

Presentation Template

**Presentation Tips Sample
Outlines and Templates**

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Overview

The Opening

Preliminary Observations

The introduction serves three main purposes:

- ◆ Captures the listeners' attention
- ◆ Lets listeners know what to expect next
- ◆ Projects the speaker as a prepared and confident speaker with an agenda

Good speakers use a format for beginning that works for them and accomplishes the purposes described above. One way to think about structuring the opening is to think about answering several questions that are on listeners' minds whenever they hear a speaker. These questions are:

- ◆ Who are you?
- ◆ Why am I here (that is, what's the point of this presentation)?
- ◆ Why do I care (what's in it for me)?
- ◆ What major points are you going to make?

The following outline answers these questions. It provides a clean, clear, and concise way of addressing the questions that are on any listeners' mind when you begin.

The outline is not cast in stone. You may want to add features or elements, or even transpose the elements into a different order. The key is not so much to buy into one specific model, as it is to arrive at a model that works for you and internalize that model. For instance, you may like the idea of beginning with a story, a quote, and a startling statistic as a way of getting people's attention. If that works for you, fine. Incorporate it into the model.

Example

The Opening

1. INTRODUCTION (Answers the question: ‘Who are you?’)

‘Hi, my name is _____ and I am with _____ here in _____.’

2. BUSINESS PURPOSE (Answer questions: ‘Why and I here?’)

‘I want to begin by telling you exactly what I’d like to achieve this morning. I want to make sure that when you leave here today that you understand exactly why _____.’

3. IMPORTANCE TO LISTENERS (Answer question: ‘Why do I care?’)

‘Now why is this important to you. It’s important because _____.’

4. LAYING OUT THE LOGIC (Answers question: ‘What points are you going to make?’)

‘I want to make my case _____ by focusing on three major points. They are:

first, _____

second, _____

third, and finally, _____.’

5. HOW WILL THE SESSION PROCEED

‘We have about two hours together, so here is how I want to structure this session. I’ll spend the first twenty minutes _____.’

6. SEGUE TO AN ‘OPEN DOOR’ TO THE FIRST MAIN POINT

‘Then let me begin by going back to my first point which is _____.’

Overview

Body of Talk

Preliminary Observations

The body of your talk is where you present the information supporting your main argument. Most, if not all of you, have experience in different types of presentation environments and are comfortable with this section of the presentation.

My advice for outlining the body of the talk is similar to the logic for the opening. That is, your listeners have an instinctive way of asking a series of questions about any topic you introduce. These questions are:

- ◆ What is the topic and what does it specifically mean?
- ◆ Can you prove what you are saying to me?
- ◆ So why should I care about that?

Thus, your outline must contain these three elements. In addition, if you have begun with the interactive style, then you can use the period of presenting content to connect back to your audience members that you have already engaged in conversation. This reinforces the engagement exercise and projects enormous confidence and comfort to your listeners.

A sample outline incorporating these steps follows:

Example

Body of Talk

First Main Point

1. DEFINE/DESCRIBE THE FIRST MAIN POINT (Answers the question: What's the point?)

'The first question is: '_____?' Let me tell you why.'

2. PROVIDE SUPPORTING DATA or STATISTICS (Answers the question: Prove it!)

'Let me give you some data which demonstrates very convincingly just how important this is. If we look at the statistics for _____.'

3. CONNECT FIRST POINT TO LISTENERS' NEEDS (Answers the question: So what?)

'So why is this so important to you as potential clients. It's important for your business because _____.'

4. CONNECT BACK TO PARTICIPANT'S COMMENTS (Reinforces engagement activity)

'Now, Bill, you mentioned that _____. Can you see why we think this is such an important factor? And also, how you could use this information when talking with clients?'

Frank, what about you?

5. CONCLUDE AND CLOSE DOOR TO FIRST POINT AND SEGUE TO SECOND POINT

'So that answers the first question _____? And it leads directly to our second question: Why _____?'

Second and Third Points

1. SEGUE TO AND OPEN DOOR TO THE SECOND MAIN POINT

'Let me turn to the second main point which is _____.'

2. REPEAT STEPS 1 THROUGH 5 FOR SECOND MAIN POINT. REPEAT THE SAME PROCESS FOR THE THIRD MAIN POINT.

'That then is our third and final point'.

Overview

Summary and Conclusion

Preliminary Observations

A good rule of thumb for your ending. Be brief. You know the presentation is over, so do they.

A few key things to keep in mind:

- ◆ A good talk ends where it began. Always end by going back to what you said in the beginning and referring your final comments to the beginning.
- ◆ Always end by asking the listeners to do something. Don't let them off the hook. Ask them to commit by engaging in some activity.

