

Major Vendor Partners with PowerSpeaking on Leadership Development



Background:

At Adobe strategic leaders from the IT organization wanted to ensure that their experts in technology development also excel when presenting to senior business decision makers. Adobe engaged PowerSpeaking, Inc. to provide a customized, high-impact presentations solution.

OBJECTIVES: GOALS FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDED:

- **Executive interaction.** Better grasp of the executives' big-picture perspective, and their need for high-level overviews that concisely address both technical and business issues. Be ready for that impromptu, 2-minute hallway conversation when a senior leader asks for a quick project update. Speak in business terms and with the business outcomes in mind — always.
- **Audience engagement.** Use a purposeful, engaging style and avoid distracting, nervous mannerisms. Strengthen leadership presence to gain and hold people's attention. Improvise and handle Q&A with confidence. Be aware of how they show up and the impact on audiences' perception.
- **Communication processes.** Create content (slides or briefs) that synthesizes disparate information and crisply articulates it for executive leadership. Develop a focused message and utilize strategies to stay on point.

PROCESS: PowerSpeaking, Inc. created a custom workshop for 70 global Adobe leaders. Some participated face-to-face; others on-line. (Content originated from the course: Speaking Up: Presenting to Executives, and utilized individual coaching.)

Each participant followed PowerSpeaking's planning templates to identify action steps, clarify bottom line statements, anticipate questions, and understand audience needs. Workshop scenarios posed difficult challenges, such as conflicts between IT and business goals, or pitching an investment idea to an Adobe executive. Speakers attended prep events and practiced with delivery style guides. Teams of four to seven were coached by an Adobe business leader.

Team members were filmed and given feedback from both internal Adobe representatives and PowerSpeaking trainers. At the end of the workshop, each team presented a 10-minute, executive-facing talk.

IMPACT: This event received a very positive response from participants, who left the session with easy to use tools and tips they could immediately put in practice. They also reported greater confidence in conversations with executives, and deeper understanding of presentation essentials. Adobe business leaders, acting as coaches, also rated the event highly. Leaders reported stronger, more impactful presentations, which saved time and improved the decision making process.