

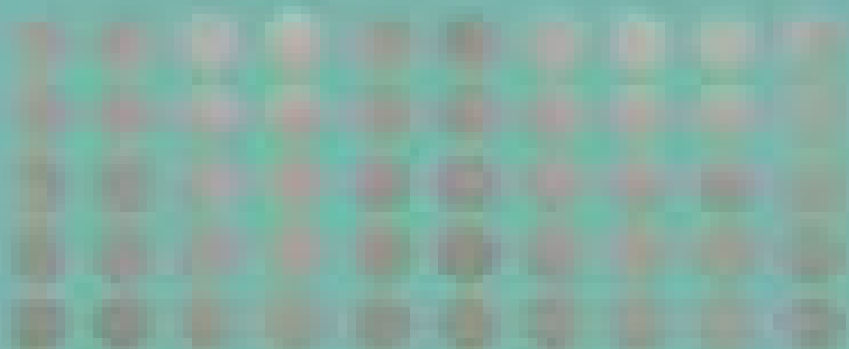


# The Art of Presenting Successfully

A COMPLETE GUIDE



By **Michael W. Pineda**  
Ph.D., MBA



# **The Art of Presenting Successfully**

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# Preface

Have you ever wondered what really makes a presentation successful? Is a fancy presentation with impressive slides, lots of special effects and sounds a successful one? The question you need to ask yourself is whether the presentation got your message across! If your audience received your message the way you meant to, then your presentation was successful.

This e-book is designed to provide information in a concise and easy to read format to anyone who needs to prepare a presentation, whether formal or informal.

The information flows in a logical sequence of actions to guide you through the process of making an effective presentation. There are 'dos' and 'don'ts' based on information gathered from many sources and filtered using my personal experiences.

I hope that you will find it useful!

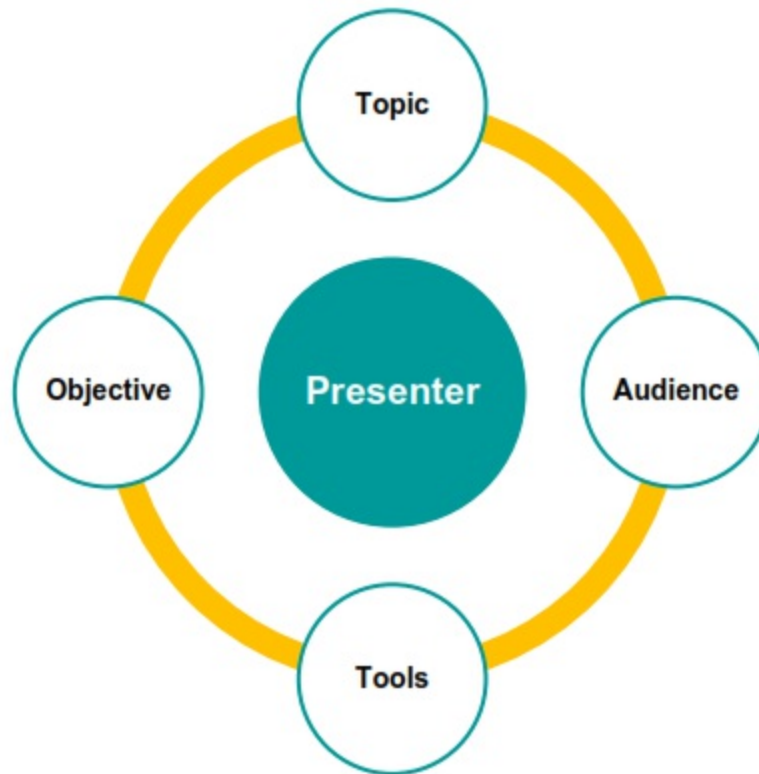
The Author

# The elements of Presentations

A presentation consists of the following interrelated elements:

- Presenter
- Topic
- Objective
- Audience
- Tools

A presentation cannot exist if any of the above elements is absent. However, the presenter plays a focal role for a successful presentation. The presenter is the orchestrator that will coordinate and organize. A lot depends on his or her public speaking skills, on the thorough knowledge of the topic and the attention she or he will give to details.



In the sections that follow, you can read an analysis of each element with useful tips on how to eventually deliver a successful presentation.

# The Presenter

Your performance as the presenter will determine whether one presentation will be successful or not. The audience attends your presentation because they expect to gain from your knowledge and your expertise. The knowledge you have on your topic will not be helpful to the audience unless you relay your message clearly.

Your ability to communicate effectively and to wisely use or handle the other four elements of a presentation is crucial.

An effective presenter should demonstrate public speaking skills which are defined as the act or process of making speeches in public and the art of effective oral communication with an audience (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).



When we say 'public speaking' we do not necessarily refer to formally speaking in front of a large audience. Public speaking can take many forms, from talking to a group of colleagues to presenting financial results at a Board of Director's meeting. No doubt, at some point of time, you will find yourself in the need to speak in front of an audience. It is really astonishing to note that public speaking causes many people fear that they cannot easily overcome. I have seen very successful professionals in their field who could barely speak in front of an audience.

Good public speaking skills are essential in every aspect of life, professional or personal. Just think about the positive impression a good speaker makes as opposed to an average one!

The 'bad' thing about public speaking is that you do not know when you will need it. It could be at a family gathering, at a friend's wedding or at work.

In this section I refer to public speaking in the professional and academic environment. Good public speaking skills are a definite plus when you try to build a professional image. A sales meeting or presentation, a training, a briefing to your superiors, a presentation of an academic project are only some examples when may need to use your skills.

