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From public speaking to communicating with impact: an online masterclass

Mr Hart: Well. Good communication is in my view all about the power of three. The less you try and say to any audience, the more likely that audience will hear, understand and receive what it is you have to say. Conversely, the more you try and say in any form of communication, whether that's public speaking, giving a media interview, making a film, the less the audience will end up hearing. And the human brain is not good at taking in information in blocks of more than three. That's why it's all about the power of three. Location, location, location. If you like, that's what real estate agents would tell us, but it is all about getting across a point as clearly and succinctly as you possibly can. Good afternoon, good evening. I am Duncan Hart. I'm going to take you through some of the key-elements of good public speaking, structuring a presentation. We'll also spend a few minutes thinking about how you deliver what you want to say: Voice, eyes, language, body language, all of which are really incredibly important. Do submit questions at any time. We'll take them all at the end of the presentation. So, you've heard everything that I've had to say. I've seen communications in over 30 years on all sides of the equation. Firstly, as a journalist, then, as spokesperson for the emergency services, at incidents of fires, road crashes, getting across points we needed to make. Then, in-house public relations, press officer in consultancy, and for the last 12 years running my own company. And I've worked with oncologists for all of those 12 years, particularly through my longstanding association with ESMO. And I've prepared a lot of oncologists to give presentations and press conferences. So, I know a little bit about what you go through in terms of preparing what you want to say. For many people though, public speaking is something they really, really don't want to do, and they spend their lives, their careers trying to avoid it. Here's why. A fear of public speaking was found to be a more pressing concern than death, according to a ranking of society's most pervasive fears. This was a study that was done some years ago, but it still holds true today. It is not something that many people really want or enjoy doing. And as it says there, public speaking, a fear to be perhaps worse than death. In some people's perceptions. I don't think that is the case, but that is how some people feel about it. And this was also part of the same study. And actually, a loss of a family member was only worse for many people than public speaking. And if you ask me the fear of number three and the fear of number four, well, they lead to each other. The fear of being buried alive and the fear of death. That is how many people consider public speaking. I don't think it needs to be like that. I hope it doesn't need to be like that. My job, when I prepare people for public speaking, I've been invited as a speaker to conferences around Europe as well, so, I do know what you go through. But my aim is to take the fear out of public speaking, and also, to turn simply speaking into communicating with impact. You don't just want to speak because you might be wasting your time. You want to do everything you possibly can to make sure you are getting your points across. To make sure that the audience is hearing and really importantly, understanding what it is that you have to say. A lot of people get that wrong, because they're too technical. They haven't thought about the audience. So, it is really important not just to speak, but to get your points across, communicate with impact. And hopefully over time, at least, my aim is also to move it for many people from an endurance exercise to something you may, at some point come to enjoy. Now, what's the best starting point? This is something I'm asked a lot. People say, how do I work out what it is that I want to say? And that's critical. You must know what you want to say. That's the fundamental truth of any form of

