



All Ears English Episode 140:

Three Pro Tips on How to Start Your Presentation in English with Carl Kwan

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 140: “Three Pro Tips on How to Start Your Presentation in English with Carl Kwan.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel,’ from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: So, Gabby, how can our listeners become insiders with All Ears English?

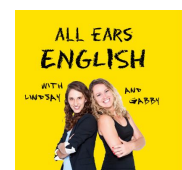
Gabby: Go to www.AllEarsEnglish.com/100. It’s 1-0-0.

Lindsay: What can they get there?

Gabby: That’s where you get on our email list, our insider list, where we have conversations with you on email and even sometimes on Skype.

Lindsay: But it’s not just getting on the list, there’s something even more awesome, there, that they can get, right?

Gabby: That’s right, because 100 means “100 Most Common Phrases in the English Language,” an e-book that we made just for you.



Lindsay: Super useful and up till (until) today, (uh), 900 people have downloaded this e-book. So it's awesome.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: After today's episode, you'll never have to wonder how you're going to start a presentation in English.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay.

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby. How (are) you doing today?

Gabby: Doing great because we have our friend, our colleague, Carl Kwan with us today. Hey Carl, what's up?

Carl: Hey there, ladies! How are you?

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: Feeling great. Glad to have you back, Carl.

Gabby: Yeah.

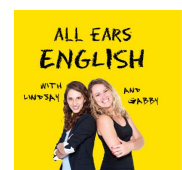
Carl: Glad to be back. Always happy to be able to talk to you two.

Gabby: So for, for our audience, so that you guys know who are listening, Carl is a video and marketing consultant. He's taught English for several years and he's an expert in giving presentations and public speaking in English. So we're so happy to have you with us today.

Lindsay: Yeah. And Carl has also been on our show before.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Carl was here for Episode 79. That's AllEarsEnglish.com/79. He talked about the importance of knowing your audience. And then he came back and talked about how to end your presentation in AllEarsEnglish.com/80. That was great. How (are) you doing, Carl?



Carl: Very good. I'm so excited. I didn't realize I did (have done) so much work already

Lindsay: You did!

Carl: ...I could just stop now while I'm ahead, (you know).

Gabby: We're glad you keep coming back.

Lindsay: Yep.

Gabby: So last time we talked about how to end your presentation. So we thought this time – well it might be good to talk about how to start your presentation (like) how do you get to the end. Well, you have to start somewhere, right?

Carl: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Every ending, I guess, has a beginning, doesn't it?

Lindsay: I suppose.

Carl: Or something philosophically sounding like that [crosstalk].

Gabby: Yeah, I like that.

Lindsay: Very poetic.

Gabby: The circle of...

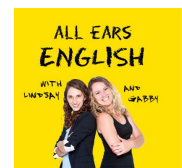
Carl: Yeah.

Gabby: ...life, the circle of presentations. So...

Carl: Anything is possible when you're hiding behind a microphone.

Gabby: So, great. Yeah. (I mean) let's jump right into it. What are your, your top three ways to start a presentation in English for a, an international or an American audience?

Carl: Okay, okay. So this is what we're gonna (going to) start off with. First of all, as, (you know), Episode 79 talked about, it's really important to know your audience, what would interest them, and what do they care about



because all of that, if you know that, then you can then create your, (you know), (sort of), (uh), -- what do they call, like a memorable or, (you know), very highly, (you know), I guess, (uh), -- what can I say?

Lindsay: Like a hook?

Carl: Impressive opening to your presentation.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: (Um).

Carl: 'Cause (Because) without knowing your audience, you cannot do any of the stuff that I'm gonna (going to) teach you, (you know), in these three tips.

Lindsay: (Um), true.

Carl: So make sure you know that first, right? Know your audience first. Now, all of these three tips are based around this (kind of) problem and challenge type of a presentation and then offering a solution. Most audiences will want to know how you're gonna (going to) deal with their problems because people...

Lindsay: (Hm).

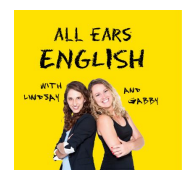
Carl: ...are thinking about themselves and they'll think, "Well, (you know), can you actually help me with what I'm going through right now?"

Gabby: Yes.

