Presentations.

Structure is basic for a presentation: make sure you have a clear opening, a development of the topic and a strong ending. If you do not organize your ideas in a clear way, your audience will soon be lost and bored.

Most presentations are divided into 3 main parts (+ questions):

1	INTRODUCTION	(Questions)
2	BODY	
3	CONCLUSION	
	Questions	

As a general rule in communication, repetition is valuable. In presentations, there is a golden rule about repetition:

1. Say what you are going to say,
2. say it,
3. then say what you have just said.

In other words, use the three parts of your presentation to reinforce your message. In the introduction, you tell your audience what your message is going to be. In the body, you tell your audience your real message. In the conclusion, you summarize what your message was.

1. Introduction

The introduction is a very important - perhaps the most important - part of your presentation. This is the first impression that your audience has of you. You should concentrate on getting your introduction right. You should use the introduction to:

1. **welcome your audience:** Never start a presentation right away, you need to acknowledge the audience's presence and thank them for being there
2. **introduce your subject:** you also need to, briefly, tell them what your presentation will be dealing with
3. **outline the structure of your presentation**: you should enumerate the different parts your talk is divided into.
4. **give instructions about questions:** inform your audience about whether you will answer questions during the presentation or at the end. It is your choice.

The following table shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

Function	Possible language
1 Welcoming your audience	• Good morning, ladies and gentlemen • Good morning, gentlemen • Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman • Good afternoon, everybody
2 Introducing your subject	• I am going to talk today about... • The purpose of my presentation is...
3 Outlining your structure	• **To start with** I'll describe the progress made this year. **Then** I'll mention some of the problems we've encountered and how we overcame them. **After that** I'll consider the possibilities for further growth next year. **Finally**, I'll summarize my presentation (before concluding with some recommendations).
4 Giving instructions about questions	• Do feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions. • I'll try to answer all of your questions after the presentation. • I plan to keep some time for questions after the presentation.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much

for coming along here today

The purpose of today's presentation is to discuss how we can...

I've invited you here today to have a look at my findings

Now let me begin by...

Secondly...

...and finally...

I'd be very happy to invite you

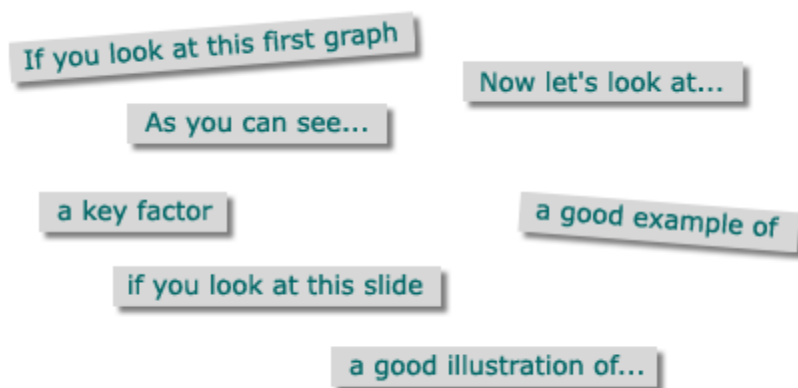to ask questions at the end of the session

At the end I'd be very happy to answer any of your questions

2. Body

After you have greeted your guests, you will begin to go through the main body of your presentation. The body is the 'real' presentation. If the introduction was well prepared and delivered, you will now be 'in control'. You will be relaxed and confident.

The body should be well structured, divided up logically, with plenty of carefully spaced visuals. It's very useful to have some visual aids - some slides, pictures or graphs that help explain what you are saying. Sometimes they can also help to keep your audience interested in your presentation!

You need to introduce the slides or graphs and describe them to the audience. Although they can see them, and most probably understand them, it shows you know your topic well, and that you are capable of explaining concepts to others. Use sentences like…

If you look at this first graph

Now let's look at…

As you can see…

a key factor

a good example of

if you look at this slide

a good illustration of…

Remember these key points while delivering the body of your presentation:

- do not hurry
- be enthusiastic
- give time on visuals
- maintain eye contact
- modulate your voice
- look friendly
- keep to your structure
- use your notes
- signpost throughout
- remain polite when dealing with difficult questions

VISUALS

A Few Deadly Sins

The Illegible Image.

Images not clearly seen by the entire audience add confusion and distraction. If you have to say "I know you can't read this but…..," why include the visual at all? The more eagle-eyed viewers may take exception to your attack on their literacy, while others are attempting to see what is on the screen.

They cannot be expected to be paying full attention to what is being said while straining to read the visual.

One popular rule of thumb is the *"8H" rule of legibility.* In a nutshell, if you can read an image from eight times its height, odds are your audience will be able to read it when projected.

For example: You have a flip chart which is 2 feet high. If you can read the chart from 16 feet away, that chart will probably be legible when presented as a projected image to a small to midsized audience..

Likewise, if you can read an 8-1/2″ high print from a distance of Five Feet (8″ high by 8) it will probably be legible to an average audience.