communication. You've got to know what you want to say, but you've got to think about who you are saying it to. It is not just what you're going to say, it's who you are speaking to. So, the starting point I would suggest, in any form of communication, is to zoom out and think about who you are talking to. Understand your audience. That's the first step. Because you may have a similar message to convey as oncologists to other oncologists, at a symposium, at a presidential speech, for example, but also, at a press conference. And you've got two very different audiences. You have other oncologists who know exactly what you are talking about, and you'll have journalists, you have mainstream journalists, you might have more technical journalists, broadcast journalists, print journalists, newspaper, journal journalists, as you were. But two very different audiences. So, you've got to tailor what you say to the end audience. It's a mistake many people make. They just say the same thing, but one size does not fit all when it comes to communications, and when it comes to public speaking. Think about your audience: Who are they? Is it a general audience or a specialist audience? What is their level of knowledge? That's really your starting point. And if you are in any doubt, think about the two or three questions that your audience needs answers to, depending on what you are talking about. That's a great starting point. If you put yourself in the shoes of your audience and say, well, if I was listening to me speaking today, what is it that I need to know? You can then flip that on its head, and you've probably got your two or three key-points, key-themes, key-messages that you want to get across. So, do think about your audience, drill down into what you want to say, into just two or three key-points, and think about what you want the audience to take away. For example, is there a call to action? Is there something you want people to do as a result of your presentation? Do you want people to go away and log on to something, to take some action? Because if they do, you've absolutely got your point across. They're thinking about what you've said, you've made an impact and they go on to think about it in that call to action by logging on, by signing up to something, by downloading something. And you know you've given a good presentation then because the audience has gone away and taken up your call to action. So, how do we do that? How do we make sure we're getting across what we want to say? Well, starting by thinking about your audience is the first point. And then, overlay that into this message house. This is absolutely critical. This forces discipline upon us. We only want to tell one story and we only want to convey that in a maximum of two or three key-messages. But this message-house when it's complete needs to become a story-house. Giving a speech, a presentation, giving a media interview, any form of communication, it is about storytelling. But you only want to tell one story to an audience at any one time. Why? You don't want to confuse them. You want them to be very clear about what it is that you are saying and what you want them to take away from your presentation. So, I would start in the roof of this house where it says a story or the headline. Well, to some extent, that's more for media interviews, but the same is true of public speaking. In other words, what do you want the audience to go away thinking about? What do you want them to hear? That is your ultimate destination. That is what you want to achieve. And if you've got that very clearly in your mind, based on who is my audience, thinking about the audience that you are talking to, all you've going and got to do, is work back from that, and say, well, if that's what I want the audience to take away, to think about, to hear, to understand, what's my story made up of just two or three key-points that you want to get across. I call them key-messages. They are the messages that you want to convey. A maximum of three, for reasons we've already talked about a little bit in terms of the audience, any audience not being able to take in information in bigger blocks than that. And this message house forces that discipline upon us. There's only room for two or three key-messages. There's no extension. Don't add an extension to the house. It doesn't have the planning permission. It knocks the whole structure down. And public speaking, media interviews, any form of communication for me, done well, is about structure. And this forces us to have that structure. One story you want to convey, two or three key-points. Two or three key-messages for reasons that we've explained, but also, potentially think about it in the sense of a beginning, a middle and an end. It gives you that opportunity, but it also forces you not to say too much to any particular audience. So, two or three key-messages, behind them, what's going to support it. One of your messages might be what is the challenge that you set out to achieve or the science that you look to develop, the second message might be how did you go about it? The third message might be well, what were the results? Behind that is going to sit your

