

**Business &  
Leadership  
BOOKS**

## Welcome to Chicago, David Booth & Deborah Shames!

In their new book *OWN THE ROOM: Business Presentations that Persuade, Engage & Get Results* (McGraw-Hill, Available 9/18) skilled corporate communication experts and authors Deborah Shames and David Booth offer a method of business presenting that goes beyond the dos and don'ts of public speaking. They deliver a proven way for executives to differentiate their services and become industry leaders—from team presenting and closing important deals to delivering news to shareholders.

I learned that Deborah and David will be in Chicago on September 22 and 23 to conduct speaking training at the National Association of Certified Analysts Conference, so I took the opportunity to ask them two questions for BananaQ.

Deborah, what was one of your most challenging assignments?

“One of our most challenging communication scenarios was training the investment banking firm of Barrington Associates in LA. They called in Eloqui to increase their hit rate, when they were on the short list to broker the sale of a company. In their world, this is called a “beauty contest.

“Typically, before the beauty contest, Barrington would assign a team to put together a pitch book, which consisted of how they would value the company, activity in that market sector, their projection and timeline. This comprehensive document could take weeks and was often completed just prior to the pitch.

“The founding partner would take the lead at the pitch, and present the content, even though he may have had little to do with assembling the material and no relationship with the company owners. To compensate, he would go through the pitch book, in chronological order, one page at a time. The other members of the Barrington team would have minor roles, and speak very little even though they would be the ones to run the deal if Barrington was chosen.

“We radically changed their approach. We believed that by increasing the interactivity, we would increase their success. First, we coached them on team presenting skills, including dividing up content among the entire deal team. For example, we made sure the VP (who had a relationship with the potential client) served as the facilitator, so that once the deal was won, the client would see him as the go-to person for day-to-day details.

“Instead of using the pitch book as a cueing device, we recommended that the Barrington team use it as a reference and not necessarily go in order. It was better to ask questions, and based on the client's needs, go to that section of the pitch book that satisfied their concern.

“We also insisted that they spend time rehearsing the mechanics and

delivery of the pitch, rather than 100% of their time on content—which is similar to the approach many of our clients take. During the rehearsal, we guided them in smooth hand-offs to demonstrate their respect for each other. Sharing the stage and passing the baton modeled how they would conduct business during the actual deal process.

“To set themselves apart, we recommended they depart from the investment banker's uniform—white shirts, dark suits and red or yellow ties. For example, to appear trustworthy and approachable, we had the key players wear blue shirts.

“The push back on wardrobe, pitch book and having the founder do all of the talking was based on habit—i.e. what they had done for years, and what they considered was expected of investment bankers.

“Going up against competitive, A-type, meat-eating investment bankers was tough, but after Barrington won their very next pitch, we had their attention. And at our next session, everyone was wearing blue shirts!”

David, what's your most memorable keynote experience?

“Our most memorable keynote speaking experience came in 2008 when we kicked off the national conference of NACVA (National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts) in Washington, D.C.

“Facing a room of over a thousand CPAs was daunting. Our challenge was to capture the attention and interest of professionals who expected to receive advanced technical training. CPAs attend this conference to learn more about how to value a business and be hired as expert witnesses. Yet we were asked to inspire and motivate them to market themselves as consultants—not deliver technical expertise.

“We coached them to put on their marketing hats, consider what set them apart and how they could express what they do in a fresh and unique way. We led interactive exercises that shaped their “elevator speeches”—self introductions, honed their differentiators, and delivered a template for telling client anecdotes. The goal was to exhibit how they

were successful, rather than recite their credentials.

“Contrary to the reputation that CPAs are boring, this group was lively, witty, and fully participatory. In front of their peers, individuals were willing to stand up and have us shape their anecdotes and elevator speeches. When they realized they could communicate what they do in a colorful and entertaining way, it encouraged others to participate. The excitement in the room was palpable.

“Not only did we sell all our books, but for the remainder of the conference, whenever we ran into an attendee in the hotel lobby, they treated us like rock stars. We never tired of autographing our books, and NACVA remains one of our favorite clients.”

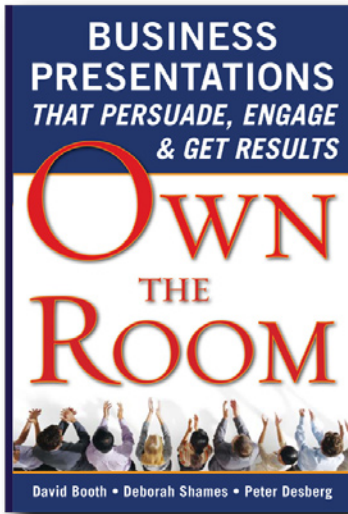
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**David Booth & Deborah Shames, co-authors of *OWN THE ROOM: Business Presentations that Persuade, Engage & Get Results*.**

*Deborah Shames and David Booth are co-founders of Eloqui, a Corporate Communications firm based in Southern California.*

*Eloqui techniques are derived from David Booth's experience as a theatre director and award winning performer. David has guest starred on series such as *The Practice*, *Judging Amy*, *Gilmore Girls*, and *Hidden Hills*. He has worked with directors including Francis Ford Coppola and Wes Craven in the original *Scream*. Although acting was his first career, David's current focus is*



**OWN THE ROOM: Business Presentations that Persuade, Engage & Get Results** (McGraw-Hill September 2009. \$18.95 Paperback. ISBN-10: 0071628592. ISBN-13: 978-0071628594) can be purchased at all major retailers, including Amazon.com.

on corporate communications. David represents global companies in the trade show arena throughout the U.S. and Europe.

An accomplished producer and director, Deborah Shames brings years of experience behind the camera. Directing and distributing award-winning independent films, she has also produced more than sixty corporate and educational videos. On-camera, she has directed luminaries including Wendie Malick, Rita Moreno, Danny Glover, and Angela Lansbury. Deborah has prepped TV anchors, on-camera hosts and authors before national book tours.

They are field-trained as directors and have translated performance techniques from the entertainment industry for the business professional. Eloqui training also utilizes the latest research from Neuroscience on how to be memorable. They also draw on Impression Management from the field of psychology.

Eloqui trains companies to deliver their competitive advantage. Their clients include Amgen, Mattel and Fisher Price, as well as mid-level, law, financial and insurance firms. They also coach individuals to identify their strengths, utilize their authentic voice and drive business.

**OWN THE ROOM: Business Presentations that Persuade, Engage & Get Results** can be purchased at all major retailers, including Amazon.com. For more information on Deborah Shames and David Booth, or to sign up for communication training with their presentation and communication training firm, Eloqui, please visit [www.eloqui.biz](http://www.eloqui.biz).