

AN e-BURST OF INSPIRATION FROM THE BEST BOOKS

Jerry Weissman

DON'T MAKE THEM THINK!

Creating the Best Flow for the
Elements of any Great Presentation

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Press Delivers *elements*

FINANCIAL TIMES

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The best way to express the critical importance of flow to your audience is to start with the simple example of written text. One distinctive aspect of written text is that the reader, who is the audience to the writer, has random access to the writer's content. If the reader, while browsing through a book, report, or magazine, encounters a word or reference that is unclear but looks familiar, the reader can simply place a finger in the current page and then riffle back through the prior pages to find the original definition or reference. The reader can navigate through the writer's ideas independently.

Your presentation audience does not have that capability. They have only linear access to your content, one slide at a time. It's like looking at a forest at the level of the trees, only one tree at a time.

You may be doing an excellent job of presenting one tree. Your audience may be suitably impressed, thinking, "That's a superb tree: deep roots, thick bark, rich foliage!" But if, when you move on to the next tree, you don't make it crystal clear how it relates to the first tree, your audience is forced to try to divine the relationship on their own. They no longer have access to the first tree, which forces them to work harder to remember it and draw the necessary connections.

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