statistics, your findings, your science, your, in other forms of public speaking, your stories, your anecdotes, your case studies that helps to support the messages. Behind every message, you really need some good examples and proof to bring it to life, to prove the point that you are making. So, I think that's a great structure for anyone giving any form of communication. You've got to make an impact. And I did this at the start of my presentation. I didn't start by saying hello, good afternoon. And I'm a bit nervous or gosh, isn't it hot today? I started by apologising. For many people, apologise for being here. I'm sorry to take up your time today, I'm really sorry we'd all rather be outside in the sunshine and I'm not really qualified, I don't why I'm here. Never apologise. If you've been asked to give a speech or a presentation, it's for good reason. You've been asked to do it on your merit. So, start strongly. At most conferences we go to, most people start by saying hello and good afternoon. And this is who I am, and I'm a little bit nervous. Be different. Be bold. Shake things up a bit. My advice is you've got to start strongly. You've only got about 15 seconds for an audience to decide, are you worth listening to, or should I check my emails or do something else? You've got to catch the audience earlier. You've got to hook the audience. So, start with the hook. Start by telling the audience something they don't know. I did that today by starting with the power of three. And hopefully, that might have worked. Hopefully, you are still with me. Because if you don't have the audience at the start of a presentation as a speaker, you will never have that audience. If you hook the audience in and they're listening to you at the start, then, they're yours to lose, but hopefully, you won't lose them. Tell the audience something they don't already know, then introduce yourself if you need to, you may have had an introduction anyway. Start with your conclusion. And then, the audience hears your main point, your conclusion, your destination twice, at the start and then, through the middle, and at the end because you'll build up to the conclusion again at the end. So, start strongly. The difficult middle, this is the difficult part for any presenter, because people hear and learn best at the beginning and at the end, at the expense of everything in the middle. So, as a presenter, you've got to work hard to keep the audience with you. How do you do that? Well, you've only got three things you want to say. You've done yourself an enormous favour and the audience an enormous favour already, because you've forced that discipline upon yourself. So, you've only got your two or three things that tell your story: The beginning, the middle and the end. And tell the audience where they are in the presentation as well. That's important. If you lose the audience during a presentation, you can get them back again. So, you use what I call verbal signposts. What do I mean? You might say, well, firstly, and let me tell you how we went about this. You move on. Secondly, of three things that I need to say today, and thirdly, and lastly. And this is really important for everybody. So, you take the audience through your story and end strongly. You build back up to your conclusion, flag up that conclusion, signpost, the end is coming. That the audience, if they've drifted off, they need to wake up again. And in conclusion, and this is crucial for everyone listening today. This is what we need to think about and get back to your conclusion, and potentially, your call to action as well, if you have one. That is a great structure for a presentation and as a speaker, it does ensure you get the audience with you from the start, and get them back at key opportunities, if they've drifted off. How does that look like? What does that look like? This is simply my attempt. I call it my presentation power model. It's simply an attempt to visualise how strongly you need to start and how strongly you need to end. Absolutely critical. It's not to suggest that the bits in the middle are less important, but what it does suggest is that they are the most difficult elements, the difficult part of a presentation to keep the audience with you. But if you start strongly have the audience with you, go through just two or three key-messages that make up your story, you need that beginning, middle and end, and end strongly with a really strong conclusion. And then, people will absolutely hear what it is you've had to say. So, keep it as simple as possible, really. It is about one story. It is about just having two or three key-messages. But it's also about the language you use as well. Do, if any questions occur to you as you're going through, send them through, I can't guarantee I'll be able to answer them, but I will do my very best at the end. So, you structured your presentation, you've thought about the audience. You've worked out the key-points you want to say, you've got a structure, it's not a script. And I would recommend people don't speak from a script. You have to be very, very good as a presenter, and there aren't many of them out there in order to read from a script, without it sounding to the audience, like you're reading. And I'll come on to how you might want to do that