Carl: So that's what, (sort of), the theme, I guess, of all three of these tips is gonna (going to) be. Okay. So ...

Gabby: Great.

Carl: ...the very first one is to use a surprising or interesting fact and then tell people what it means or what they should do after they learn about this. Now, as an example here...



Lindsay: (Um).

Carl: ...by some estimates, there are between 500,000 to over 1 million words in English. But you only need about 3,000 words to be functional.

Lindsay: Ooh!

Gabby: Ooh, I like it.

Lindsay: That is a surprising tip.

Carl: Yes! Isn't that? Exactly. Right? Then, so you've started this thing. You said, "Okay. Well, guess what, there are (th-), all these words and you only need (like) this much to do something. Now you've got their attention, you've presented this fact to them. So now you're gonna (going to) say, "And here are three ways for you to learn those 3,000 words in only three months," or, (you know), whenever it is.

Gabby: I love it.

Carl: Yeah.

Lindsay: That really hooks them. I like it.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: Yeah. Exactly. So it's better than, say for example, say, "Okay. Hi, my name is Carl. Thank you for attending my presentation. And..."

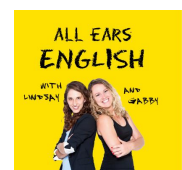
Lindsay: Totally.

Carl: "...I want to talk about this."

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: Most people that come to your presentation, they're already gonna (going to) your name. (Uh), they're probably, they're (al-), already gonna (going to) know what your general topic is going to be because that's why they came to your presentation in the first place.

Gabby: Right.



Carl: So you don't really need to start with, (you know), no -- don't necessarily need to start with saying your name and what your topic is going to be, and so forth. You can just go right into...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Carl: ...“Okay, here's something that you don't know, “There are between 500,000 blah, blah, blah, blah,” and go through this fact and then, say, “Okay, and here's how you can then use this fact or here's what you can do, what you can do now that you know about this particular statistic, or whatever it is.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: That's interesting.

Lindsay: I can see how that would be really effective.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Really effective.

Gabby: And also how you have to know your audience, right? (Uh), you don't...

Lindsay: Exactly.

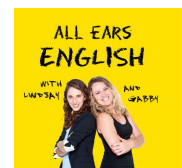
Gabby: ...know what's going to be a surprising fact unless you know the audience, so...

Lindsay: Right. And, and being inside their head.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Carl: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. So for, (you know) -- that's why I used this example here because the people listening to this are most likely English learners and you people, and you two are English teachers. So something about learning English is very appropriate, right?



Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Totally, totally. That was an interesting fact. (I mean) that's something where you might have to get online and do a couple minutes of research to find a fact 'cause (because) you don't wanna (want to) just make something up. (Um)...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...or you shouldn't.

Carl: Right, right, right.

Gabby: Did you just make that up, Carl?

Carl: ...(you know). I better check those facts then, just in case, but...

Lindsay: Yeah, double check, double check.

Gabby: No, but that's, that's great.

Carl: They're relatively accurate, I think. So...

Gabby: I think that's worth the effort, (you know), the few minutes?

Lindsay: Oh, totally.

Gabby: And that's – 'cause (because) that's a great, (um), memorable fact that [crosstalk]. Yeah.

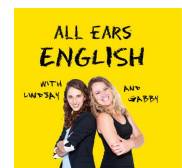
Lindsay: And also because it is the beginning, it sets the tone for the entire presentation, doesn't it?

Gabby: Right.

Carl: Yeah, absolutely. And that's the whole thing is that you've now captured the audience's attention and they want to know, "Okay, that's all I have to do. Well, (A) I'm relieved, and (B), how do I do it?"

Both: (Um).

Gabby: Very cool.



Lindsay: Well, what if, what if you can't find a good fact or, or it just doesn't work for your presentation? What's, what's another way we could start?

Carl: Okay. Great. So, that's the second (sort of) way that we can start a presentation.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: And this is using the very popular, I guess, everyone wants to know, "How do I use a story in a presentation?"

Lindsay: (Um).

Carl: Because I think people...

Gabby: That's tough.

Carl: ...have often heard, "Tell a story," and...

Gabby: Yes.

Carl: ...most people think, "(Uh), yeah, I have no idea how to do that."