Communication is the core of public speaking. Communication is a two-way process. To achieve effective communication you need to get your message across and at the same time to be able to receive feedback from the other party. According to the 7 Cs theory, communication, written or oral, must have the following characteristics:

## Clarity

**Makes understanding easier**

**Enhances clarity of message**

- Define the purpose of the communication.
- Emphasize on a specific message or goal at a time.

- Do not try to convey too many messages in one communication.
- Use appropriate and exact words.
- Ideas should be clear and not subject to assumptions or different interpretations by the audience.

## **Conciseness**

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### **Better comprehension by the audience**

#### **Makes the message more appealing and more apparent**

- Use the appropriate number of words.
- Avoid the excessive use of adjectives.
- Avoid the use of unnecessary expressions or 'filler words'
- Avoid different forms of repetitions.

## **Coherence**

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### **Your message will make sense.**

- Check the relevance of your points.
- The communication should be consistent in tone and flow.

## **Concreteness**

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### **Gains the confidence of your audience.**

#### **Provides a clear and lively picture to your audience.**

- Be precise.
- Be focused.
- Support your message with appropriate amount of facts and figures.

## **Correctness**

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### **Enhances the impact of your message.**

#### **Increases your credibility.**

- Make sure your communication is free of grammatical and syntax errors.
- Proof read your written communication. Do not rely only on the spell checker.
- Use appropriate and understandable technical terms.
- Check the accuracy of facts and figures used.
- Use appropriate language-avoid jargon.

## **Completeness**

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### **Enhance the reputation of the organization**

#### **Persuade your audience**



- Establish what your audience expects from the communication
- Convey all the facts and figures so that the audience can make decisions or take action.
- Be ready to provide any additional information if required.

## Consideration

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**Helps you to gain the trust of your audience**

**Creates a positive attitude towards the communication**

- Take into consideration the characteristics of your audience, their views, background, educational and social level.
- Respect your audience.
- Be friendly and honest.
- Be positive and optimistic.

**Build your self-confidence**

Self-confidence is the cornerstone for a successful presentation. Even if you believe that 'you don't have it', it is in your hands to succeed by consistently using exercises to boost your self-confidence and to follow some useful guidelines.

- Think positively about yourself.
- Keep repeating to yourself that the presentation will be a huge success!
- Be well prepared. Use a checklist to ensure that all the preparations have been made.
- Allow reasonable time for the audience to settle down before you start. If needed, ask for quiet.



- Eliminate tension by using simple techniques like using a stress ball and taking a series of deep breaths.
- Familiarize yourself with the arguments of your presentation.
- Do not apologize to the audience for being inexperienced! Why are you there then?
- Keep calm and move on if you missed your point or forgot what you wanted to say! Move on to the next point and return to the missed point later!
- Do not hide behind a lectern or a desk. It implies a 'physical' apology.
- Read your material over and over again and get used to hearing your voice.

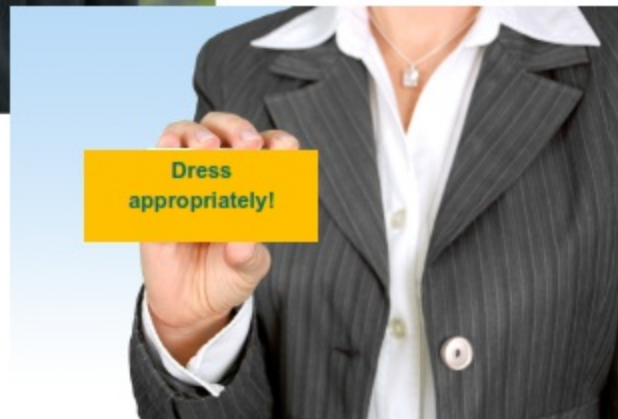
Practise! Practise! Practise!

## Appearance

A proper appearance will give a good first impression to your audience and will be vital for the success of your presentation. First impressions are sometimes hard to change. By the

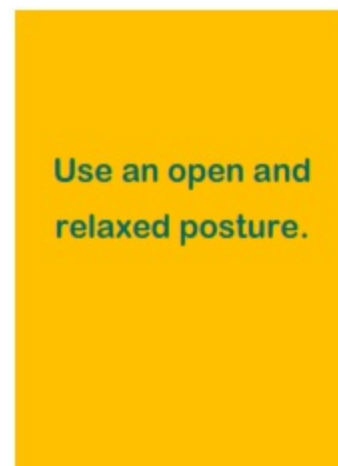
time you begin your presentation, the audience will have formed a positive or negative idea about you. How can you make a good first impression then?

- Dress appropriately, business-like and smartly.
- Do not wear clothes or accessories that are distracting for the audience.
- Avoid extravagant hair styles.
- Hide any 'perspiration problem areas.'
- Do not overdo it with makeup or perfume.
- Make sure that your clothes are well-fitted and properly ironed!
- If applicable, make sure your tie is at the right length and the knot is well made.
- Hair is brushed and tidy.
- Make sure your shoes are polished.



## Body language

Believe it or not, our body is a means of communication. How we stand, the gestures we make and facial expressions transmit messages to the audience. So it is important to have in mind some important guidelines in order for the body language to work in your favor.



- Begin your presentation by holding a balanced stance, keeping your body upright and your hands relaxed on the side.
- Smile genuinely!
- Use an open and relaxed posture.
- Use hand gesture to welcome the audience or to emphasize your point.
- Use open gestures that move away from your body towards the audience.
- Adapt your posture to the kind of presentation, formal or informal.
- Do not hide the flipchart or the presentation screen with your body.
- Avoid turning your back to your audience.
- Do not take a defensive position like crossing your hands on your chest
- Do not overdo it with hand gestures, they indicate nervousness and eventually they become a distraction.

## Voice

Your voice is critical to the success of the presentation. The volume, the pace and the pitch of your voice are equally important as all the visual messages you will be transmitting during your presentation.

