

Session Objectives:

- Why Organize?
- The Core statement
- Organizational structure
- Supporting your ideas
- Visual aids
- After the presentation

Why Organize?

By organizing his message, the speaker is able to detect flaws and gaps in his message and take corrective action. While organizing his speech, the speaker juxtaposes all his ideas and is able to identify the best sequence in which to present his ideas. Organizing messages helps in a clear presentation of ideas besides improving the ability of the speaker to handle queries from the audience. Organizing the speech helps ease the pressure on the speaker during its presentation. A well-organized presentation adds to the credibility of the ideas presented by the speaker. Irrespective of the type of speech or its presentation; organizing the message helps listeners to understand the message better as well as helps the speaker to retain their interest.

Ways to organize a message

Though several ways of making presentations exist, the most appropriate method to organize a message involves formulating the core statement, planning main points and sub points to support the core statement and helping to relate these various points through appropriate patterns.

The Core Statement

A speech generally consist of two parts

- (a) Points that require clarification, amplification or proof, and
- (b) Material that clarifies, amplifies or proves the statement.

That part of the speech which requires clarification, amplification or proof is known as the core statement and comprises the most general statement of the speech. The statements that clarify or prove the truth of the core statement are termed as main points and are less general than the core statement. Further, the statements that clarify or prove the main points are termed as sub points and are least general of the three.

Core statement is also termed as a subject statement, theme statement, thesis or proposition. Core statements prevent the speaker from unintentionally introducing irrelevant information into the speech and help to focus the audience's attention on more important and relevant facts. Thus the core statement serves as the unifying factor in a speech.

Example:

Core statement: Population is increasing at a rapid pace in India.

Main point I: It is increasing mainly in northern India.

Sub point: Bihar is experiencing a sharp increase.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure refers to the systematic pattern in which the core statement, main points and the sub points in a speech are arranged. The purpose of having an organizational structure is to facilitate easy understanding of the speech by the listeners.

Speeches are unique to each type of situation. A few common structures relating to informative and persuasive speeches are discussed.

Organizing in an informative speech

While organizing a speech to inform, it is important that a proper flow and clarity are maintained. This facilitates the audience to understand and retain the information presented in the speech.

An informative speech should be organized in the following pattern:

The Introduction

Introduction serves a dual purpose, it helps arouse the interest of the listener and gives an idea about the subject of the speech. The introduction depends on the topic of the speech, interest and knowledge level of the audience, time available for making the presentation and the situation.

Obtaining and retaining listeners' attention is possible only if their interest is aroused. If the introduction is so drafted that you are able to hold the attention of the audience, later presentation of the speech becomes easier. The speaker can utilize the introduction to convey to the audience about the various benefits they could derive from listening to the speech. This enables the speaker to make a presentation to a motivated audience.

A preview of the main points of the speech should be presented in the introduction. This will allow the audience to understand the flow of the speech and what they can expect from the rest of the presentation.

The Body

In the introduction part, the speaker briefs the audience, arouses their interest and manages to capture their attention. The body of the speech should be organized into meaningful groupings to facilitate listeners' comprehension and retention of their attention.

The various patterns that can be followed in organizing the speech into groupings are:

Chronological pattern: Under this type of grouping, various events are arranged in the order of their occurrence.

Example: Historical details regarding wars and other important events.

Spatial pattern: This pattern is effective when you are to describe scenes or locations. The arrangement could be based on region to region, top to bottom or center to outside and so on.

Example: The pattern of description followed while explaining the structure of monuments.

Causal order: This pattern of speech is used to present a topic describing a cause-effect relationship.

Example: A talk that explains about various hazardous effects of pollution resulting in the depletion of the ozone layer.

Topical pattern: This is the most common pattern of speech. It follows a logical order of presentation of events and activities. This pattern is most common since it is invariably the pattern that the audience expects. It also helps in conveying the message easily.

The Conclusion

Techniques such as restating the main points of the speech are used to conclude a speech.

Organizing in a Persuasive Speech

Persuasive speeches are different from informative speeches. In an informative speech, the purpose of the introduction is to capture the attention of the audience and to prepare them for what is to follow. In persuasive speeches, the introduction is expected to create a conducive climate of acceptance. It is advisable to adopt an inquiry style rather than an assertive style for delivering such speeches.

In delivering such speeches, the speaker should be able to accomplish the desired results. The goal may be to elicit an immediate response, convince the opposite party regarding a project proposal etc.

Depending on the purpose of the speech, the speaker should present adequate supporting material so as to strengthen his/her argument, and win over the listener's confidence.

Specific Strategies for Persuasive Speeches are:

The Problem-solution order: According to this pattern, the speaker divides the body of the speech into 3 parts. The first part explains the problem, the second part offers a solution to the problem and the third part provides supporting material or evidence to defend the solution.

Example: Problem statement: There are many ailments because of excessive pollution.

Solution: (i) Proper emission norms should be reinforced for controlling air pollution.

(ii) Disposal of waste in the industrial sector should be strictly monitored.

Supporting Statement:

(i) There is an increase in lung diseases by 10% in the last 2 years due to vehicle emissions.

(ii) Water is contaminated, due to the disposal of harmful

chemicals without adequate treatment prior to disposal.

The Motivated Sequence: This is a variant of the problem-solution approach. It consists of five steps:

- Attention step
- Need step
- Satisfaction step
- Visualization step
- Action step

Example: Attention Step- The increasing Costs of transportation have had an effect on our companies profits.

