Training Workbook:
Presentation Skills

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Worksheet: Audience Assessment

Relationship

Does your audience know you personally: YES NO

Does your audience see you as an authority figure in your field: YES NO

Is your audience familiar with your professional title: YES NO

Does your audience value/respect your education & experience: YES NO

How might your answers impact your message and how you deliver it?

Worksheet: Audience Assessment

Knowledge (answers will depend on topic selection)

Is your audience familiar with your topic: YES NO

Is your audience supportive of your topic: YES NO

Does your audience have practical experience with your topic: YES NO

Are there terms/acronyms you'll need to define for your audience: YES NO

How might your answers impact your message and how you deliver it?

Worksheet: Audience Assessment

Needs, Expectations, and Preferences (answers will depend on topic selection)

What problem does your message solve for your audience?

What will your audience need to know in order to act on the information you share?

Name three specific expectations your audience has of you in this speaking situation:

How does your audience prefer to be spoken to (consider medium, tone, language):

Worksheet: Define Your Purpose

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else."

– Yogi Berra

Answer the following questions to help you define the purpose of your message…

What problem am I solving for my audience?

What opportunity does my presentation help create for my audience?

In a single sentence, what's the most important thing my audience needs to know and/or do differently by the end of my presentation?

If they interviewed people after my talk and asked them, 'What did you get from this speech and what are you going to do differently as a result?' what would I want them to say? *(Source: Brian Tracy – Speak to Win)*

Presentation Structure Options

Comparison: What is vs. what could be
This structure is meant to move back and forth between the current reality and "what could be."

1. Beginning: Tell the big picture story of the current situation – what does it look and feel like?
2. What is: Tell the story about one specific reality
3. What could be: Contrast that reality to what could be
4. What is: Tell the story about another specific reality
5. What could be: Contrast that reality to what could be
6. What is: Tell the story about another specific reality
7. What could be: Contrast that reality to what could be
8. Call to action: What specific action do you need your audience to take in order to realize "what could be?"
9. Ending: Recap the big picture story of "what could be." – what will it look and feel like?

Pitch: How your idea can improve a situation
This structure leverages storytelling to show how your idea will improve a current or forthcoming situation, or meet an unmet need.

1. Introduction: Summarize the current reality
2. Problem/Opportunity: State the problem you're trying to solve or opportunity you're trying to take advantage of
3. Recommendation: What specifically are you recommending?
4. Options: If possible, share multiple paths that can be taken to get to your recommendation (ideally, you'd contrast the one you want to a weaker option)
5. Pitch: Tell them why your option is the best way to achieve your recommendation
6. Points: Give details and supportive evidence explaining your recommendation
7. Close: Share 1-3 additional benefits of taking you up on your recommendation

Presentation Structure Options

The Staircase: Explain something: This structure can be used when you're trying to share knowledge or teach your audience how to do something.

1. Introduction:
    a. What's the current situation – where are we now?
    b. What's the destination: Where are we going?
    c. What's the path: What's between where we are and where we're going?
2. Detailed Roadmap: What route do you propose to get your audience from here to there?
3. Step 1
4. Step 2
5. Checkpoint: What ground have we covered so far? What's be done/learned?
6. Step 3… *and so on*
7. Checkpoint: What ground have we covered so far? What's be done/learned?
8. Close: Describe the destination we've arrived at and ask your audience to show/tell you how they plan to use what they've learned.

Situation – Complication – Resolution: This structure works well when making a recommendation to a business audience – *and you want to create a sense of urgency.*

1. Situation: What is the objective reality of the current situation?
2. **"But…"**
3. Complication: What problem are you now facing? Use data to contextualize the complication and build credibility.
4. **"Therefore…"**
5. Resolution: What are you proposing to remedy the complication? Use forms of influence to 'prove' the validity of your recommended resolution.

Presentation Structure Options

The Hero's Journey: Classic story structure: This structure can be used when telling a story.

1. The set up: Share the background details of the story
    a. Main character(s)
    b. Setting/context
    c. What does the character(s) want?
2. The challenge introduction: What problem does the character(s) encounter?
3. The challenge details: Share how the problem plays out – how bad does the situation get for the character(s)?
4. The bottom: What does the challenge look like at rock bottom?
5. The lightbulb moment: What does your character(s) find that might help overcome the challenge?
6. The rise: How does your character(s) use the lightbulb moment to begin rising out of rock bottom?
7. The end: How the story ends – who is your character now and how has the setting/context changed?
8. The lesson learned: What did the character learn or what can your audience learn from the story?

