PRESENTATION

Skill 1:
How to prepare an effective presentation

Classifications of Presentations

In contrast to public speaking of a general nature, most presentations centre around three specific classifications:

1. To *inform* the audience of selected facts or figures of a given event
2. To *motivate* a group to take a recommended course of action
3. To *persuade* an audience to your point of view
4. Presentation combinations

1.**To *inform***

Your objective in such a talk would be, primarily, to remain as neutral as possible, that is, to be factual, offer the benefits of your new proposal or plan, and keep your commends to the point.

Some sample topics of informative talks include:

♦ Research proposals
♦ Research reports
♦ Revision of previous research
♦ Research findings
♦ Budget proposals

2.**To *motivate***

In this type of talk, you are recommending that your audience follow a certain course of action. For example, you want your friends (colleagues) to support the research proposal on industrial waste. Your audience's attitude may range from passive to positive, tough you should not assume that everyone will be receptive to what you say.

Some sample topics of motivational talks include:

- ♦ The need for greater support on your research activity
- ♦ The need for greater involvement for your research activity
- ♦ Prevention is everyone's job
- ♦ Why "they" need help
- ♦ How we can achieve an extra 10 percent in fund raise

3.**To *persuade***

Persuading goes beyond the motivational talk of recommending; here you are trying to convince your audience of your point of view-and move them to action. For example, a persuasive talk on "Ten easy step for study" will really not be successful, unless at the conclusion of your talk you have convinced your audience to have better scores and to finish your study using your ten easy steps.

Audience attitude toward your talk can range from passive to extremely negative. You may be confronted with vocal objections or skeptical audience feedback.

Examples of persuasive talks include:

- ♦ Advantage of the new word processing system-why we need it
- ♦ Why the new institution reorganization is necessary
- ♦ The need for better academic community relations
- ♦ Selling the new product plan

4. ***Presentation combinations***

Note that all three types of talks can run in parallel. To illustrate, let's take the case of a student union that wishes to achieve a 90 percent voluntary student contribution rate to this year's United Way campaign. (For whatever reason, last year's rate was a disappointing 58 percent). As a starter, the speaker would have find a way to motivate the members into seeing the importance of the United Way fund and into learning how their contribution, however small, is vitally needed to achieve the 90 percent participation rate the organization has targeted. Once this accomplished, the speakers has the added responsibility of persuading each employee in the audience to sign a pledge card before leaving the room.

How to build your framework: Five key areas

Regardless of the type of presentation you plan to give, it is important that your talk has structure. Successful presentations incorporate five important categories in their framework: ***preplanning, attention, interest, desire,*** and ***action***. Each of these five areas has corresponding key points of emphasis that not only provide your talk with the necessary structure, but also provide a smooth transition from one segment of the presentation to the next.

These five categories are also an integral part of the main elements of an effective presentation. In other words, each of categories has a direct relationship to a corresponding main element. For example:

Category	**Presentation Element**
Preplanning	Covers all five elements ***(Power Opener, Connector, Main Body, Power Close, and Audience Question)***
Attention	Correlates with the ***Power Opener***, which secures early attention from audience and builds early rapport. Concludes with the ***Connector,*** which bridges the ***Power Opener*** to the ***Main Body***.
Interest	Begin with reinforcing the ***Connector*** and develops into the ***Main Body*** of the presentation.
Desire	Starts with a reinforcement of the ***Main Body*** (fact, figures, and content) and pave the way for the ***Power Close***.
Action	Focuses on the ***Power Close*** (or what the speaker expects the audience to do) and concludes by setting the state for ***Audience Questions*** that will follow the presentation.

1.Preplanning

Preplanning involves all the specific activities that should be accomplished before your actual presentation. You should try to anticipate any special factors or possible concerns that could affect your presentation before the actual presentation. This will help you develop a well-grounded strategy.

The following are the key point emphasis before you begin to prepare your actual presentation:

♦ Nature and size of the audience

♦ Audience expectation

♦ "WIFM" (What's in it for me?)

♦ Any special factors (cautions) involved

> Note:
> Use the ***Audience Research Checklist*** (Form 1) and ***Guidelines for Customizing Your Talk*** (Form 2) on the Appendix to help you in the area of ***Preplanning.***

2. Attention

Since the first few moments of your presentation are critical to its success-or failure-you should plan to introduce an early attention-grabbing statement within the first minute of the presentation. This kind of statement can be relatively short, perhaps three to five minutes.

The following are the key point emphasis on grabbing audience's attention:

♦ Securing early attention

♦ Establishing rapport

♦ Highlighting purpose of presentation

♦ Building anticipation for balance of talk

3. Interest

It is not enough to grab your audience's attention: you must also plan to keep it. Here are ten suggestions for maintaining and heightening audience interest:

♦ Use traditional phrases to move from one key points to another

♦ Emphasize the benefits or positive aspects of your presentation

♦ Heighten audience awareness

♦ Bridge into the main body of your talk using connectors (See Chapter 2)

♦ Keep sentences short and crisp

♦ Use benefit statement whenever possible

♦ Always reinforce WIFM when you have opportunity

♦ Modulate your voice frequently (speak softly, then louder, etc)

♦ Pause occasionally for greater effect

♦ Use audiovisuals to their fullest extent

4. Desire

At this point, if the *attention* and *interest* phrase were handled properly, the desire phase should flow naturally. Here you concentrate on building the audience's commitment to do what you are recommending. It consists of expending on the key points covered in the interest phase, and then, to 'drive the point home' effectively, by furnishing as many examples as possible. Following this would be a refocusing on the benefits involved and then developing another interconnecting statement to lead smoothly into the concluding ***action*** phase.

The following are the key point emphais on building the audience's commitment:

♦ Explanation by example

♦ Re-focus on features/benefits involved

♦ Bridge into closing remarks

5. **Action**

You can now effectively close your presentation following the steps below:

♦ Summarize the main points of your talk

♦ Clearly tell the audience what is requested of them (obviously, this will vary, depending on the nature of your talk)

♦ Close with the final benefit statement that will leave everyone in a good psychological frame of mind.

Note:
Use the ***Promoting Desire*** (Form 5) and ***Moving Your Audience to Action*** (Form 6) on the Appendix to help you build the audience's commitment and close your presentation.