



## Now, Then & What Happened!

by Mohamed Isa

**W**ould you like to connect better and deeper with your audience? Would you like to hook them with every word you say? And would you like to have a lasting impact on the audience after you leave the stage? Then, you better start applying the powerful - "Now, Then & What Happened" Technique - for developing a faster and a stronger connection with your audience.

In 1998, Bill Phillips, an American entrepreneur, produced an extraordinary documentary film entitled "Body-of-Work" documenting the transformation of 10 individuals who participated in a 12-Week Physique Transformation Challenge. The film was a huge success and made Bill millions of Dollars. It was entirely based on this technique - "Now, Then & What Happened." Bill was clever in having 10 different individuals from different walks of life in the film to maximize the target audience so that each person who watches the film would identify himself or herself with one of the heroes in the film and then start their own transformation process using Bill's dietary supplements line.

So how do you apply this in speaking? Let me give you a real

example. I have a keynote called the 4 C's of Professional Success. And depending on the audience's sophistication level, I immediately like to come across as a credible speaker who knows the subject of professional success very well and not only that but also could demonstrate that I am a professional success too. So here is what I usually do. I jump right into a story and if you remember from the previous articles, stories are powerful to establish a connection with the audience and keep them engaged. I begin with this story:

In 2015, I spoke in three different continents - North America, Europe and Asia and not only that I was interviewed by CBS News in Washington DC. Can you believe that! This is my reality now. Traveling to different countries to speak and meet interesting people like you all the time. In 1996, I had another reality. I worked in an investment bank at the UGB Tower in the Diplomatic Area in Bahrain. I worked as a cleaner. Yes, as a cleaner to pay my university fees and expenses. I was responsible for various tasks including polishing the windows and making sure that they are shiny just like my head. So, today, I will share with you my story on how I went from

sweeping to speaking using the 4 C's of Professional Success.

My "Now" is being a speaker or my current reality. My "Then" was being a cleaner or my past reality. And the "What Happened" or "How" my application of the 4 C's of Professional Success. I am sure you came across the "Before and After" pictures of people who lost weight. This technique is similar to this concept. You tell the audience about your "After," then the "Before" and then tell them about how did you achieve the end results in terms of steps or solutions.

Recently, I was approached by a global consulting firm that specializes in customer experience consulting assignments to review its slides. I was very happy for it because its consultants apply this technique in their PowerPoint Slides to showcase their past clients projects successes and stories. Each slide had a three boxes: The before, the after and how the consulting firm helped its clients through its services.

The following diagram shows how you could present your idea on slide for your future talks:



Finally, be creative when you use the "Now, Then & What Happened" technique. For example, you could manipulate the equation above to suit your speaking occasion. You could start by sharing your vision of the future or the "After" and how would you like to achieve it by using certain steps or processes to move from your current reality. Use this powerful technique and you will be delighted by the results! @



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