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The perils and pitfalls of presenting

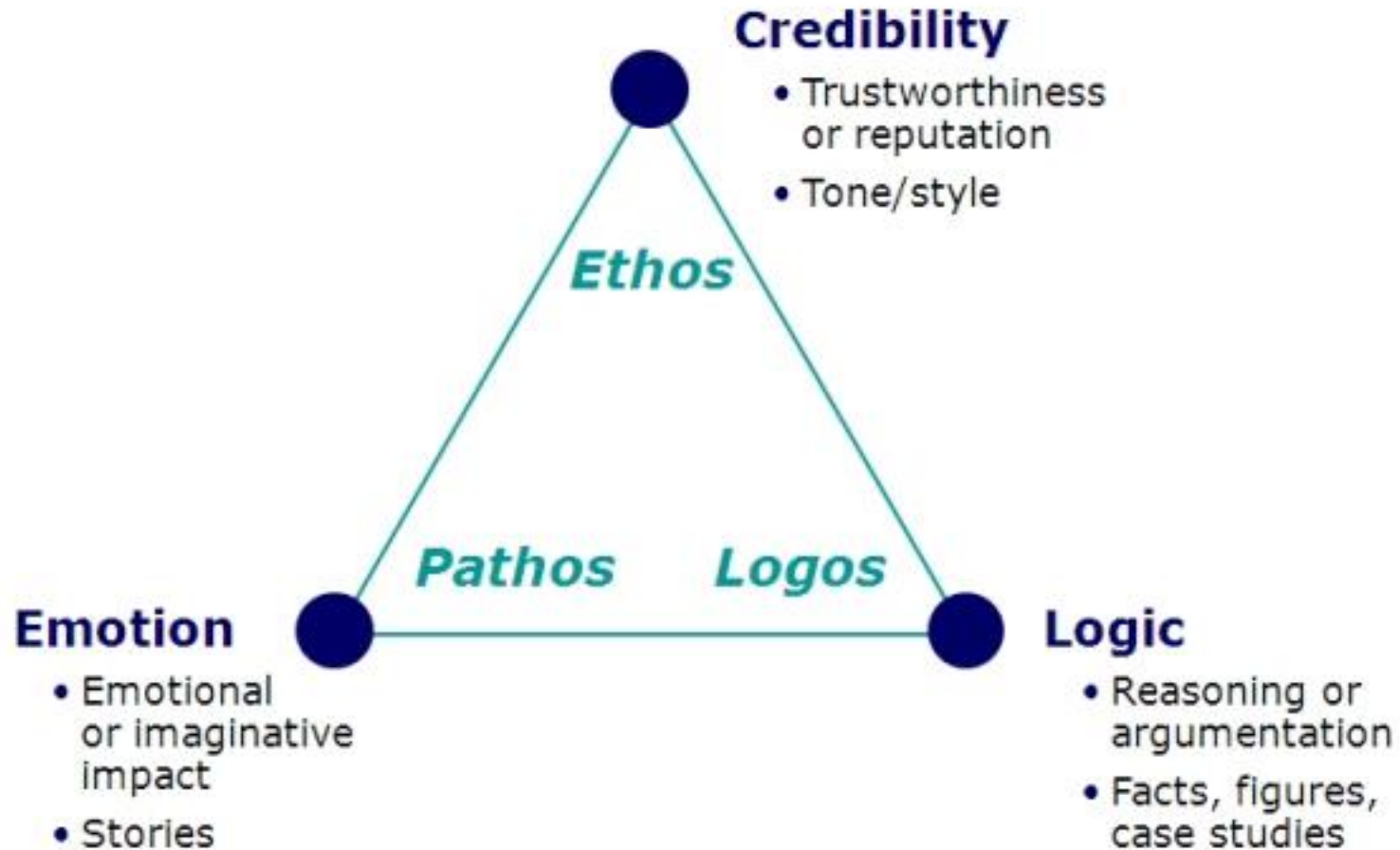
Dr. Damian E M Milton



Introduction

- This presentation will reflect upon my experiences of presenting in order to offer some advice, and also to warn of 'perils and pitfalls' in presenting about autism as an autistic person.
- I will not be talking about the Autism Show specifically as an environment as this will be covered by Leo later on.
- A starting place – a bit of Aristotle!

Logos, ethos, pathos



Using logic – rationale and evidence

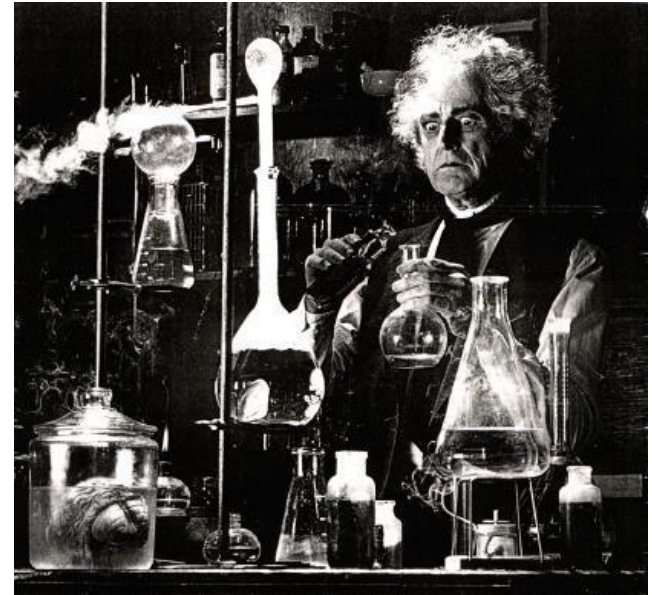
- Particularly important for academic-based presentations and conferences, but not to be taken lightly at practice-based events.
- Overstating the case and humility.
- Confidence in the evidence one does have and what can be deduced from it.
- Acknowledging contentions and controversies.
- Academic sources and referencing.

- Why should the audience take you seriously?

Trust and credibility

- Use of evidence (again)
- Status games
- Insider perspectives – advantages and potential problems (at least perceived by others)

- Why should the audience trust you and what you are saying?



Using quotes, visuals and emotional content

- “Some of us aren’t meant to belong. Some of us have to turn the world upside down and shake the hell out of it until we make our own place in it.” (Lowell, 1999).
- Why should the audience care about what you have to say?



Perils and pitfalls

- Beware: shark infested waters!
- Recognition and autonomy
- Benefits and costs
- Those unexpected moments and questions!
- Environment and technology
- Not having a backup plan
- Interruptions
- Losing one's balance
- Example: nothing tangible vs. 'death by powerpoint'
- Perfectionism: you can't please all the people all of the time, but you can please some of the people some of the time.

The audience

- Be careful of what was coined as the ‘self-narrating zoo exhibit’.
- Audience members and need for self-validation vs. potential need to challenge ideas (which can make people uncomfortable).
- Audience participation.

Putting it all together

- Style – going your own way, playing to strengths
- Practice – authentic and simulation (example: the penalty shootout)
- Knowing when to say no to a presenting opportunity
- Confidence and humility in message and content
- Tangible activities and being engaging
- Utilising your own strengths and interests (example: the ‘batversity’ workshop)

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