going forward. But think about your language you use. And a lot of people are nervous at the beginning. And so, on the left where it says under language, I do recommend that people start strongly, and really gain some confidence right from the start. So, memorise your introduction so you can look the audience in the eye, so you're not having to look down and read what you're saying, and then you get lost in your words and you lose confidence. Know what you want to say. The first few sentences, look the audience virtually or really in the eye. And then, you'll be building up your confidence. Make sure you focus your language on the audience. So, strong, positive words, but language which will resonate with the key audience, depending on their level of knowledge, which hopefully you will know. Focus on what it means for the audience and use appropriate language. And do try, at the bottom it says, eliminate filler words, and sounds. We all do this. We all um, we all uh, um, uh, you know, like, um, gosh, you know, at the end of the day. We all hear it. It doesn't matter too much unless it starts to become the only thing the audience hears, and then, it's a problem. I am an advocate, but good communication is not about being word perfect. It's about talking with passion, with conviction, and using language that resonates with the audience. But practise and try and iron-out as many of those filler sounds that we all use. We tend to use them because we're afraid of silences, but actually, the power of a pause when you are presenting helps the audience to catch up, helps you to get ready for your next slide, even allows you to take a sip of water. Use your voice as effectively as possible. Change the pace and the volume slightly. You want to create a sense of urgency; you might speak a little bit more quickly and increase the volume. What is incredibly important that we take away today? You might then just soften your language and slow down slightly. Again, it's another technique that just keeps the audience with you, and it helps you build to the important points that you want to make. So, make the most of your voice. We are not reciting Shakespeare probably, but we are delivering important information and news to an audience. So, it's an enhanced conversation. It's not the sort of way you would speak if you are talking to your family around the dinner table or friends at a restaurant, but it is about using your voice to an enhanced conversation. And don't be afraid of a pause. Most people are really worried. They think, I can't stop, I can't pause. Absolutely you can. It helps the audience catch up. And just a word on body language, because I could talk to you for a long time, and I do normally with face-to-face training that I undertake across media or presentation skills about body language. Posture is important. Don't lean on things when you're presenting. Don't grip onto a lectern for dear life, which everybody does, by the way. If you are delivering a press conference or a speech, 99 people out of 100 will grip onto the lectern. It doesn't look great, it drags your voice and your body down. It stops you from using hand gestures. Hand gestures are really important. There's been a lot of work done, and I'm happy to talk to anyone in future about this, if it's interesting. But it shows that using good hand gestures is like communicating with your audience on, in a different language, with an emotional resonance, if you like. It really helps to enhance what you want to say. And there's been lots of studies that show that to be the case with people who use more good, positive, open hand gestures, always getting a better reception than people who don't, who don't use their voice and their body to the best effect. It's about open gestures. It's about hugging the room. I always describe it as a big hug you're putting in your arms around the audience. But don't do anything that will distract the audience. So, don't lean on things. Don't, if you are doing a presentation like this kind of seat, leaning to one side, because it will distract the audience. Don't use closed gestures. Standing or sitting with your arms crossed, it looks defensive. Don't point. That's something that some, a lot of politicians do. So, it's about enhancing what you want to say through good, strong, open, confident, hand gestures and body language. And if you are presenting on a stage, use of movement, don't move around for the sake of it. I trained someone recently who moved around so much when he was presenting, he almost fell over his own feet. I've seen people nearly fall off a stage because they're moving around so much. And that really is not a great look. It's not something you want to do. So, think about your body, think about use of movement. Dress appropriately, of course, you will. But also, smile. It's a great weapon in your armoury, and it does make you feel confident. If you lose your way in a presentation, you will get back if you worked out what you want to say, a smile keeps you in control, but it also gives the audience great reassurance that you know what you're talking about, you're pleased to be there. That's body language, eyes, really important. Just a quick word on eyes. You need to look the audience in the eye or make

it look as though you are, if you are doing it virtually, or if you're presenting on a stage where you can't actually see the audience because of the lights. Start by looking at the back if you haven't got a microphone, the eye acts like a radar. It helps your voice find the right level so that you are talking as if you're talking to someone at the back to make sure they can hear, not talking just to someone at the front. And with a big room, think of the room as a giant letter W or an M. In other words, you're talking to people at the point of the M, getting eye contact or making it look as though you are with them, with people down to the left, people at the top, people down perhaps to your right, make sure everyone feels included. You want to be looking at the audience most of the time, you don't want to be reading from a script, I would suggest. So, you might want to use note cards. People often say, well, how do I make sure I don't miss out something I wanted to say for my presentation? Well, if you're using slides, you could use those as a prompt, but also, you can have some note cards in just one hand. Not a script, just little bullet points. Just make sure that you don't miss anything out. So, just a couple of, a little bit of myth busting. These are things I hear all the time when I'm get doing presentation training. People often say to me, that "I can tell the audience hates me the way they're looking at me, they think I'm an idiot." Absolutely not. I very much doubt that that's the case. People say, well, "People are frowning at me. They think I'm a complete idiot." People hear, listen, learn in different ways. People might be taking notes. I hear this, "Oh, someone was on an iPad." Well, they were probably taking notes about what it is that you are saying. So, people might be sitting frowning slightly doesn't matter. Don't lose confidence because of that. The audience I am sure will want to hear what you have to say. You're there on merit, you've been asked to deliver some findings or say something that that audience is very likely to need and want to hear. A lot of people say to me, the third point down, they must be word perfect. I don't agree with that at all. I don't think it's about being word perfect. I think I mentioned this earlier. It is though about delivering what you want to say with passion, with conviction, with confidence and with a smile as well. "I can't take a sip of water." You absolutely can. And I see people presenting and they're really drying up, and they're desperately thinking, "I can't stop. I can't have a sip of water." Absolutely you can. Do not be afraid of a silence. Keeping yourself lubricated, hydrated, is incredibly important and allows you to keep on talking. So, you can build in a pause. It helps an audience understand what it is that you are saying. And lastly, and this is something I have seen working with oncologists for the last decade. They often, people often say, not just though, I have to say in other areas as well. "My topic is so complex. You know, I can't have three key-messages. That's the first thing, I need five." I would argue that actually it's the other way around. If your topic is so complicated that the audience is going to struggle, it's even more important just to have two or three key-messages. And you don't have hundreds of slides. I have seen people come to press conferences in scientific arenas with a five-minute presentation, a five-minute slot with 25 slides. There is no way you'll get through them in five minutes, there is no way the audience will hear what you have to say. If you've got five minutes, five slides, maximum three slides, really. Maybe, even you don't need slides, but I hear a lot, I have a lot of pushback from people across the medical arena that people feel if you don't have slides, you haven't thought, you haven't taken the effort to decide what you want to say. And clearly, if you're delivering scientific findings, you need some slides. Keep them simple, keep them as simple and as few as possible. And then, that way you won't confuse the end audience. So, how about presenting with slides then? I've just said, keep them simple and don't have too many. Absolutely critical, really. If you have to go through your slides so fast, the audience won't be able to keep up. I've seen people sort of cut out slides because they're running out of time. They say, "Oh, we don't need to go through this, I'll just read through these." Why were they there in the first place? If you don't need them, take it out. It's an, all of these things are enemies of clarity. So, as few slides as you need, really, you keep them as simple as possible. Don't and I have seen some really horrendously difficult slides for certainly a general audience to understand at medical conferences. Think about the key-facts, the key-findings only, that you need to have on the screen. Generally speaking, there's a rule that says that people max out at maximum seven lines, really, on a slide and seven words per line. So, don't have lots and lots of words if you can help it. You keep the font clear. Effectively the best way of saying to yourself is have I got too much on here on my slide? Is can it be read from the back? Think about someone sitting at the back, trying to make sense of what's on the screen. So, keep the words to an absolute minimum.