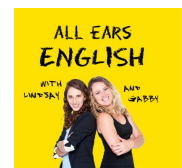
Gabby: "Once when I was in..."

Lindsay: "Once upon a time."

Gabby: "...grade school..."

Carl: Right. No, that's what people think of, right? And there is a real basic format that you can use. And so, what I'm gonna (going to) teach you is (sort of) three steps that you can use to, (uh), use a story in your presentation at the beginning. So what you're gonna (going to) do is you're gonna (going to) talk about what you were doing at a certain (sort of) point in time when you maybe thought about your topic that you're gonna (going to) present in your presentation. (Um), as an example, (uh), recently, I had a conversation with a friend about learning languages. When she told me a really interesting way she used to learn English.

Lindsay: (Mm).



Gabby: Nice.

Carl: So you see, that was just (like), (you know), recounting or telling you something that happened to me recently. But that is a story. And so...

Gabby: Right.

Carl: ...there was, there was a structure to that. And the first step that you want to (sort of) use is indicate some sort of a time reference.

Gabby: (Um).

Carl: So, either say, like I said recently, or...

Lindsay: (Hm).

Carl: ...(you know), two weeks ago, or (like), (you know), (uh), "Yesterday when I was going out for a walk..."

Gabby: Right.

Carl: Whatever. So use some (sort of) time reference just to give people an idea of when this happened.

Gabby: Oh.

Carl: Then the second step is to talk about a situation and then the action that was going on at the time. So, I said in the example, I had a conversation with a friend about learning languages...

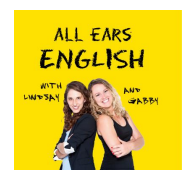
Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Carl: ...right?

Lindsay: (Hm).

Carl: So, that's what was happening. I was talking -- and about learning languages. And then the third step is to use the word "when."

Gabby: (Uh-huh).



Carl: So as people are learning English, I think they always learn that when -- when you use the word "when," it indicates that something happened to disrupt that particular...

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: (Uh).

Carl: ...(you know), conversation or situation, right?

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: "I was watching television *when* the telephone rang."

Lindsay: Yeah.

Carl: Right. Exactly, exactly. "*When* Gabby and Lindsay called to do the interview."

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: (You know), so. So...

Gabby: Nice.

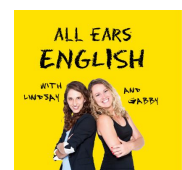
Carl: So you would use "when" to then introduce the idea or the thought that you had about your topic, or whatever it is that you're going to continue talking about in your presentation. So, again, it is just saying, okay, for example, (uh), "Recently, I had a conversation with a friend about learning languages *when* she told me a really interesting way she used to learn English."

Lindsay: (Mm).

Carl: And then from there, now you can talk about, well, what did she say and then...

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: ...you could use ...



Lindsay: (Mm).

Carl: ...this entire, (uh), setup to talk about the rest of your presentation basically. So...

Lindsay: That's great.

Gabby: Well, that's so cool.

Carl: ...it's a really -- yeah.

Gabby: You really broke it down there for our listeners...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...the time reference, plus, the, the situation or the action that was going on, plus, *when* ...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...something happened.

Lindsay: And you're setting up...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...a really nice cliffhanger. Is that the word, "cliffhanger," where...

Gabby: Oh.

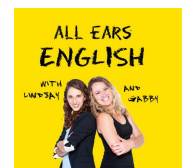
Lindsay: ...we're expecting something...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...and we're ready (like) I want to know what you're gonna (going to) talk about here.

Gabby: Absolutely.

Carl: Yeah, exactly. Right? So, that's the whole – (I mean) that's all a story is, is providing, (uh), some (sort of) interesting hook for people and, (you know), (a-), (you know), making them guess what's going to happen, (uh),



presenting something, maybe, (uh), a problem or challenge, or something dramatic that, that is supposed to happen. And then what's the, (you know), the, the resolution to that. So...

Lindsay: Totally.

Carl: ...that's what you're gonna (going to) talk about in the rest of your presentation.

