

**STRUCTURE YOUR
SPEECH OR
PRESENTATION
IN 10 STEPS**



A UNIQUE PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

Presentations and speeches are unique group processes that can connect people and spur them into action. And yet, there is little more nerve-wracking than public speaking.

Connection, Authenticity & Leadership

Speak to Inspire helps you to tell your story in a way that makes audiences recognise, understand and want what you have to say. But working on presenting skills has a broader effect. It teaches you how to deal with tension and makes you stretch yourself. It forces you to reflect on who you are, what you stand for and how to make an impact on people. Presenting is therefore automatically a question of authenticity and leadership.

A unique Speak to Inspire structure

Speak to Inspire training and coaching focuses on the three pillars of presenting: **structure, presentation and mindset**. This fact sheet centres on one of these pillars - the structure. Our unique approach streamlines your presentation and makes your story one that connects, moves and activates.

Speak better = less stress = more success

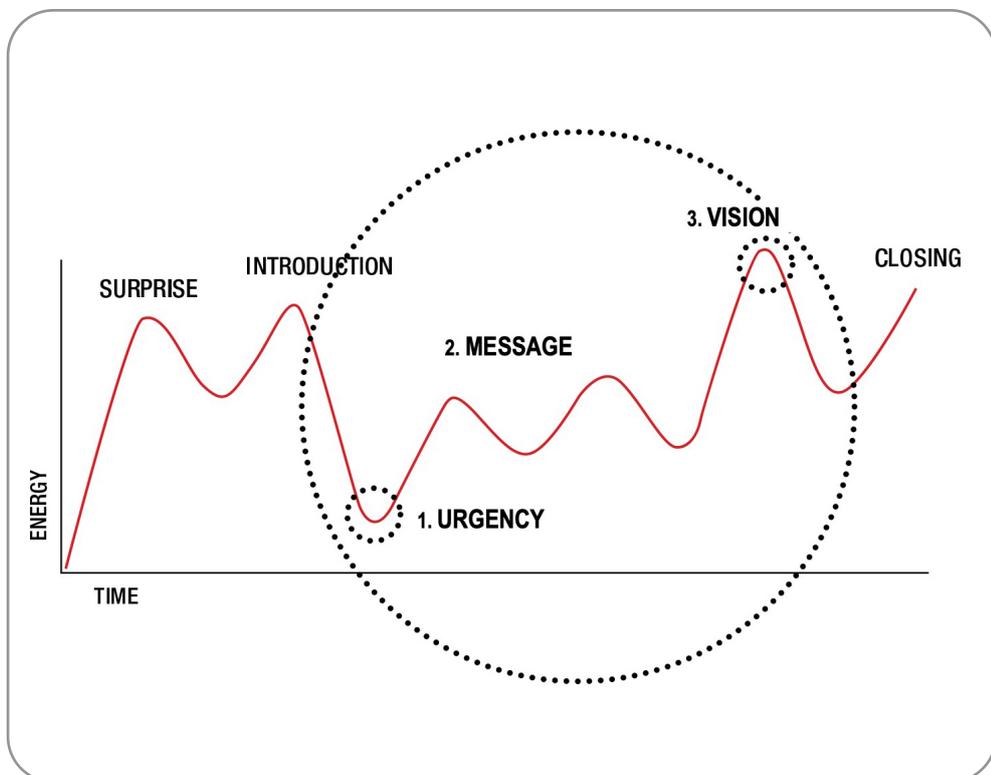


A UNIQUE PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

We use the following structure:

- **Surprise:** Grab the attention with a surprising opener.
- **Introduction:** Introduce yourself and your subject. Make your audience sympathetic and willing to listen to your story.
- **Urgency:** Describe the situation and problem.
- **Message:** Offer a solution or analysis, following a step by step argumentation.
- **Vision:** At the crux of your story, offer a vision that moves people.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude with a hope or a call to arms so the audience knows all is well and/or what is expected of them.