Keep the font large. Be careful about colour contrast as well. Greens and yellows are difficult for some people to, words in greens and yellows, it's difficult for some people to read. And don't overdo lots of animations. I've seen people have all these things flying in from left and right and above, and it's just been, it's incredibly complicated and confusing and distracting for the end audience. So, yes, your slides need to be there to enhance what it is you want to say. The power's got to be with you though, not on more PowerPoint and not on the screen. So, use them effectively to enhance, they mustn't detract. And the last key-point for this is just be careful because presenting with slides can create a conflict between you and the audience. If it's lots of information on the slides, if you are talking about the next slide before you bring it up on the screen, the audience thinks sometimes, do I listen to you or do I read what's on the screen? So, allow the audience just a little pause before you start speaking. It enables you to take that sip of water as well. Really importantly though, don't have loads and loads of text on a slide and stand there and read it word by word. I've seen this happen. And the audience effectively thinks, well, why are you there? You might well have just have given me the slides and given me that to take away. Importantly though, don't turn away, and most people do. They turn away and they talk to their slides. You've got to avoid that. A quick glance at your slides, or look down at your slides and then, look back at the audience. You've got to know what you want to say. And note cards are a great way of doing that. So, really in a couple of summary slides for me, in conclusion, he says building back up to make a strong conclusion and also using verbal signposts to tell you we are very much approaching the end of my little section. Plan for the unexpected. If you plan for the worst and hope for the best, you won't go far wrong. I helped to organise a data protection conference three, four years ago, three years ago at the European parliament. And I trained to compare the host over about six months. And we planned for a total IT failure, when she was moderating a panel debate. There was a total internet failure, but nobody knew. She, knew the questions she wanted to ask, she knew how she wanted to engage with the end audience. So, you've got to be ready to present without slides in case they fail, and they might. So really know what you want to say with, or without slides. Have little note cards that will help you get through it if there's an IT failure. Ignore distractions. People walk in and out a lot at press conferences. And at other conferences, when people are presenting. Don't let it distract you. And also, think about the questions you might well be asked and think about your answers. In the words allegedly of Mike Tyson, "Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face." And that's very true in any form of communication. If you haven't thought about what might go wrong, you get the metaphorical at least, punch from left or right field. Plan for the worst, hope for the best, and you'll be alright. So, in summary, don't go on too long, focus on the audience and their needs. Think about your communications from their perspective. It's not about your PR, if you like, or your storytelling, it's about engaging with the end audience. You've got to tell a story to an audience in three key-messages. Start and end really strongly. Get your conclusion in at the start, get it in, expand it at the end. Don't have too many slides, really don't go on too long. The maximum time I'm at it actually is about 20 minutes, really, that you can keep an audience for. Practise, practise, practise, and over time, I hope you will start even perhaps not just to endure, but to enjoy public speaking. That's me, and we'll be absolutely happy to take any questions that you may have.

