TED

Can ideas change the world? The vision of TED is clear: yes, they can. TEDx events next month in India and China show the company’s vision is growing. What’s more, the speakers are tearing up the presentations rule book.

1 Find an area of common interest with your partner in the box below. Decide what’s new and exciting in this field.

| science | arts | politics | education | technology | culture | business | global issues | entertainment | design |

2 Scan the transcript of the speech below and put the following PowerPoint slides into the correct order.

Welcome to this groundbreaking event. First, let me tell you a little about Ted.com. We were founded in 1984. We’re an academic organization and as you know already, our annual events are by invitation-only. Our four-day conferences feature some of the world’s most dynamic presenters. We really believe that ideas can change the world. Our slogan says it all: ‘ideas worth spreading’.

TED stands for: technology, entertainment and design. We have expanded the scope of our talks to cover a pretty wide range of topics including science, arts, politics, education, culture, business and global issues.

What are we doing here? TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events, bringing people together to share a TED-like experience. As you may already know, speakers at previous conferences have included Bill Clinton, Gordon Brown, former US Vice President Al Gore, Microsoft’s Bill Gates and Google co-founders, Sergey Brin and Larry Page.

There’s no time right now to go through all of our, er, ‘TED commandments’, but all speakers must follow these guidelines. We ask that presenters should not run overtime, and definitely not make any kind of pitch for their own company. We ask presenters not to use notes. Sure, they need to rehearse but also be spontaneous. But more than that, to ‘share an idea that could change the world’. We encourage them to say something the audience will remember forever.

So yes, I guess we are re-writing the rule book for presentations. I’ve gotta tell you to forget what you learnt on that high-priced presentations course – you know, ‘divide your presentation into three parts’. And don’t worry about ‘signposting language’. All you need is the rhetoric to inspire. It’s no wonder that there are so many hits on our website. Please visit us there to enjoy our bank of life-changing presentations. But now, just sit back and relax. As the Beatles once sang: ‘We hope you will enjoy the show!’

3 Read the whole transcript. What are the ‘TED commandments’?

4 Identify the following words in the transcript from their definitions below.

(a) statement or promise made to promote something
(b) to practise a speech before delivering it to an audience
(c) happening in a natural way without being planned or thought about
(d) phrases used to help the audience follow a presentation
(e) a style of speaking that is intended to influence people

Some definitions taken or adapted from: http://www.macmillandictionary.com/

5 Prepare a short (5 minute) presentation for a local TEDx event. Choose your topic area and main idea. Rehearse your speech. Make sure you follow the ‘TED commandments’.

This page has been downloaded from www.businessenglishonline.net.
It is photocopiable, but all copies must be complete pages.