

The Laughter Factor

Presented by www.BergenMeisters.com Club #7493
Workshop Facilitator: [Michael Varma](#), DTM

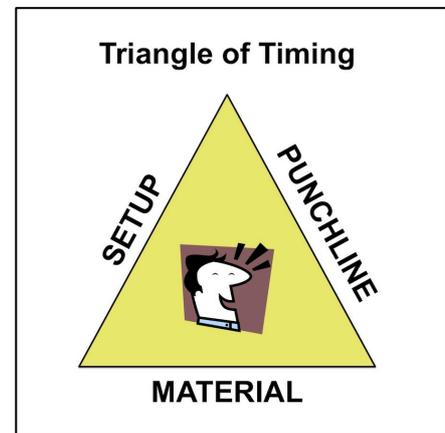
Triangle of Timing

Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog: few people are interested, and the frog dies. But you'll get more laughs when you understand the three key components required to tell a good joke. The Triangle of Timing is the winning formula: Material, Setup and Delivery.



Material

Ever told a funny joke and nobody laughed? They didn't laugh because there was no common ground for them to be engaged. Provide a firm foundation and **describe the scene** with vivid words so the audience envisions the situation.



Setup

The longer it takes to tell a joke the smaller the laughs. Keep the setup short and succinct. **Share only relevant material that affects the punchline.** Omit needless words and explanations: Only the germane shall remain.

Punchline

Present with confidence. Then pause. **Give the audience time to digest what you said.** Imagine your words flying through the air and entering their brains. It takes about three beats: hear, understand, comprehend - then the laughter ignites, clear and bright.

Every time you tell a joke you'll learn when the laughs come. Then you can enhance your delivery for the next time. Practice really does make perfect.

Resources:

1. www.HumorMasters.com – Receive support from a local specialty Toastmasters club dedicated to using humor in speeches. How many laughs per minute can you score?
2. [Humorously Speaking](#) – Learn how to incorporate jokes, anecdotes, and emphasize points in your next presentation. Toastmasters International Item #2260.
3. Your local library – many FREE resources.

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SOME Types of Jokes

Knock-Knock – An interactive joke that requires full audience participation.

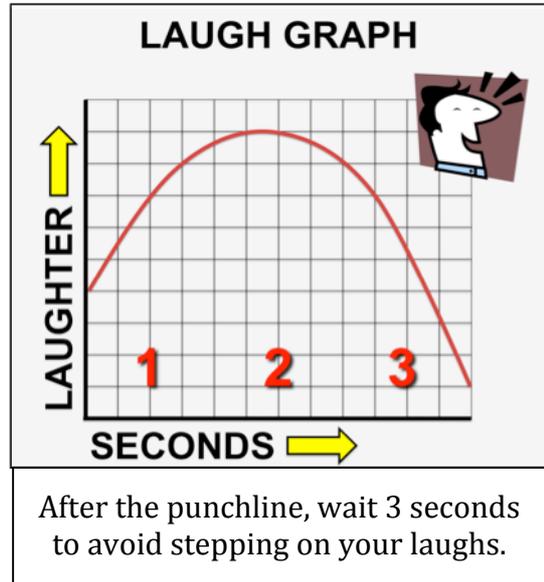
Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Freeze.
Freeze who?
Freeze a jolly good fellow.

Riddle – A “straight” question with a funny answer. Can be rhetorical to avoid responses.

What's a ten-letter word for “starts with gas?”
Automobile.

Why did the Cyclops give up teaching?
Because he only had one pupil.

What has a bottom at the top?
A leg.



One Liner – A single sentence with a humorous twist at the end. No Q&A – just laughs.

If I agreed with you we'd both be wrong. • The driver carries no cash; he's married.
Good girls are bad girls that never get caught. • Crowded elevators smell different to midgets.

Paradox – Seemingly true statement that contradicts itself or defies logic. Can produce delayed chuckles and snorts after a bit of brain work.

Failed invention #1: An inflatable anchor.
Failed invention #2: Waterproof teabag.
Failed invention #3: A parachute that opens on impact.

Spoonerism – The linking of two apparently entirely unconnected concepts or objects. These “What do” jokes are similar to riddles and might produce moans, groans, and throwing of stones!

What do you call a chicken crossing the road?
Poultry in motion.

What do you get if you cross a zebra with an ape man?
Tarzan stripes forever.

What do you get if you cross a bumble-bee with a rabbit?
A honey bunny.

Acronyms – Substitute actual words for industry familiar initials.

DTM = Distinguished Toastmasters (real)
DTM = Don't Time Me
DTM = Don't Test Me
DTM = Done Too Much

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The Three Ps of Telling a Joke

Humor allows a speaker to connect with an audience faster. Your core message is then more easily accepted. The most successful presenters use an effective technique known as The Three Ps of Telling a Joke: **Purpose**, **Pace** and...**Pause**.



Purpose

Tell origami jokes to a bunch of lawyers and you might get sued, but share judicial jokes with legal beagles and they'll file in your favor. **Match your jokes with the crowd's interests and the subject** at hand and the laughs will be longer, louder and more legitimate. And after your joke hits a high note, tell the audience the most important thing you want them to remember. Why? Because, "*After the laughter comes the height of listening.*" - [Jeffrey Gitomer](#).

Pace

A good jokes take less time and receives more laughs when you keep a clear and steady pace. **The rhythm of the joke prepares the audience for an expected line.** When an unexpected (punch)line is substituted you've achieved *The Laughter Factor*. (See examples on reverse.)

Pause

When telling a joke, don't pause for effect; **pause for the audience to reflect.** Every person listening needs time to absorb and process what you said. If you start your next joke too soon or run to sit down, you will "step" on your laughs and spoil the fun of the joke. Pause for three seconds *after* the punchline. Stand calm and confident and let the laughs roll.

When you use humor effectively you'll be able to attract and retain the audience's interest and emphasize key points in your presentation. Your spectators will remember you and your subject matter for the perfect win-win scenario.

Resources:

1. ***They're Not Laughing... 'Cause You're Not Funny*** – A booklet with 16.5 ways to add humor to any presentation by Toastmasters Victor Broski and Brian Adams.
2. ***The Comedy Bible*** by Judy Carter – Provides step-by-step instructions to help readers develop, refine, sell or perform their work.

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The Rule of Three

Apply what you've learned with The Three Ps of Telling a Joke (purpose, pace, and pause) to The Rule of Three type of joke.

The joke's structure includes a brief sentence (material) that provides a common foundation, includes a succinct setup and a direct delivery.

You can make your own Rule of Three joke on any subject by listing 10 real and 10 unexpected answers to your subject matter.

Then choose two real and one unexpected word or phrase and fill it in the sentence. Tips for creating "unexpected" words: choose the exact opposite or a complete exaggeration of the real term.

For example:

To win a speech contest you need _____, _____, and _____!
(Real) (Real) (Unexpected)

REAL

1. Humor
2. Strategy
3. Story
4. Emotion
5. Props
6. Gestures
7. Vocal Variety
8. Call to Action
9. Delivery
10. Authenticity

UNEXPECTED

1. Nudity
2. Bribe
3. Wardrobe malfunction
4. Gun
5. Plagiarize
6. Muppets
7. Puppy
8. Kitten
9. Bulldozer
10. Mime routine

To win a speech contest you need a good story, a good delivery, and a gun!
(Real) (Real) (Unexpected)