Deductive and Inductive Structure:

In a deductive speech, initially, a proposal is presented followed by supporting arguments. In an inductive speech, the arguments are presented first in such a way that the proposition can be drawn from them. An inductive speech is more suitable for a hostile audience, since deductive style may offend them and make them unreceptive.

Example:

Deductive statement: There will be a reduction in salaries by 10%, since the company's revenues have come down drastically, due to economic slowdown.

Inductive statements: The performance of the company for the past few months has been pretty bad, because of economic slowdown, leading to a decrease in exports and revenues thereof. Hence, the company is forced to reduce salaries by 10%.

Supporting your ideas

A presentation or a speech must contain supporting statements to convince the listeners. Simply stating facts doesn't necessarily imply that the audience will believe what they hear. Most often, supporting statements need to be provided as evidence to strengthen one's stance.

The various forms of support that can be used while making a presentation are:

Illustration: An illustration is an example which helps to clarify or prove a statement. It is usually in the form of a narration of an event or an incident which helps to explain the point under consideration.

Illustrations may be in any of the following forms:

- narrative or detailed factual illustration,
- undeveloped factual illustration, or
- hypothetical illustration

Statistics: Statistics are also similar to illustrations and help to clarify or prove the point. They are however, quantitative in nature and show comparisons or proportions. If presented in a proper manner, they present a

very strong proof. But excessive use of statistics in a presentation leads to confusing the audience.

Example: If the chairman of a company, during the annual general meeting presentation on the performance of the company, presents the company's sales figures ever since it was established, it will only result in confusing the shareholders.

Expert testimony: Testimony by people, who enjoy credibility with the audience, can become a strong supporting factor. While selecting quotations, it is advisable to look for short and crisp quotes. Such quotes help attract and retain the attention of the audience.

Example: While giving his presentation on importance of branding, the marketing executive made frequent reference to quotes by marketing expert, Philip Kotler. The expert testimony by the marketing guru aided with the examples given by the executive made the presentation truly impressive and informative.

Analogy – Analogy presents similarities between what is known to the listener and what the speaker is trying to prove. However, it does not form sufficient evidence to prove the point.

Anecdotes, Fables & Parables – Other forms of illustrations are in the form of anecdotes. Real life characters are depicted in anecdotes. Fables are narrated in which animals speak like humans. Parables, convey a moral, along with the story that is narrated.

Visual Aids

Visual aids are extremely useful to the speaker and the listener. They aid the speaker in remembering the important points of his presentation. They facilitate the listener to have a better understanding of the presentation and retention of the information presented.

Designing and presenting visual aids

Visual aids may be in the form of text visuals or graphic visuals. Text visuals comprise simple sentences which highlight the key points of the presentation. Ideally, these type of visual aids should consist of short and simple sentences in order to be effective. Each slide should consist of not more than six sentences. Graphic visuals consist of graphs, diagrams, maps, tables and charts. These form of visual aids facilitate quick grasping by the audience and prevent them from detracting from the presentation.

Selecting the Right Medium

Handouts: Handouts are distributed to remind the audience about the subject and the main idea of the presentation. They may be in the form of abstracts, reports, or any other supplementary material such as graphs, charts or tables. Though they are useful in informal situations, they may be responsible for distracting the audience's attention from the presentation.

Chalkboards and Whiteboards: They provide flexibility to a presentation because they permit the speaker to invite opinions and ideas from the audience. They may be used during presentation to a small group of people.

Flip charts: Flip charts comprise large sheets of paper attached at the top of a board, so that the pages can be flipped or turned over as the speaker proceeds with his presentation. These are suitable for making

presentations to small informal groups.

Overheads: Overhead projector is also used as a tool for presentation. This is a convenient tool since the speaker doesn't need to dim the lights to make the presentation. Thus, it allows the speaker to maintain contact with the audience without many distractions. Opaque projectors may be used for exhibiting photographs and excerpts from reports.

Slides: Slides are best suited for making professional presentations. Slides may contain text, graphics or pictures. Presentations using slides need to be made in a darkened room. The presenter, therefore, may not be able to see the audience during the presentation. Further, the speaker will require additional help to operate the slides.

Computers: Computers can be used as intelligent chalk boards. They provide flexibility during presentations by allowing the speaker to note the impact of altering one variable on the final result. The use of computers allows the speaker to incorporate animation and graphics in the presentation. Computer presentations allow mailing them to potential customers using the ordinary mail or e-mail.

Videotapes, audiotapes, filmstrips and films: These are essentially supporting media and help in improving the quality of presentations. With the use of different colors and pictures, they help to capture the audience's attention.

Models and physical objects: Models, built to scale, facilitate easier visualization of the actual object.

After the presentation

In order to know whether the presentation has been understood by the audience and to clarify any of their queries, most oral presentations are followed by a question-and-answer session.

Summary

Material for a presentation has to be suitably organized to ensure better understanding and attentiveness of the audience while at the same time allowing the speaker to detect and eliminate flaws in the presentation. Depending upon the purpose of the speech and the audience's needs, speeches can be organized in different styles.

Credibility of the message delivered during the presentation can be achieved by use of visual aids and other forms of support such as analogies, fables, statistics, illustrations and expert testimonies. Question-and-answer sessions that follow presentations can be utilized to respond to audience's queries