



Keyword: Presentation

Preparing a More Powerful Presentation

by Kevin Eikenberry

Most every professional has to give a presentation at some point (and some, most every day). And while some enjoy presenting to groups, the vast majority of people would say it isn't their favorite activity.

Because presenting to groups isn't fun for most, and further, because it isn't easy, people are often stymied as to what steps to take to create a presentation that will be successful and, at the same time, less stressful.

Achieving these twin ideas of creating a better presentation with less stress is the goal of the suggestions that follow.

First, grab 10-12 index cards, and then, as you read, think about a specific presentation that you might need to give soon.

Who is Your Audience?

This is the first important question to consider. These steps will help you consider the question.

1. On one of the index cards write down who will be in your audience. Write down job titles or roles or whatever will categorize these people. If you know the names of specific audience members, write them down too.
2. On a second card write down the questions you think they will have about your subject matter.
3. Put these cards down - you will use them again.

What are Your Key Messages?

Even at this early planning stage you should have a pretty clear picture of what you need to share. If you don't, now is the perfect time to figure that out. These steps will help you focus and confirm the key messages you need to deliver in your talk.

1. Take 3-5 cards and write down a key point on each one.
2. If you have more than five key points to make, you need to consider if your talk is focused enough. Spend time determining if all of these points are critical to your end goal for the presentation.



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3. Write down the details you need to cover on each card.
4. If you don't think you have enough space – further focus your message.

What Do You Want to Happen Next?

Along with your key messages you also want people to take some action as a result of your presentation. Now is the time to focus on that.

1. On your next card, write down what, in a perfect world, you would want people to *do* as a result of your talk.
2. Compare that result with your key points above – adjust, reduce or change those key points to support this desired end goal.
3. Now, look at your audience cards, and review the questions you think they will have. Confirm that your content will address those concerns, and adjust your content if those questions aren't relevant to your end goal.
4. Prioritize the most important people or groups in your audience by circling them. Consider everything you know about those people and think about what else you need to share in order to answer their questions and reach your goals.

Using your index cards to answer these questions hands you the content that you need to include in your talk. With this content basis for your presentation, then you can begin to craft the detailed plan of what you will actually say when.

By starting in this way, you can rest assured that you will successfully prepare and deliver the message you mean to share – and feel much better about the process too!



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