Gabby: That's great. I, I think when we naturally tell stories, when we're talking to our friends – as you were saying your, your friends told you about how she was learning languages, and it just comes out very easily because we're relaxed and we're open to sharing about our personal stories. But when you're in presentation mode in front of an audience, sometimes we, we clam up or we get nervous, right, and we don't want to share anything personal. But I think it's important for people to know that's one of the things that you should do is (um), (you know), share some story that applies to your topic that, that you have lived and experienced.

Carl: Sure.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Carl: (I mean) you can even, (you know), be a fiction writer in some way and you don't have to really have had that experience, but you could...

Gabby: Sure.

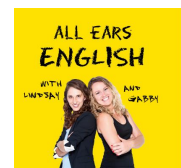
Carl: ...just pretend that you did and, and use that as your introduction.

Gabby: That's a good thing.

Carl: Because the... Right? You don't -- right? That's what I've done here. (I mean), I didn't really have a conversation with a friend about learning language.

Lindsay: Ah!

Carl: I just made it up.



Lindsay: Really?

Both: You lied to us?

Lindsay: Oh my gosh.

Gabby: That's it. You're never coming back. No, just kidding.

Carl: But the thing is, with that kind of, (uh), introduction is, it's really memorable because...

Lindsay: Yes.

Carl: ...you were able to tell me exactly what it was after only listening to it once, right?

Gabby: Exactly.

Carl: You could repeat what I just said. So...

Gabby: We love stories.

Carl: ...it's a great way to make it memorable too.

Gabby: Absolutely. That's great. So how about, (uh), one, one other way to start your presentation, if, if you're just not, if you're not feeling this, (uh), story method, you're not, you're not sure about sharing a fact, what's a third way, a third option we could start?

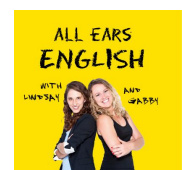
Carl: Okay. So the third one is a, is a really great way to start it, and it's to use a question to talk about a problem and then your solution to that problem.

Carl: And again...

Gabby: Great.

Carl: ...there's a really simple format that you can use. And it begins with the question, "Have you ever something?"

Gabby: (Uh-huh).



Carl: And then... Right? So once you've told them have you ever, whenever -- once you've asked that question...

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: "Have you ever..." then you're gonna (going to) say, "Well, here's the..." and then you're gonna (going to) explain it. So, as an example, "Have you ever tried watching or listening to CNN to learn English, but found it too hard and gave up? Well, here's a five-step process for how you can finally use CNN to quickly improve your English skills."

Gabby: Oh my gosh.

Lindsay: Yeah, I want to know what that is.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: Right. Exactly. I want to know too 'cause (because) I just made it up too, but, (you know).

Gabby: That sounded great though.

Carl: Yeah. So, it's that -- it's just that really simple, (you know), one question, plus, "Okay, now, I'm gonna (going to) tell you what, what you can do." And that, "Have you ever," (you know), that question though, you really do have to make sure you know your audience because...

Lindsay: Right.

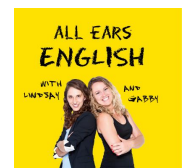
Carl: ...if you say, "Have you ever tried, (you know), bungee jumping naked?" (Uh), a couple of them might say, "(Uh), no," (you know), actually wouldn't care, right.

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: Oh man.

Lindsay: True.

Carl: Well, here's not what to do....



Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: ... Here's what not to do, right. (Uh), (you know), things like that people wouldn't care about. So, you have to, when you ask that question, you have to be almost, I guess, 99.9% sure that they will agree with that question. They'll somehow...

Gabby: Right.

Carl: ...know it...

Gabby: Right.

Carl: ...and they'll somehow agree with what you're saying.

Gabby: But that's a really good point. They have to...

Lindsay: Yeah. It has to speak to them.

Gabby: ...agree. Yeah.

Lindsay: It has to speak to them and make them feel like you're in their heads again.

Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Carl: Absolutely.

Gabby: Oh, that's great. I love these. I think out of these, these three ways of starting a presentation, whichever one you choose, it's gonna (going to) be a winner because these are all great...

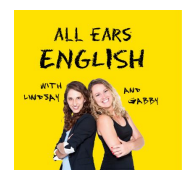
Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...ways.

Lindsay: These are really great tips.

Gabby: So, so a surprising fact, (uh), or a story or ask a question.

Lindsay: Awesome.