Dr Abdelaziz: Thank you, Duncan, really, for this interesting...

Mr Hart: Pleasure.

Dr Abdelaziz: ... really, lecture. And it's actually vital to our daily life to have public speaking. And we get now some tips from you?

Mr Hart: Okay.

Dr Abdelaziz: To enhance our skills?

Mr Hart: I hope so.

Dr Abdelaziz: Okay. So, we have questions in Q&A. I, myself, have some, do you think, some say the ability of public speaking is both innate and acquired. And experience of public speaking is cumulative. What do you think regarding this?

Mr Hart: It's an interesting question. I don't think, I don't believe I firmly don't believe. I firmly believe that no one is born to do public speaking. I think it's a skill that we all need to gain. I don't think there are any necessarily born communicators. There are some that enjoy it more, there are some that like it less, but I think it's about mainly, it's about planning, practise. And unfortunately, the more you do it, the better you will get at it. And you know, I've seen people, well known people who are thought to be natural communicators and confident people, and they're often not. And often they are quite nervous, but they see the value in what they're doing, the value in public speaking or giving interviews. So, generally speaking, I think there are skills that are acquired. Yes, it comes naturally to some than others perhaps, but we can all do it if we do plan and we do practise. And if we get out there and do it, and every time you'll do a presentation, you'll learn from it. I would encourage everybody not to be too critical of themselves though. People often ask, should I review my speech? Should I kind of go into it in lots of detail? I think you've got to find what works for you, but I certainly wouldn't be too critical of yourself. We're never perfect, it's just about being the best version of ourselves that we can be.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. Okay. You know, regarding the fears, there are very several causes of fear, fear of lacking experience, of inability to answer questions, of having negative feedback maybe, or fear of making mistakes, even the fear of being the centre of attention or losing the train of thoughts. But I think it is all in one's mind. So, the fear gives negative thoughts, and you should be confident with positive thoughts. So, can you give us tips on how to overcome this?

Mr Hart: Yeah. I mean, I think I would start by taking you back to the first part of my presentation, one of the best ways of overcoming fear of getting it wrong or stumbling or forgetting what you want to say is to know very, very clearly what you want to say, and not trying to say too much. Those two things go hand in hand. If you go into a presentation with 15 massively complicated things you want to say, you're going to get more nervous than if you're going in with one story with just two or three, great clarity, around two or three things you want to say. So, it does come back to proper preparation, it comes back to practise. Everyone needs to find the right way of doing this. You might want to film yourself, you might want a critical friend to listen to what you want to say. If you're communicating to a non-technical audience, a non-oncology audience, then practise in front of someone who isn't an oncologist, who doesn't necessarily understand all the intricacies, because if they understand it, then a non-expert, if you like, would be able to understand what you want to say. And all those things really, should give you enormous confidence. I would use note cards and not scripts. I would use note cards, just little kind of postcards, number them in case you drop them just before you go on stage, but just little things that just two or three bullet points or examples, just to stop you from worrying about missing a big important chunk of your presentation out. The other thing I would say, though, is do yourself an enormous favour and if you're presenting in the morning, for example, have a bit of breakfast. Fortify yourself ready for a presentation. I was asked once to help someone who kept collapsing during presentations, and these things were in the morning after breakfast. And yet, it would be a night out beforehand with journalists, for example, and in the morning, they'd have to present and he couldn't get through it, but his preparation was several cigarettes and lots of coffee. Well, have a bit of breakfast, get rid of the cigarettes anyway, and don't drink coffee. That's incredibly important. It makes us more nervous. If it's got caffeine, it makes the heart beat faster. I'm not a medic, but I do know that it can make us feel worse. We think it's not water, hydrate yourself, keep yourself lubricated. And do everything you can to make yourself feel as confident as possible.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. You know. This was my next thinking of becoming more nervous is a well-known symptom. When one presents, I know some who lose their confidence completely. Maybe, once they have to present in public, despite they have strong characters, however, they may have trembling voice.