Start speaking confidently!  
 Be enthusiastic!  
 Speak clearly!  
 Use simple words and concise sentences!

- Introduce yourself and make an initial connection with the audience by asking if they are sitting comfortably, whether the room temperature and lighting are right, whether they have a good visibility.
- Keep a natural pace, neither too fast nor too slow-the audience will have a difficulty following you.
- Add life to your presentation by varying your pace as it progresses.
- Do not vary the pace for the sake of it.
- Involve your audience by asking questions such as 'the chart shows us that...'
- Pause between the main points
- Vary the volume, the pace and the pitch of your voice when you want to emphasize a point, draw attention or convey enthusiasm.
- Set the volume of your voice so that you can be heard.
- Use tactful, relaxed and confident humour to break the ice or ease tensions.
- Make sure there is water available within easy reach. A warm drink before the presentation will help ease your voice.
- Avoid reading from your notes. Instead skim through if needed.
- Do not fade out the volume of your voice at the end of the sentence.
- Do not mumble! If it happens, treat it with confidence!
- Do not use humour if you are not confident that it will work! Do not overdo it with humour; you are not a stand-up comedian!

## Eye Contact

Eye contact is a powerful tool! Establish a connection with your audience so that they keep

following the presentation. Losing the eye contact will most probably mean losing the audience.

- Initially, establish eye contact with a member of the audience that looks friendlier or more interested.
- Establish and maintain eye contact with all the members of the audience.
- Use eye contact to engage with the audience and to get their reaction and feedback.
- Do not neglect the members of the audience sitting in the back rows.
- Do not avoid eye contact with 'unfriendly' members of the audience.
- Do not look vaguely around the room.



Use eye contact to engage with the audience.

# The Topic

The topic of the presentation is what you are going to talk about to the audience. The topic may be given or chosen. Whatever the case may be, you as the presenter should have a thorough knowledge of it by the time you will be presenting. The audience will be expecting to receive a value from the presentation of an expert in the specific field. Knowledge brings confidence. The better you know the topic, the more confident you will be as a presenter.

- If the topic is given by the presentation organizers, make sure that you understand it fully. Ask for clarifications.
- Find up-to-date information especially on topics that have rapidly changed over the last years, for example technology related issues.
- Use relevant and updated numerical data.
- If your source is old, confirm the validity of the information before using it.
- Colleagues can be a good source of information which is often underestimated.
- The internet is an ocean of information. However, you should be careful as regards the reliability and credibility of the sources.
- Look at the bibliography of a relevant book or a journal. This provides you with more reference material.
- The objective of the presentation will determine the depth of the required research.
- Organize the relevant research material. Write the ideas in a logical order of questions and issues arising from the topic (or in the form of a 'mind map').
- If you have many sources (printed or electronic), prepare an index with the title (website if applicable), the information or data contained, the section or page it is located so that you can easily retrieve it.

## Sources of information

The sources of information are categorized into primary, secondary and tertiary on the basis of its flow from its source. It particularly refers to the traditional printed publications. Internet has changed this in terms of both the time to access and publish information as well as access to information that until recently was beyond reach such as some government publications.

### Primary

- Reports • Theses • Emails
- Conference proceedings
- Company reports • Some government publications
- Unpublished manuscript sources

### Secondary

- Journals Books • Some government publications
- Newspapers

### Tertiary

- Indexes • Abstracts
- Catalogues • Citation indexes • Dictionaries
- Encyclopedias
- Bibliographies

# The Objective

Just after setting the topic of the presentation you have to think about its objective.

Ask yourself the following questions and note the answers. This exercise will help you to identify the objective.

- Why am I making/why have I been asked to make this presentation?
- What do I want to achieve? Do I have any personal goals?
- Why has my audience come here?
- What is my audience expecting of me?
- What do I want my audience to know after the presentation?
- What do I want my audience to do after the presentation?
- Is the audience expected to make a decision after the presentation?
- Is the audience expected to action after the presentation?
- How will my presentation support the corporate targets or strategy?

Rethink each answer you have written down. Sometimes a spontaneous answer does not cover the full depth of the question. By the end of this 'self-examination' process you should be able to identify a clear, specific, realistic and attainable objective for your presentation.

Having in mind the objective(s) of the presentation at every stage will help you to remain focused and to avoid the pitfall of wasting time, effort and resources working towards the wrong direction. If necessary adapt the style and type of your presentation to meet your objective.

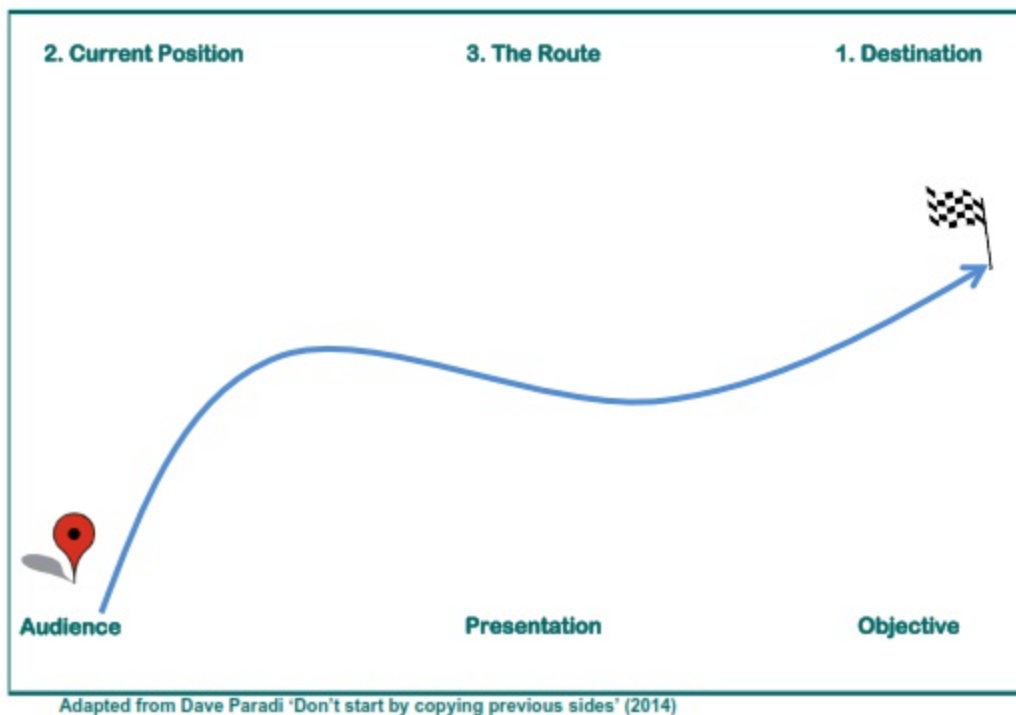
Put yourself in the shoes of a guide who has been asked to lead a group of people. Whether you use a GPS receiver or a traditional map, you need to identify three elements:

1. The destination.
2. The current position of the group.
3. The route you will follow.

When you are a presenter you will do exactly the same thing. You will first identify the destination-where you will want your audience to be after the presentation.

Then you need to identify what is their position now-the level of information or knowledge they have at the moment.

Finally, the route is the means you will use to lead the audience to the desired outcome-the objective of the presentation.



Adapted from Dave Paradi 'Don't start by copying previous sides' (2014)

## Assess the presentation

Has the audience reached their 'destination', in other words have you managed to achieve your objective? At the end of the presentation it is important to receive feedback from the audience not only as regards your skills as a presenter but as regards the degree of success in conveying your message across. In addition, comments as regards the venue and the overall organization would be helpful information for future reference.

**If the objective of a presentation is to sell a product or service, then the success is easily identifiable. However, if the objective is not so tangible, then you need to probe your audience in order to evaluate the presentation. Remember that a successful presentation is the one that gets your message across to your audience.**

# The Audience

You, as the presenter are the one side of the communication equation. The other one is the audience. In order to deliver an effective and eventually successful communication/presentation, it is of utmost importance to get to know the audience. Find out as much information as you can during the preparation phase of the presentation.



Information you need to find out from the organizer of the presentation or by researching yourself:

- What is the size of the audience?
- Ratio of male and female?
- Age range?
- Academic background?
- Professional level?
- Cultural composition?
- Does the audience know who you are?
- Do they know each other?
- Do they have things in common?
- Have they travelled a long distance to the venue?
- Is there any sensitivity of prejudice towards the content of the presentation?
- Are there any conflicts or tensions among the members of the audience?
- Have they been chosen to attend?

## Handle the audience

The presentation is organized for the benefit of the audience and you as the presenter you should always have this in mind. Therefore, it is important to do whatever you can to add value to your presentation and enable the audience to make the most out of it. Opinions or facts stated in your presentation may initiate hostility or strongly opposing opinions. You should be prepared to cope with such situations by being a soother than an instigator of hostility and tension.



Try to listen to previous speakers so that to get an idea of how the audience reacts.

Start your presentation according to the mood of the audience, stimulate them with some interactive questions if they are bored or start with a joke if they are hostile or indifferent. Give positive signals with your body language.

Learn to read the body language of the audience and adapt your style.

Identify audience members that show interest and agreement and involve them in the presentation.

Do not use gestures that can be insulting in other cultures such as pointing a finger.

Do not expect that everyone will react in the same way to your presentation.

### Types of hostile audience

- Recognize the types of hostile audience;
  - hecklers, people who disagree with what you say and want to cause trouble,
  - 'wise guys'-they mean no harm they just want to look clever.
- Be polite but firm with hecklers. State facts and provide evidence to back your case or underline that the presentation contains your personal opinion if not based on facts.
- Give hecklers the chance to get heard.

Do not interpret body language signs of the audience in isolation rather look at the whole picture. For example crossed legs by itself do not mean negativity.

Emphasize points of agreement with hecklers and repeat your opinion at the end.

Do not maintain prolonged eye contact with a hostile audience member, this may cause escalation.

Do not lose your temper under any circumstances.

Do not involve yourself in tension or hostility among audience members. Be the mediator, defuse tension and bring the presentation back on track.

### Answer questions

Remember that a presentation is most often a two-way communication. You should structure your presentation in such a way to allow time, depending on the subject of the presentation, for questions from the audience. You should be prepared to answer to expected and unexpected questions.

- Do not answer only to the questioner, address the whole audience.
- Do not argue with the questioner.
- Do not haste, think before beginning to speak. If needed, gain some time by coughing or drinking a sip of water. If necessary, look at your notes and explain why you did that, for example because you need to refresh some data.
- Do not show negative emotions, whatever the question is.
- Do not simply say "I do not know" to a question! Answer to the extent you can and commit that you will get back to the questioner with the rest of the information. Make sure that you do that in a timely manner! It will enhance your credibility.
- Do not make insulting comments no matter how stupid you think the question was.

Prepare well and know your subject in depth.

It is better to ask the questioner for clarifications before answering rather than give an answer off track.

Accept and answer one question at a time.

Answer questions confidently.

Stand up when answering.

If a question is not of general interest, suggest to answer it privately to the questioner, otherwise you might lose the audience.

If a question is irrelevant to the presentation, proceed to the next one by proposing to discuss any other issue after the end of the presentation.

Encourage and stimulate the audience to ask more questions.

Be relaxed but alert during the questions session. There might be some tricky questions leading to a pitfall.

Answer politely and respectfully.