Example

Summary and Conclusion

1. CONCLUSION

‘Well, when I began I said I wanted to make sure that you understood why _____ . I think I’ve done that by focusing on my here major points which are _____ ’. I’d like to ask each of you to think about these ideas and make sure to implement them when you return to your office.’

Thanks for your attention.’

Presentation

Using Questions to Engage Listeners

Preliminary Observations

I must begin with the recognition that there are certain types of presentations that simply do not allow the use of questions. Whether this arises from custom or from customer wish, it does not really matter. At times you will be in situations where you and only you will talk, and your listeners will speak only if they have a question. But there are many situations in which it is perfectly acceptable, if not preferable, to induce audience participation. Certainly, the training program is one of these situations.

There are really two major considerations concerning the use of questioning in the training situation. The first is the overall value of audience involvement; and the second is a method for asking questions that generates the response that you want.

Audience involvement is valuable because adults want to participate in any activity that is important to them. Studies show that adults remember best when they participate in the learning process. So if you want your listeners to remember what you say, then let them participate in saying it. Finally, if your listeners are relaxed and comfortable, it is much easier for them to pay attention. Asking participants to pay attention for twenty-five minutes is asking a lot.

Presentation

Four Components of Questioning

1. Attention-Getting Step

This is accomplished by asking the entire group for a quick show of hands in response to a yes/no question that is fairly innocuous.

2. Getting-to-Know Step

This initiates the conversation and is accomplished by asking two very short and easy questions and have short, almost one word, answers. Once again, the key is that the questions are easy. This step serves the purpose of building the connection between speaker and listener so that the listener feels comfortable answering the content question.

3. Getting to Content

This occurs when you ask your listener to provide you with some information either a piece of content or perhaps something of evaluative nature. The point here is not to put the listener on the spot, but rather, to get some sense of how your listener feels about or judges a situation. It is critical that this question yield some information that is related to one of your major points.

4. Getting to Summary and Segue

This occurs when you summarize the conclusion of the conversation(s) by emphasizing and highlighting the listeners' points and then tying these points back to the key points you mentioned in your opening.

Sample Dialogue

1. ATTENTION-GETTING STEP: (Easy question with a show of hands and no risk answer)

Speaker: 'Before I talk about my first point, I want to ask a few questions, just to make sure that I am on the same page as you folks. Let me have a quick show of hands. How many of you are familiar with disability policy at all?'

2. GETTING-TO-KNOW YOU STEP: (Easy follow-ups of a general nature intended to relax the listener while you gain his/her confidence for the content question)

Speaker: 'I'm sorry, your name is?'

Listener: 'Bill'.

Speaker: 'Bill, how long have you been at Marsh?'

Listener: 'Two years'.

Speaker: 'So you've had the chance to develop some familiarity with these policies and the clients. Tell me: are the number of policies you are writing going up or down?'

Listener: 'I would definitely say 'down'.

3. GETTING TO CONTENT STEP: (Now it is time to ask for some facts and evaluation)

Speaker: 'If you had to guess one reason for this downturn, what would it be?'

Listener: 'That's easy. There are more claims and companies are trying to protect their interests.'

4. GETTING TO SUMMARY STEP:

Speaker: 'So, at least from Bill's clients we learn that increased claims and their cost are a critical consideration.'

5. SELECT ANOTHER PERSON AND ASK QUESTIONS THAT LEAD TO YOUR SECOND POINT

Getting to Know Step

Speaker: 'You also raised your hand. And your name is?'

Listener: 'Susan.'

Speaker: 'How long have you been here?'

Listener: 'Four months.'

Speaker: 'Were you anywhere before then?'

Listener: 'Yes, at AIG'.

Speaker: 'And how long were you there?'

Listener: 'Five years with the disability group.'

Getting To Content Step

Speaker: 'So what have you seen? Has the number of policies increased or decreased?'

Listener: 'I'd actually say it is about 50/50.'

Speaker: 'And if you could name one reason why people have increased their protection, what would it be?'

Listener: 'They are loaded with cash and want to provide a good employee benefit.'

Speaker: 'And what is the one reason some clients are decreasing coverage?'

Listener: 'Like Bill, some clients are worried about increased claims but others worry about increased administration.'

6. GETTING TO SUMMARY AND SEGUE STEP: (Connect their points and your summary to your main points)

Speaker: 'So we see from Bill and Susan that claims, costs and service are key interests to our clients. Let me go back to my first point and show you how we at Marsh try to address each of these issues.'