Carl: Right, right, with "have you ever" just to make sure that -- 'cause (because) whenever you use tag questions, I don't know if people know this, but psychologically, whenever you use a tag question, people have to agree with you.

Gabby: (Um).

Carl: No matter what the question is, people will have to, almost have to automatically agree with you. So, I could say it's, (you know), if it's warm out, I'd say, "It's pretty hot out, isn't it?" And you would have to agree with me.

Gabby: No.

Lindsay: No, it's not.

Gabby: No. Unless we're just trying to be, (you know), (uh)...

Carl: Right? You, you almost (like) have to agree. So...

Lindsay: Yeah. Like, yeah, yeah it is.

Carl: That's a great way...

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: ...to, to stop talking

Lindsay: Yeah. Interesting.

Gabby: Absolutely. That's awesome. I think we're going to have to start using these on the, the podcast, (like)...

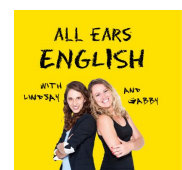
Lindsay: I like this.

Gabby: ...did you know that...?

Lindsay: These are great. These are pro tips.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Fantastic.



Gabby: I, I love...

Carl: Yeah, when I...

Gabby: Oh, go ahead.

Carl: Well, when I used to teach English, (uh)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: ...and oftentimes I'd have young single guys coming in to my classrooms. I had taught one-on-one a lot.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: And a lot of times, we'd end up talking about these (kind of) things. And I said, "Well, (you know), if you're, if you're ever, (you know), in a situation where you, (you know), (hav-), are having trouble talking to women -- I'm not an expert, but here's one thing that you could do is ask, (you know), use these kind of questions because she has to agree with you.

Gabby: Oh, yeah, yeah, using those, those tag questions, as you said, (like) "Oh, it, it's, it's nice out, isn't it?"

Lindsay: So (the-), this can be used beyond just presentations. This is useful in a lot of different spaces.

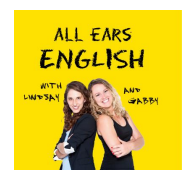
Gabby: I love it. (You know), Carl, I love having you on the, the show, the, the All Ears English (pod-), podcast because you just share so many practical tips. (You know), in in Episode 79, 80 and now in this episode. (I mean), I've learned a lot, so.

Lindsay: Yeah. We really appreciate that, Carl.

Gabby: Tell, tell our...

Carl: No problem.

Gabby: Sorry, (um), tell our audience where they can find you to find more of your, your awesome tips.



Carl: Well, the easiest place to find me is on YouTube. So, you can find -- just look up my name, Carl Kwan.

Gabby: Okay.

Carl: (Uh), and then if you're interested to look into more of what I'm doing as far as my work with presentations or video production work and things like that, you can visit my main website, which is carlkwan.com, C-a-r-l-k-w-a-n.com.

Gabby: Right.

Carl: And then I've got this new English learning site because I've been, (you know), an English teacher for quite a long time.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: Almost -- I guess more than ten years I (have) taught English.

Gabby: Great.

Carl: And I've always had this passion for wanting to find ways to teach people English in a really, (sort of) interesting or fun way.

Gabby: Yeah.

Carl: And so, (you know), I -- there's this new site that I have; it's called CarlsEnglish.com.

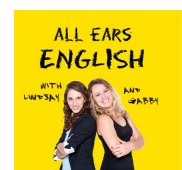
Gabby: Okay.

Carl: And if you go there, you can check out some lessons to help you with your listening and to improve your grammar and speaking and vocabulary, and all this (kind of) stuff all on your own...

Gabby: Wow! That's great.

Carl: ...without needing anybody's help. Yeah. So, check those things out and, (uh), yeah, get in touch with me.

Gabby: Great resources.



Lindsay: Excellent. Thanks for mentioning that.

Gabby: Thank you so much.

Lindsay: Perfect.

Gabby: Great. Well, Carl...

Carl: Thank you for having me. It's always great to talk to you two as well.

Gabby: It was a pleasure.

Lindsay: Yeah. Thanks, Carl.

Gabby: All right. We'll talk to you later.

Lindsay: Talk to you soon.

Carl: Great. Thanks. Bye.

Gabby: Bye.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