Mr Hart: Absolutely.

Dr Abdelaziz: They have shaking hands, even they can take meta-blockers for the accelerated heartbeats or breathing rapidly. So, how do you see this, and I think you gave some tips to choose them. I'm one of them who drinks coffee before any public speaking, so.

Mr Hart: Try not to.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. I will try not to drink.

Mr Hart: Yeah. You know. I think it kind of follows on from what we were saying, really. My view is that if you start strongly, you build up that confidence, and the rest should be plain sailing. I would absolutely memorise your opening comments, the things you want to say to start with, because that will get you off strongly. Either you won't forget that. That's incredibly important. I mean, it does come back I think to knowing what you want to say, being really clear about what you want to say. The better you know your content, the more confident you should be. If you memorise that opening few sentences, if you use note cards, that will really help. Breathing techniques can help. Most people will have a trembling voice and you mentioned this earlier. A few breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth, just for whatever reason, and I say, again, I'm not an expert on, a psychologist or medic, it does help to stabilise you, to make you feel calm. And also, just to steady the voice, getting that little bit of air in the lungs, I suppose. I think all of those things will really help, but it does come down to really knowing what you want to say should give you enormous confidence. The other thing I would suggest, and actually this is a really important point actually, in case you lose your way, most of us might at some point where we're public speaking, what I suggest is, and this is the same in media interviews, actually. Have a default comment or theme that you can, that gets you back on track. You lose your way, and you are looking down at your notes, you're thinking, "Where am I?" I call it a get out of jail free card. A phrase like a back pocket phrase or a comment that gets you back on track. It might be an example, it might be one of your key-findings. Get yourself back on track and then, carry on. And for most audiences, they are really nervous on your behalf. Far from most audience thinking you're an idiot, or you don't what you are talking about, most people of course are very receptive because you are there and we are all there on our merits. So, actually, having a default phrase, having something that gets you back on track and the way you get back on track gives the audience enormous satisfaction. You don't need to be word perfect, use the smile. If I've just lost my way, I might say, "Look, let me try this again. What I'm trying to say here is this." You do it with a smile, you do it with confidence, everyone feels reassured.

Dr Abdelaziz: Oh, thank you for these tips also. What do you think, some recommend watching records or one's speech? What do you think regarding this?

Mr Hart: Sorry. Is that watching yourself?

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah.

Mr Hart: Yeah. I think you've just got to find what works for you. I wouldn't be too critical of yourself if you do watch yourself back really. By all means, if you're getting the opportunity and if you want to learn from it, then absolutely. But don't lose confidence. Don't, don't feel that actually, you could have done that. Perhaps, you could have done something a little bit better. I'll look back on this and think, well, I could have done that a little bit better, but hopefully, it's delivered you naturally. It's very important for people to be authentic as well. Today, there's so much that's fake today. You know, fake news, fake social media, and so on. It's so important to be yourself and be authentic. So, I wouldn't worry too much. I think if watching yourself back makes it worse, simply don't do it. If watching it back, you can say, "Ah, I need to do that better." Then yeah, maybe. Just find what works for you.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. And do you think should every lecture or during giving a speech or a lecture understand body language to analyse those with the audience and oneself?