# The Venue

The choice of the right venue contributes to the overall success of a presentation. Ensure that the chosen venue:

- Is easily accessible from audience by car or public transport.
- Has enough parking capacity.
- Provides flexibility for different sitting setup.
- Has satisfactory visibility and acoustics.
- Can cater for the required audio-visual equipment.
- Has satisfactory heating and air-conditioning.
- Provides pleasant surroundings to hold coffee breaks.
- Has or can provide catering facilities.



Photos courtesy of the Amathus Beach Hotel, Lemesos, Cyprus

### Before the presentation:

- Prepare a detailed list of all your requirements and have it confirmed by the venue management or the event organiser.
- On the day of the presentation, arrive at the venue early enough.
- Is the room temperature pleasant? Is there adequate ventilation?
- Is the setup as requested (seats, podium, head table, screen (s), rollups, backdrop etc.).
- Is there natural light? Are there curtains or blinds to darken the room?
- Are there enough seats for the expected audience? Keep some spare seats for late arrivals.
- Ensure that the requested equipment is available (laptop/PC, projector, screen, internet connection, TV, DVD, laser pointer, sound system, microphones etc.). Check whether they are working properly.
- Test your PowerPoint presentation on the laptop/PC and familiarize with the forward/backward buttons on the remote control/laser pointer.
- Locate the controls for the lights, the air-condition/heating, the audio system and the audio-visual equipment.
- Ensure that there is technical staff on call to handle any emergencies.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of the emergency exits and any emergency equipment (fire extinguishers, fire alarms).



# The Tools

Nowadays a presentation may involve a number of audio-visual equipment, from a PC and a projector to sophisticated audio systems to cater for large audiences. Whatever the case maybe, the success of the presentation depends on the reliability of the equipment you will use as well as your ability to handle any technical issues. In essence, it is important to have a backup plan for anything that might go wrong!

## Audio-Visual Equipment

Use a laser pointer/ remote control for the handling of the PowerPoint presentation.

Copy your presentation and run it from the PC or laptop instead from your USB or CD-Rom. It will run faster. If your presentation contains sensitive data, make sure that you delete it and remove it from the recycle bin when you are done.



Have a copy of your slide presentation saved on a cloud-based file management service like OneDrive, Google Drive or Dropbox. It will be your backup in case you forget your USB/CD-Rom or if something goes wrong with it.

Make sure that the slide projector is properly adjusted to the screen.

Ensure that there is a second projector at the venue as backup.

## Handouts

Handouts should be given at the end of your presentation. If you give them at the beginning, most probably you will distract your audience as they will be flipping through to the very end.

A handout is not a hard copy of your slide presentation. The slides should be the visual support for your presentation, they should not substitute it. Therefore, the handout should be a well written and presented document that will contain the information in your presentation. The preparation of such a document requires time and effort and you should take this into consideration when you make your planning.

The handout does not have to be in printed form, you can always have it available in electronic form to be sent or downloaded.

# Building and delivering a presentation

This is the final stage of the presentation process where you will perform your focal role as the presenter. Being a presenter is a multidimensional function for which you need to possess a range of skills. You will find them applicable when preparing and giving a presentation. Having studied the previous sections, you are at the point that all the elements are connected so that you have a meaningful presentation which will then be enhanced with the visual part in the form of a slide show, if you so choose.

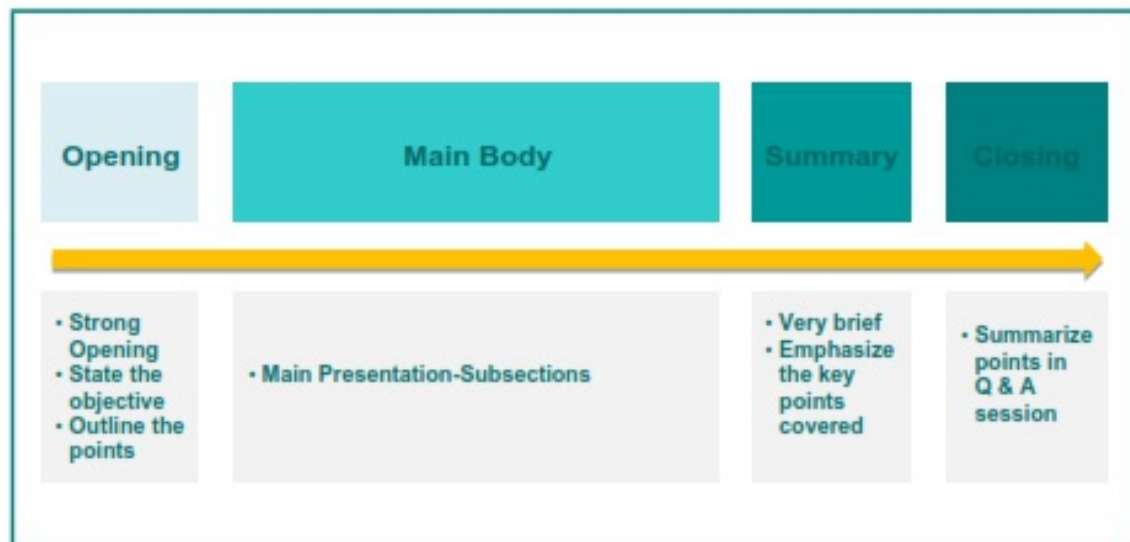
## Outline

You cannot build a house without the architect's and the civil engineer's drawings. The same holds with the presentation. You cannot 'build' a presentation without having a 'drawing', an outline. With an outline you ensure that you have identified your main points and consequently you know the framework within which you need to research, to collect information and data in order to support your points.

Your outline can be ideas written on paper, on sticky notes or using more elaborative methods such as software for making mind diagrams or even story builders like the tool from Amazon.