Situation – Opportunity – Resolution: This structure works well when making a recommendation to a business audience – *and you want to have a positive spin.*

1. Situation: What is the objective reality of the current situation?
2. **"But…"**
3. Opportunity: What opportunity do you have to take advantage of? If available, use data to build credibility around the opportunity.
4. **"Therefore…"**
5. Resolution: What are you proposing to take advantage of the opportunity? Use forms of influence to 'prove' the validity of your recommendation.

Presentation Structure Options

PREP: Point, Reason, Evidence, Point: This structure works well when sharing information or trying to influence your audience's beliefs/behavior. It allows you to make several unrelated points in a cohesive, easy-to-follow format.

1. Introduction: What's your topic and the background of your topic?
2. Agenda: What points will you talk through?
3. Point 1: What's your first point?
4. Reason: Why is this point important for your audience to know?
5. Evidence: What forms of influence can you use to support your point?
6. Point 1: Restate your point
7. Point 2: What's your second point?
8. Reason: Why is this point important for your audience to know?
9. Evidence: What forms of influence can you use to support your point?
10. Point 2: Restate your point
11. Continue with point/reason/evidence/point as needed…
12. Close: Summarize your points and close your message

Recommend with Logic: This structure works well for problem-based or action-oriented messages.

1. The problem: What's the problem?
2. Cause and consequence:
    a. "The problem happened because…"
    b. "As a result, we're facing / having to…"
3. The solution: What's your recommended solution?
    a. "To fix this…"
    b. "To straighten this out…"
    c. "To remedy this, we need to…"
4. Implications: What will happen if they move forward with your recommendation?
    a. "The possible downside is this…"
    b. "The upside is this…"
5. The call to action: Who? Does what? By when?
    a. "To move this forward we need to…"

Slide Design Guidelines

- Your slides should have a **consistent visual theme** (like they belong together) - consistency in colors, fonts, font sizes, image style, etc.

- Use the **minimum effective dose**: What's the least amount of information you can put on the slide and still get your point across?

- In most cases, more slides with less content are better than fewer slides with more content.

- When choosing colors for your slide backgrounds and text, **choose high-contrast colors**. If you're using a dark background, choose a light font color. If you're using a light background, choose a dark font color. Avoid neon-like colors. Simple is always better (and easier for your audience).

- Filling the slide background with a design pattern or image should be done with caution. Unless necessary to make your point, these patterns and images often make your content difficult for your audience to read. Best to **stick with a flat color background**.

- **White space (blank space) on slides is necessary**. Don't fill white space with random graphics. Less is more.

- If you're going to use pictures on slides, consider **stock imagery**. You can download and use free stock imagery on Pexels, Unsplash, and icons on Flaticon

- If you're going to use **example videos** in your presentation:
    - Trim them to only the portion of the video you need
    - Make them big on the slide (so long as the quality of the video doesn't go down)
    - When you insert them in your slide, animate them so they don't play until you "click". This way, you can introduce your video and tell your audience what you want them to watch/listen for *before* it plays.
    - Unless you're making a side-by-side comparison, stick to one video per slide.

Slide Design Guidelines

- **Choose large font sizes**. As an example, in PowerPoint, I don't go below 40 points for the headline font size and don't go below 28 for the body font size (FYI: the font size ratio will be different in Keynote and Google slides than it is in PowerPoint). If you're considering shrinking your font size so you can fit more on your slide, that should be a sign you're headed in the wrong direction.

- Your slide **headline should tell your audience exactly what that slide is about** or the conclusion the information on that slide will come to. In most cases, your headline should be a complete thought.

- If you're using bullet points, **avoid full sentences** whenever possible. Instead, bullet points should be made up of keywords and short phrases. Sentences are permissible if: (1) It's a definition (2) It's a quote (3) It's a statement - like a mission or a vision statement.

- Try to begin your bullet points with a verb or adjective: (weak) "You can collect better data" (strong) "Better data"

- Try not to exceed more than five bullet points on a slide.

- Whenever possible, don't have more than two lines of text for one thought - no paragraphs on slides!

- When you need to draw your audience's attention to something specific on your slide, **use shapes, colors, or arrows**. Don't use a laser pointer (we'll talk about why later).

- Your audience will read everything they see on a slide. If you don't want them to read ahead because it will confuse them, 'hide' that content and 'build' it in when you're ready to speak to it. When you use builds or animations, keep it simple. You want your content to appear instantly (no fade in/out, bouncing, twirling, etc.).