns:http="http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/wsdl/http/" xmlns:soap="htt
 3      <types>
 4        <s:schema elementFormDefault="qualified" targetNamespace="http://microsoft.
 5          <s:element name="Divide">...
13          <s:element name="DivideResponse">...
20          <s:element name="safeDivide">
21            <s:complexType>
22              <s:sequence>
23                <s:element minOccurs="0" maxOccurs="1" name="a" type="s:string" />
24                <s:element minOccurs="0" maxOccurs="1" name="b" type="s:string" />
25              </s:sequence>
26            </s:complexType>
27          </s:element>
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29            <s:complexType>...
34          </s:element>
35        </s:schema>
36      </types>
37      <message name="DivideSoapIn">...
40      <message name="DivideSoapOut">...
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45      </message>
46      <message name="safeDivideSoapOut">...
49      <portType name="DivideServiceSoap">...
59      <binding name="DivideServiceSoap" type="s0:DivideServiceSoap">...
80      <service name="DivideService">
81        <port name="DivideServiceSoap" binding="s0:DivideServiceSoap">
82          <soap:address location="http://localhost:9090/DivideService.asmx" />
83        </port>
84      </service>
85    </definitions>
```

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Initial Baseline...project is in trouble
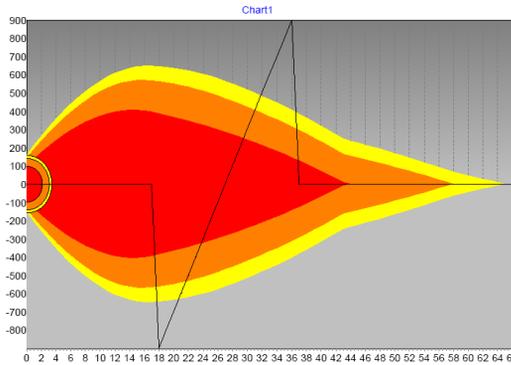
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Preparing To Present

- **Dress comfortably – clothes and shoes**

- **Find the room early**

- **Familiarize yourself with the surroundings**

- **Try out your computer, the projector, the microphone, where you'll stand, …**
- **Coordinate with your Track Chair**

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You're On

- **Don't memorize your presentation**

- **Do not read your presentation word-for-word from the slides**

- **Make eye contact for a few seconds with each person in the room during your presentation**

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You're On

- **Speak to your audience like you were speaking to a friend in your living room**

- **Don't stand in one spot – move around, but move for a purpose**

- **If you're nervous – slow your pace and speak just a little louder**

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You're On

- **If English is not your primary language, slow your pace to be understood**

- **Be yourself. You might be serious, clever, a jokester, a storyteller – each of these is fine**

- **Make your message real – use examples, metaphors, stories, illustrations, …**

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You're On

- **Watch your %$*&! mouth**

- **Your presentation must be G-rated**

- **Some delegates are just not comfortable hearing speakers say:**

  - **G-d**

  - **Fu-k**

  - **Sh-t**

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You're On

- **Also, please don't make statements of a political or religious nature. They can be offensive to some, and they rarely add value to your presentation**

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Answering Questions

- **First, repeat the question so everyone hears it**
- **Dealing with questions:**
  - **If it's a good question and it supports your presentation, answer it briefly**
  - **If you don't know the answer, just say so**
  - **If it's a tangential/bizarre question, respond that you'd be pleased to discuss it after your presentation**

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Answering Questions

- **Remember, this is <u>your</u> presentation**

- **It is <u>your</u> time to shine**

- **<u>You</u> are in control. Don't give control to others**

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Practice, Practice, Practice

- **The more you practice, the better you'll be**

- **Record yourself, then listen and learn, then listen and learn, then …**

- **Nail the opening and closing – it's what the audience will remember most**

- **Observe other speakers – incorporate their good traits, make sure you don't emulate their poor ones**

- **The more you practice, the better you'll be**

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Stuff Goes Right – Stuff Goes Wrong

- **What are the top three things that could go wrong – what will you do then?**

  –

  –

  –

- **Usually, it all goes right and you are great. People will thank you. People will congratulate you – what will you do then?**

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One Last Bit Of Advice

- **Remember, everyone in your audience wants you to succeed**

- **They came specifically to hear <u>you</u>, not to get a good seat for the next presentation**

- **Have fun – it's an experience few will have**

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Thanks

- **Thanks for joining with me today**

- **Questions ???**

- **If I can be of assistance, or if you'd just like to chat, please contact me at**

    lee@sqe.com

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Acknowledgement

- **Some of this material came from Johanna Rothman and Naomi Karten**

- **My thanks to them for sharing**

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