Do not engage in the visual design at this point. Using the house analogy it is as if you start decorating the house while it is still not built!

## Structure



### Opening:

A successful opening is of paramount importance for the rest of the presentation. The ancient Greeks used to say: "*Ἡ ἀρχὴ εἶναι το ῆμισυ τοῦ παντός*-*I arhi einai to imisi tou pantos*" which in broad terms means that a good beginning is already half of the success.

Use an 'eye-opener' to get the audience's attention. It is very important to make a strong, confident opening.

- Make sure that you introduce yourself by providing your credentials.
- Briefly refer to the agenda of the presentation.
- Highlight why the audience is there.
- Explain what your objective is and what they will gain from the presentation.
- End your introduction with a credible and positive statement.

### Main Body:

This is the main and longest part of the presentation and it is here that you will expand on and support your main points. Divide it into sections each covering a single point or idea.

### Summary:

This part should be brief and straight forward. Emphasize again the main points and tell the audience what is expected from them.

### Closing:

This is as important as the beginning, as it will be the last impression the audience will get. Close your presentation with a positive final message.

- Capture the audience's attention within the first five minutes.
- Divide the presentation in sections based on the relevance of the topics covered.
- Analyse your main topic between 5 and 20 minutes into the presentation where the concentration of the audience is at its peak. The concentration fades until 35 minutes where it starts to increase again reaching another peak point near the end of the 45-minute time span.
- Keep the presentation short and relevant to your audience.
- Each section of the presentation should have its own brief opening, main body and closing so that it is clear where one point ends and the next one begins.
- Categorize the points to make in:
  - Must Know
  - Should Know
  - Nice to Know

- Must and Should Know points should be part of your presentation.
- Link the points so that the presentation has a natural flow and continuity.
- Recap information and arguments during the presentation.
- Alert the audience that you will be closing the presentation by using expression such as 'In closing...', 'My last point...', 'In conclusion...'
- Do not make presentations or their sections longer than 45 minutes.
- Do not overwhelm the audience with too much detail or numerical data of little value.
- When recapping information do not simply repeat the exact expressions you used in the main body. On the one hand, keep it familiar and on the other make it sound fresh.
- Do not go over the allotted time for the presentation. It indicates lack of adequate preparation and rehearsal.

## The script

You can write the contents of your presentation either in full or on index cards in the form of notes.

- The script is meant to be a backup in case you forget some points you want to talk about.
- Index cards should contain only information in point form and not full sentences.
- Number your index cards so that you can easily sort them in case they get mixed up.
- If you using full script number the pages and staple them, otherwise they can be easily get mixed up!
- Use appropriate margins, spaces and font sizes so that you can easily refer to your script.
- Do not read directly from your script.
- Do not use both sides of the paper or index card for your script.
- If you feel nervous do not hold the script in your hands. Keep the script on a table or on the podium and flip through.
- If you feel comfortable using a tablet during the presentation, you can save the script in an appropriate application. Have in mind that PowerPoint presentations may not show correctly in some compatible applications.



# The Slideshow on PowerPoint

PowerPoint is the most widely used software that provides all the tools to design professional-looking presentations. PowerPoint is just a powerful tool in your hands nevertheless you will decide how the presentation will look like.

There are a few simple rules that will make your presentation more professional and will enable the audience to concentrate on the messages you want to convey

## Templates and slides

- Use a simple, minimal and consistent slide template design.
- The number of slides depends on the main points of your presentation. Too many slides can be tiring for the audience.
- Limit the number of words on the screen. Empty space on the slide enhances readability.
- The slides are there to complement the presentation and assist you in giving a visual dimension to the message you want to convey.
- The attention of the audience should not be on the slide but on the presenter.
- Use 'black' slides when you want the full attention of the audience. You can do that by adding a black slide in your presentation if you know the specific point in advance or ad hoc, by pressing the '.' key while in the slide mode, during the presentation.
- Use phrases containing only the essential information. Avoid using complete sentences.

## Images

- If you will use photos, make sure that they are high quality images. If you think that an image or text is unreadable, do not use it!
- Choose appropriate photos that support your message. If you use online sites, check about copyrights and/or charges involved.
- Use one or two large images instead of more, smaller ones. Incorporate text into the images instead of having them separate to create a unified outcome.
- Do not use irrelevant images just to make the slide look nice.
- Do not overstretch small images. The more you stretch, the more the quality of the image deteriorates.
- Do not use the clipart images contained in PowerPoint. As in the case of the built-in templates, they have been seen already so many times before. Your presentation will look dated and you will look unprofessional.

- Use bullet points appropriately. Use not more than six words in each one and not more than six bullet points per slide.
- Use dark colored fonts on light colored background or vice versa. Make sure that the contrast is enough to make the text readable.
- Use automations and timings only if you feel confident that you can handle them.
- Proof read your slides and check the spelling, the grammar and the syntax.
- Avoid the use of the pre-designed templates available in PowerPoint. They have been widely used and your audience might have seen them too many times!
- Avoid the use of distracting elements like flashy transitions, excessive animation and sounds.
- Do not use all capital letters.
- Do not clutter the screen with logos and useless design elements. An uncluttered

slide makes your visual message stronger. You can add the logo of your company in the corner.

- Do not move back and forth in your slide presentation. You look disorganized and eventually the audience will not be following.
- Do not read directly from your slides. The audience can read them too!
- Do not use more than 2 colors for the fonts on the slides.
- Use 'builds' (lines of text appearing one after the other each time you click the mouse or based on timings), when they support your message.
- Make sure that 'builds' appear one at a time so that you have time to make your point and that they run each time in the same order, for example top to bottom. Do not use any flashy animation.