If you were to measure audience energy during a presentation that follows this structure, it would look something like this:



Source, *Het Speechboekje, Huib Hudig - Founder Speak to Inspire*
You can use this graph to structure, write and practise your speech - hopefully these tools will make it a truly inspirational one!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

#1	PREPARATION	4
#2	STRUCTURING YOUR ARGUMENTATION	5
#3	INSPIRE	7
#4	SURPRISE	8
#5	INTRODUCTION	9
#6	CONCLUSION	10
#7	STYLE	11
#8	FINAL CHECK	12
#9	PRESENTING	13
#10	THANK YOU	14

1. PREPARATION

When? Where? How?

- When and where does your presentation take place?
- What's the deadline for your written text?
- What is the occasion? Are there any formalities to take into account?
- What does the programme look like, are there other speakers?

About?

- What is your subject? What does the organisation expect?
- What should your presentation achieve? What is your goal?
- Which data are required to compose your story?

Who?

- How many attendees are expected?
- What kind of people are they?
How will they feel about you and your subject?
- What is the ratio of fans to opponents?
How many people will be on the fence?
- Can the organisation provide you with a list of attendees?

- ➔ Take an empty sheet of paper or start a new document on your computer.

When working on a computer, use, for instance, the Verdana font, size 12, with double line spacing.

- ➔ On a separate bit of paper, jot down the subject you want to discuss in a single sentence.

- ➔ Collate useful texts and research.

When working on a computer, copy and paste them all in one separate document that you can dip into when writing.

2. STRUCTURING YOUR ARGUMENTATION

In one sentence

- Build your case, jot down your key message and place it at the beginning of your speech. Turn your key message into a call to arms by adding the word 'must' in your draft.
- What's the 'why' behind your message?
- What arguments /evidence can you use to convince your audience (are they fans, opponents, or fence sitters)?
- Choose a style for your speech and use a structure that best fits that style:
 - The problem - solution structure or
 - The review - analysis - forecast structure

The problem - solution structure

- 1 What is the problem / situation? (urgency)
- 2 What is the cause? What is currently being done about it?
- 3 What might be a better solution? What's yours?
- 4 Where do we want to end up? Can we approach it from a different angle?
- 5 What do we propose? What does your call to arms mean in a practical sense?

Building your presentation is all about having a clear vision of the goal, audience and performance.



2. STRUCTURING YOUR ARGUMENTATION

The review - analysis - forecast structure

1 Review

What have we been doing and why?

2 Analysis

What are the 3 lessons learned? And what can we do differently in the future (= your key message)?

3 Forecast

Where do we want to end up? Can we approach it from a different angle?

4 What can we bring to the table? How can we apply the lessons learned?

- Now try and answer each question of the structure you chose in a few sentences, using the arguments / evidence you gathered earlier.
- Does this result in a logical, step-by-step argumentation?
- Will your audience be on board with each step of your argumentation?
Note: If you suspect your audience holds a different opinion and will therefore not be open to your message:
 - Acknowledge their views and show understanding without altering your message.
 - Set yourself a realistic goal - what would be a (small) win?



3. INSPIRE

→ **A need or urgency can help to convince people of the importance of your key message.** Try to imagine what would make the problem important and relevant to *them*. Describe the need or urgency in a few sentences - do you have figures, facts and examples to back it up?

→ **At the crux of your argument, can you share a vision that really brings your key message to life?**

- For a vision of the future, society or human kind, ask yourself:
‘What direction do we want to take?’
- For an original perspective, ask:
‘What is another way of looking at it?’
- And to approach the subject from a meta level:
‘What are we ACTUALLY talking about?’

→ **Can you connect it to a concrete image or vista?**

An inspiring presentation depends on both content and delivery.



4. SURPRISE

→ **Surprise openers work wonders for any speech**
- an anecdote, a quote, a joke...

Decide on your preference, and remember:
whichever one you choose, make sure it connects
to your subject and/or key message.