Mr Hart: Yeah. I mean, body language is critical and I can speak all day about it. There's been lots of work about how good body language helps you communicate with an audience on an emotional level. And I think body language is critical, really. And the work done, people were asked to watch people giving speeches in silence without the sound and the audience was asked to kind of work out who got the best reception. And it's a fascinating study because focus group always got it right. And the people who got used the most expressions, the most positive body language, got always the best reception from those who perhaps were less animated and less enthusiastic. So, it is about complimenting what you're saying with good body language. So, it is about helping you to communicate what you want to say, on the other side of the coin though, it's also about making sure you don't do anything that distracts the end audience. If you do anything, if you wear anything, if you stand in a certain way or move about a lot or constantly you scratch your head, and people do it a lot, actually. They sort of touch their faces when they're nervous. Again, all of these things will be slightly distracting for the end audience. So, the more we can better use our hands and in a positive way, the better. Body language is absolutely key. And it's worth watching good presenters, presenters that you think are good and work out why you think they're good. And normally it's a combination of two or three key-messages, using the right language, and good positive body language.

Dr Abdelaziz: Nice. I have another thinking, these tips are generalised to all individuals. Is there specific tips for physicians, especially oncologists, for example, because sometimes we need to present a lot of data and trials, as you said, as you have said, and this may bring a bit of boring to some audience or it raises lots of questions. So, how can we overcome this? And still, we have a lot of data to present.

Mr Hart: It is a challenge, it is a challenge. And I've worked with cardiologists, I've worked with a lot of oncologists. So, I know the challenge or I understand, I appreciate the challenge, even if I don't understand all the data that's being presented. Just keep it as simple as possible, it is really the best information, the best advice I can give, really. Cut out what is not absolutely essential for your particular audience. Keep it as simple as possible. Your key-messages should turn complex topics into simple, accessible, interesting, and relevant chunks of information. So, cut out, nobody knows really what you leave on the cutting room floor. And there's always a desire when you're public speaking to tell an audience everything. You can't because they won't hear it. So, just keep it as simple as possible, as few slides as possible. Think about also the language you're using and make sure that you are, you know, are you talking to media, press conference or to a group of advocates or patients, for example, or are you talking to other oncologists. And tailor your language and tailor the complexity to that particular audience. Because I know, and we were talking earlier, you were asking also about jargon and acronyms, and they are all enemies of clarity, I have to say. Use as few as possible. Every sector, not just oncology, every sector has it. And when people give that verbal shorthand, which is jargon, it gets in the way. I do a lot of work with car manufacturers and they talk about ice. What does that mean? Apart from a block of ice? It means the internal combustion engine. But of course, an end audience, who's not an expert in that field, won't know. They even talk about EVs, well, it's electric vehicles. Talk about electric cars. So, use the language plain, primary language that cannot be misunderstood by your end audience and as few acronyms and get rid of the jargon as much as you possibly can. And then you'll get your points across.

Dr Abdelaziz: Thank you very much. My last question, do you think public speaking as a part of communication skills should be taught to, for example, university students to enhance their skills?

Mr Hart: I think it's a great idea. Yeah. I've trained people who are doing MBAs and it's often part of MBAs as postgraduates. Or people who have already have some experience in the workplace. Well, absolutely. Because I think at... I mean, being able to present is a key-skill. It's a key-life skill. It's a key-skill for everyone in their careers, whether or not we're talking to small groups, leading discussions, moderating them, or if we go on to talk and do keynote speeches. But if you've never done a keynote speech and you've been around here for a few years in industry or in science, it can be incredibly daunting. I would argue that you being at university, my son has just graduated from university, and I think being able to present at his age is a fantastic skill that will stand him in good stead and stand individuals, give people an advantage simply by being good

communicators. It is about communicating with impact, it's not about speaking. So, I think the earlier, before people are almost constrained by corporate life, it's a fantastic skill to gain early in life. So, absolutely, yes. I've been an advocate for including communications as a module. I think it's a great idea.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. We can do that together.

Mr Hart: Absolutely.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. Well, I'd like to thank you, really. I think we enjoyed really this session with you.

Mr Hart: I am pleased.

Dr Abdelaziz: It helped us through our progress.

Mr Hart: Well, and thank you for your questions. There's been some fantastically insightful questions there, and I hope I was able to answer them as best I could, but thanks for the questions and great to talk to you and to everyone else.

Dr Abdelaziz: Thank you very much.

Mr Hart: Pleasure.