## **Numbers, tables and graphs**

- Use tables and graphs to present the most important and relevant information that can be easily understood.
- Check the colors you use for fonts and graphs. Make sure that are readable on the chosen background. Bright colors are sometimes difficult to read.
- Numbers should support your message but should not be the main focus. It does not make sense to flood the screen with numbers which will be unreadable anyway.
- Present the summary or the conclusions you draw from numbers, do not present the full details. A slide with a table full of numbers is useless.
- Do not use complicated diagrams, tables or graphs. They add nothing to the information you want to convey!

## **Fonts**

- Use a simple Sans Serif font throughout the presentation, using no more than two complementary fonts (for example Arial and Arial Black). You can add emphasis by using bold. Check the appropriateness of italics for your presentation as sometimes they can be difficult to read.
- Do not use Serif or complicated fonts.
- Font size should not be less than 24 points. Make sure that the font size is appropriate so that the text is readable from the back of the presentation room, without being too 'loud'.
- Vary the font size for headings and subheadings.
- Select one of the standard fonts or embed the selected fonts in your presentation. If the fonts you have used are not installed on the presentation PC or laptop, the fonts will be substituted and this might change the appearance of your presentation. The same holds for words written in other languages whose fonts may not be supported on the presentation PC or laptop.



Use contrast to make text readable

Contrast



Use contrast to make text readable

Use light colored font on dark colored background to create a contrast. It makes text easily readable.

x

Use contrast to make text readable

Contrast

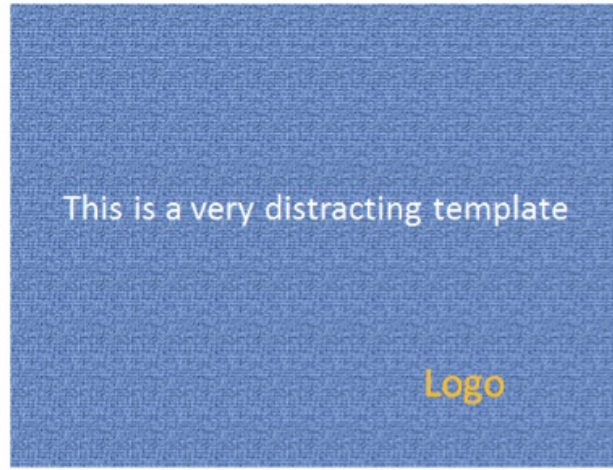
✓

Use contrast to make text readable

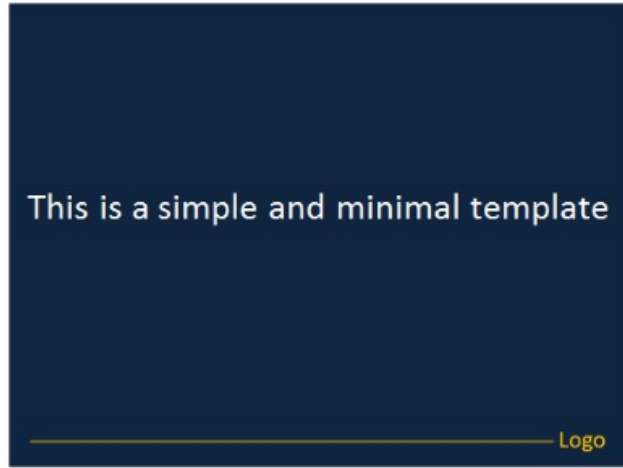
Use dark colored font on light colored background to create a contrast. It makes text easily readable.

Background

x



✓



The template's background should be as plain as possible without any distracting elements.



Serif fonts and **complicated** fonts are not suitable

Font type



Use Sans serif fonts like Arial or Tahoma

Use Sans Serif fonts, they are clearer to read on screen.



## These fonts are **too** small...

This is Arial 14 points  
This is Arial 16 points  
This is Arial 18 points  
This is Arial 20 points

Font size



## Use the **right** size of fonts

This is Arial 24 points  
This is Arial 26 points  
This is Arial 30 points  
This is Arial 36 points  
This is Arial 40 points  
This is Arial 44 points

Remember that your audience will be reading from a distance of at least 2 meters.

x

If you want to give **emphasis** do not  
do this!

Or

If you want to give **emphasis** do not  
do this!

Emphasis

✓

If you want to give **emphasis** you  
can do this!

Or

If you want to give **emphasis** you can  
do this!

Give emphasis but keep it simple.



Clear Charts



The audience will not retain the figures displayed in the upper chart. The presenter wants to demonstrate the trend per month.

x

Low Quality Image vs High Quality Image



High quality images

✓

Low Quality Image vs High Quality Image



The image loses its quality the more you stretch it to cover the slide.

Present the numbers



### Anonymous Ltd Income Statement

	2014	2013
	€ mil.	€ mil.
Sales	45,5	44,8
Operating expenses	34,3	33,8
Operating income	11,2	11,0
Other income	1,4	1,2
Income before interest and taxes	12,6	12,2
Financing cost	1,5	1,8
Income before taxes	11,1	10,4
Income tax expense	3,33	3,12
Net income from operations	7,77	7,28
Extraordinary income	0,65	0
Net income	8,42	7,28



### Anonymous Ltd. Income Statement

	2014	2013
	€ mil.	€ mil.
Sales	45,5	44,8
Operating expenses	34,3	33,8
Operating income	11,2	11,0
Other income	1,4	1,2
Income before interest and taxes	12,6	12,2
Financing cost	1,5	1,8
Income before taxes	11,1	10,4
Income tax expense	3,33	3,12
Net income from operations	7,77	7,28
Extraordinary income	0,65	0
Net income	8,42	7,28

+1,56%

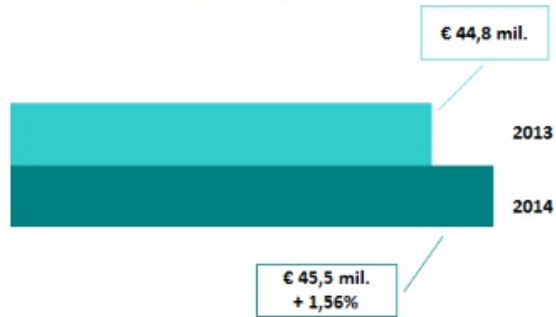
Highlight the important figures. The aim is to compare sales figures.