*The key is to grab the audience's
attention, induce an emotion,
and to inspire them.*



5. INTRODUCTION

- If there's no formal introduction, introduce yourself and what you do (where relevant) after your surprise opener in no more than a couple of sentences.
- **Identify your audience's knowledge level.**
Are you the expert in the room, a peer, or will you really need to step up your game? Are there events or facts that demonstrate your credibility and expertise?
- **Try to describe your personal connection to the subject.**
- **Briefly describe the subject of your speech.**
Try to frame it as a question that evokes curiosity.
- **Identify fans, opponents and fence sitters in the room.** How could you get the sympathy of each without belying yourself?

Make contact with the audience.



6. CONCLUSION

- **Repeat (a version of) your key message in the conclusion** - it's what you want your audience to take away with them. Make sure you revisit the surprise opener at the end of your speech (= ABA-structure).
- **Dwell on the purpose of your speech.**
In the end, what do they really need to hear?
Do you want to make a call to arms?
- **Review your structure one last time.**
Is it logical? Is every aspect covered? And remember, if you get stuck, don't hesitate to ask for help!

The power of repetition.



7. STYLE

- Make sure your speech flows and is easy to listen to.
- Make sure the core arguments are substantiated with facts or a striking example.
- Specify general concepts (make it SEI).
- Make your speech as evocative as possible. Steer clear of too much jargon and difficult words, and use terms that will speak to your audience.
- Is there a comparison you can think of to express your key message in a different way? Think about it or have a brainstorm session.
- Can you think of a claptrap for the end of each important section of your speech? Examples of claptraps:
 - **Contrast:** A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step / That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind
 - **Tricolon:** I came, I saw, I conquered
 - **Antimetabole:** Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country
 - **Question / answer: What's the difference between education and experience?** Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't.
 - **Repetition:** I have a dream / The king is dead, long live the king!
- The final sentence of your speech holds the most weight and is the one that will linger. Try to find a punchy one liner, something that moves the audience or makes them laugh.



8. FINAL CHECK

Check your speech for the following:

1. Will it make you achieve your goal(s)?
2. Does your key message stand out?
3. Is it a logical, flowing text? Are there any darlings to kill that interfere with the speech as a whole? See if you can make some improvements in this area.
4. Have you checked quotes, facts and anecdotes for inaccuracies? Are they fun and evocative?
5. Does each important section end on a claptrap? Do you have one when you want the audience to applaud?

Now go through your speech one final time, focusing on the following:

- **Cut any superfluous words and sentences.**
Is it really necessary to call someone cheerful, light-hearted and chipper, or does one adjective suffice?
- **Cut anything that's illogical or wrong.**
- **Cut any platitudes and cliches.**
- **And finally: spell check** when others or the press want to read your speech.

➔ Now read the text out loud.

Happy? Amazing, then you're ready to start practising your speech. If not, go back over the checklists and see what else you can improve. Or why not have someone else take a look?

Check, check, dubble check



9. PRESENTING

1 Practising, round 1 CONTENT

- Decide on your presenting style - off by heart, using notes, with full text in hand, or in a different way altogether.
- Recreate the situation you'll be in on the day. Stand behind a table with your text on it, for instance. Put a test audience (whenever possible) on a row of chairs.
- Let yourself be introduced and do the whole speech to them. At full volume. Don't stop when you want to change something, don't take notes.
- At the end, ask yourself how it went. Where did you falter? Did you stick to your given time?
- What did the test audience think? Any tips or feedback? Implement them.

2 Practising, round 2 PRESENTATION

- **Practise your entire speech once more.** Speak a little louder than you're used to - it forces you to speak clearly.
- Try to think of a solution or different phrasing for the bits you received feedback on so you can immediately test them out on your audience.
- At the end: How did it go? What did the audience think? Any tips or feedback? Can you hone your text even more?

3 Practising, round 3

- **Practise your speech a final time**, in one go, without feedback. If you feel that's not quite enough for you, by all means keep practising until you feel confident and prepared!

Good luck and have fun!

10. THANK YOU

*We believe there is only one way
to learn how to speak: by doing it.*



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