The Useless Image:

Images should be designed to please the mind as well as the eye of the viewer. If an image has no specific place or purpose in a presentation other than "it is pretty", it should probably be removed.

The Overly Complex Image:

More images with fewer ideas on each are better than a few images which are complicated or difficult to understand. A single idea or set of facts per image, timed to the speaker's pace will add punch and emphasis to each important idea assuring maximum retention.

Most people are easily bored, and one generally accepted rule of thumb states that if an image remains on the screen longer than 7 to 10 seconds, you begin to lose viewer attention.

Ransom Note Design:

Just because you have access to 350 fonts does not mean that you are required to use them. A single font throughout an entire presentation is usually quite sufficient. Use bold, italic, underline, quotations and/or color changes to emphasize or subdue key points or words.

Calico or Crazy Quilt Graphics:

Keep the colors to a minimum. A single background color throughout a presentation lends an air of continuity. You can separate broad sections of a presentation by changing background colors, but keep the changes to a minimum.

3. Conclusion

Use the conclusion to:

1. **Sum up**
2. **(Give recommendations if appropriate)**
3. **Thank your audience**
4. **Invite questions**

The following table shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

Function	Possible language
1 Summing up	• To conclude,... • In conclusion,... • Now, to sum up... • So let me summarise/recap what I've said. • Finally, may I remind you of some of the main points we've considered.
2 Giving recommendations	• In conclusion, my recommendations are... • I therefore suggest/propose/recommend the following strategy.
3 Thanking your audience	• Many thanks for your attention. • May I thank you all for being such an attentive audience.
4 Inviting questions	• Now I'll try to answer any questions you may have. • Can I answer any questions? • Are there any questions? • Do you have any questions? • Are there any final questions?

4. Questions

At the end of your presentation, you may wish to open the floor to questions – to ask if anyone has any questions about your presentation. What phrases might you use or hear?

If you have any questions I would

be happy to answer them now

Are there any questions about any of that?

Can I just ask...?

Yes, a very good question

Can you explain to me...?

Questions are a good opportunity for you to interact with your audience. It may be helpful for you to try to predict what questions will be asked so that you can prepare your response in advance. You may wish to accept questions at any time during your presentation, or to keep a time for questions after your presentation. Normally, it's your decision, and you should make it clear during the introduction.

Be polite with all questioners, even if they ask difficult questions. They are showing interest in what you have to say and they deserve attention.

Sometimes you can reformulate a question. Or answer the question with another question. Or even ask for comment from the rest of the audience.

Presentations: tips

The aims and the structure need to be clear

Wait until the end of the presentation before people

feed back on what you've said

Make sure you are entertaining, engaging and interesting

Don't make it too long

Be short, precise and to the point

Make sure you're relevant - make sure

you're talking to the right audience

Introduction
A good way to make your presentations effective, interesting and easy to follow is to use **signpost language. 'Signpost language'** is the words and phrases that people use to tell the listener what has just happened, and what is going to happen next.

In other words, signpost language guides the listener through the presentation. A good presenter will usually use a lot of signpost language, so it is a good idea to learn a few of the common phrases, even if you spend more time listening to presentations than giving them! Signpost language is usually fairly informal, so it is relatively easy to understand.

Signposting

Section of presentation	Signpost language
Introducing the topic	The subject/topic of my talk is … I'm going to talk about … My topic today is… My talk is concerned with …
Overview (outline of presentation)	I'm going to divide this talk into four parts. There are a number of points I'd like to make. Basically/ Briefly, I have three things to say. I'd like to begin/start by … Let's begin/start by … First of all, I'll… … and then I'll go on to … Then/ Next … Finally/ Lastly …

Finishing a section	That's all I have to say about... We've looked at... So much for...
Starting a new section	Moving on now to ... Turning to... Let's turn now to ... The next issue/topic/area I'd like to focus on ... I'd like to expand/elaborate on ... Now we'll move on to... I'd like now to discuss... Let's look now at...
Analysing a point and giving recommendations	Where does that lead us? Let's consider this in more detail... What does this mean for...? Translated into real terms... Why is this important? The significance of this is...
Giving examples	For example,... A good example of this is... As an illustration,... To give you an example,... To illustrate this point...
Summarising and concluding	To sum up ... To summarise... Right, let's sum up, shall we? Let's summarise briefly what we've looked at... If I can just sum up the main points... Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've covered... To conclude... In conclusion ... In short ... So, to remind you of what I've covered in this talk, ... Unfortunately, I seem to have run out of time, so I'll conclude very briefly by saying that .....

	I'd like now to recap...
Paraphrasing and clarifying	Simply put... In other words....... So what I'm saying is.... To put it more simply.... To put it another way....
Invitation to discuss / ask questions	I'm happy to answer any queries/ questions. Does anyone have any questions or comments? Please feel free to ask questions. If you would like me to elaborate on any point, please ask. Would you like to ask any questions? Any questions?