Present the numbers

### Anonymous Ltd Income Statement

	2014	2013
	€ mil.	€ mil.
<b>Sales</b>	<b>45,5</b>	<b>44,8</b>
Operating expenses	34,3	33,8
Operating income	11,2	11,0
Other income	1,4	1,2
Income before interest and taxes	12,6	12,2
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Net income from operations	7,77	7,28
Extraordinary income	0,65	0
<b>Net income</b>	<b>8,42</b>	<b>7,28</b>

### Anonymous Ltd Sales Comparisons



This is a graphical and clearer presentation of the same data.

# Presentation Checklist

Topic:	<input type="text"/>		
Venue:	<input type="text"/>		
Date:	<input type="text"/>	Time:	<input type="text"/>

## Topic

- Is the topic clear?
- Have you asked for/received clarifications?
- Do you have a thorough knowledge of the topic?

## Objective

- Have you completed the self-question section to define the objective?
- Have you set the objective (s) of the presentation?

## Audience:

- Do you know the number of participants?
- Have you received information on the composition of the audience?
- Have you prepared answers to expected and unexpected questions?

## Venue:

- Has the venue been booked and confirmed?
- Have you checked about suitability of the venue to the requirements of your presentation?
- Have you made your travel plans to the venue?
- Will your travel plans allow you to have enough time for last minute checks at the venue?

## Appearance

- Have you arranged what you are going to wear?
- Is your clothing appropriate for the type of presentation you are delivering?



### **Tools-Audiovisual equipment:**

Has the required equipment been arranged and confirmed?



Have you checked the list of requested equipment with the ones arranged?



Have you checked whether the remote control/laser pointer, the projector (s), the PC or laptop and the other required equipment are functioning properly?



### **Presentation:**

Have you saved your slide presentation on a USB stick and optionally on a cloud file management service (OneDrive, Dropbox, and Google Drive)?



Have you prepared your script?



Do you have a copy of the script with you?



Do you have enough copies of the handouts (based on the audience size)?



Do you know the time and the order you will present?



Have you prepared a presentation assessment (either hard copy or online)?



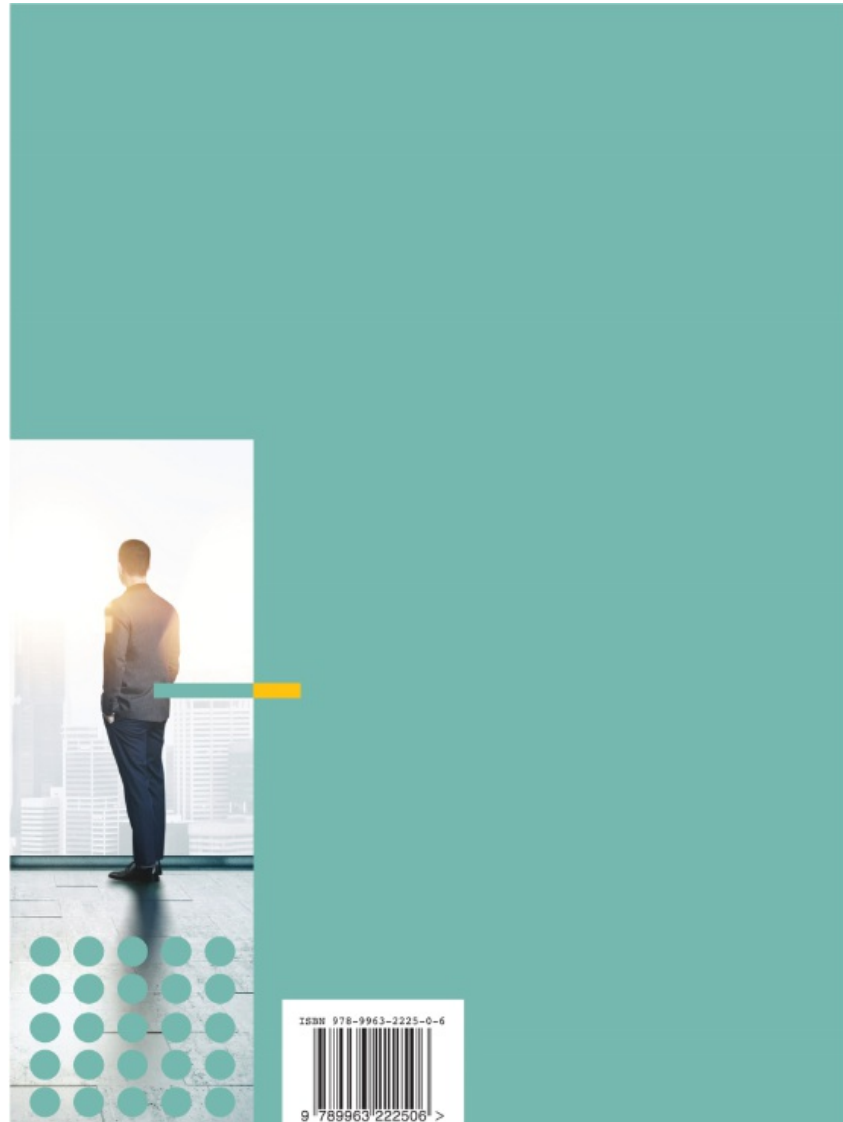
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