

>chapter 21

Presenting Insights and Findings: Oral Presentations

>learning objectives

After reading this chapter, you should understand . . .

- 1 How the oral research presentation differs from and is similar to traditional public speaking.
- 2 Why historical rhetorical theory has practical influence on business presentation skills in the 21st century.
- 3 How to plan for the research presentation.
- 4 The frameworks and patterns of organizing a presentation.
- 5 The uses and differences between the types of materials designed to support your points.
- 6 How proficiency in research presentations requires designing good visuals and knowing how use them effectively.
- 7 The importance of delivery to getting and holding the audience's attention.
- 8 Why practice is an essential ingredient to success and how to do it; and, what needs to be assembled and checked to be certain that arrangements for the occasion and venue are ready.

Thanks to the vast improvements in technology, the time is right for companies to include completely virtual meeting options as part of their overall meetings strategy.

Chris Gaia, vice president of marketing-travel division,

Maritz

>bringingresearchtolife

Jason Henry and Sara Arens, partners in Henry & Associates, are just wrapping up a Web-based briefing on the MindWriter project. Jason and Sara are in Boca Raton, Florida. Myra Wines, MindWriter's director of consumer affairs is participating from Atlanta, as are others, including Jean-Claude Malraison, MindWriter's general manager, who joined from Delhi, India, and Gracie Uhura, MindWriter's marketing manager, and her staff, who joined from a conference room in their Austin, Texas, facility.

"Based on the poll results that are on your screen, you have reached a strong consensus on your first priority. The research strongly supports that you should be negotiating stronger courier contracts to address the in-transit damage issues. Congratulations," concluded Jason.

"That wraps up our briefing, today. Sara and I are happy to respond to any e-mail questions any of you might have after reading the summary report that has been delivered to your e-mail. Our e-mail address is on screen, and it is also on the cover of the report. Myra, I'm handing control of the meeting back to you."

As Myra started to conclude the meeting, Sara was holding up a sign in front of Jason that read, "Turn off your microphone." Jason gave a thumbs-up sign and clicked off his mic.

"Thank you, Jason," stated Myra. "The research has clarified some critical issues for us and you have helped us focus on some probable solutions. This concludes the meeting. I'll be following up soon with an e-mail that contains a link to the recorded archive of this presentation, allowing you to share it with your staff. You will also be asked to participate in a brief survey when you close the Web-presentation window. I'd really appreciate your taking the three minutes it will take to complete the survey. Thank you all for attending."

As soon as the audience audio was disconnected, Myra indicated, "That went well, Jason. The use of the Q&A tool to obtain their pre-report ideas for action was a stroke of genius. When you posted the results as a poll and had them indicate their first priority, they were all over the board. It helped them understand that

one purpose of the research and today's meeting was to bring them all together."

"Sara gets the credit for that stroke of genius," claimed Jason after removing his microphone and clicking on his speakerphone. "She is a strong proponent of interaction in our briefings. And she continually invents new ways to get people involved and keep them engaged."

"Kudos, Sara," exclaimed Myra. "Who gets the credit for simplifying the monthly comparison chart?"

"Those honors actually go to our intern, Sammye Grayson," shared Sara. "I told her while it was a suitable graph for the written report, it was much too complex a visual for the presentation. She did a great job. I'll pass on your praise."

"Well," asked Myra, "where do we go from here?"

"Jason and I will field any questions for the next week from you or your staff," explained Sara. "Then we will consider this project complete—until you contact us again."

"About that," Myra paused, "I've just received an e-mail from Jean-Claude. He wants to meet with you both about a new project he has in mind. He asks if he could pick you up at the Boca airport on Friday, about 2:30 p.m. He says his flying office will have you back in time for an early dinner."

Sara looked at her BlackBerry and indicated she was available. Jason looked at his own calendar and smiled across the desk at Sara. "Tell Jean-Claude we'll meet him at the airport. Any idea what this new project is about?"

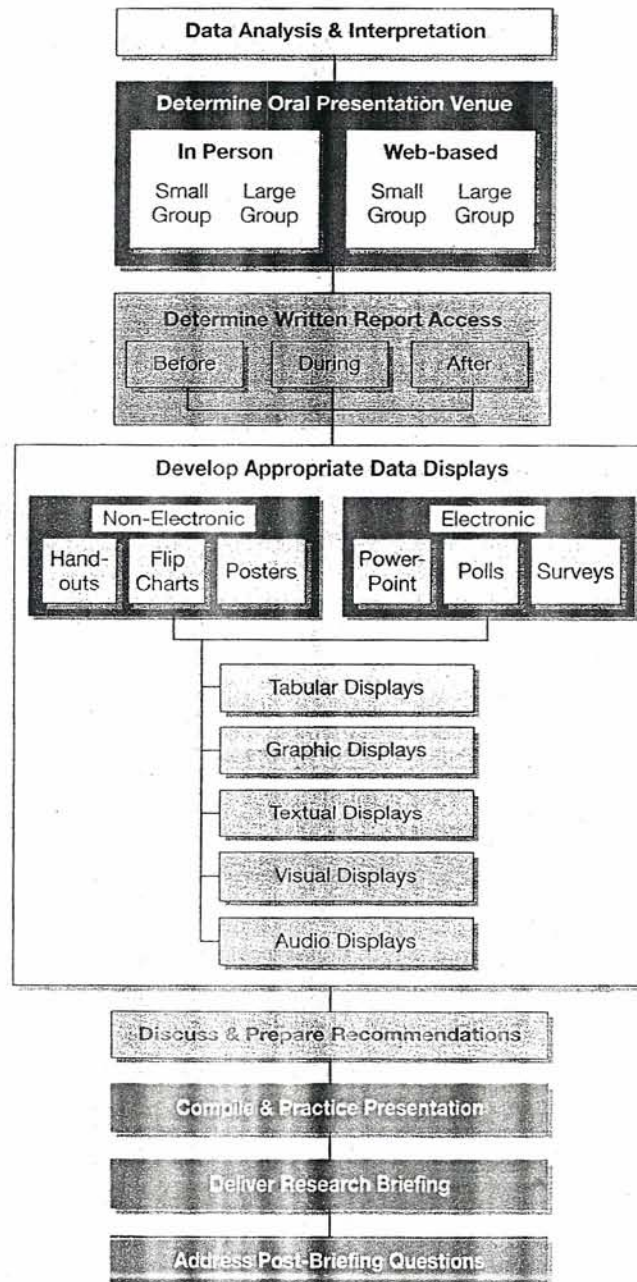
"Not a clue!"

> Introduction

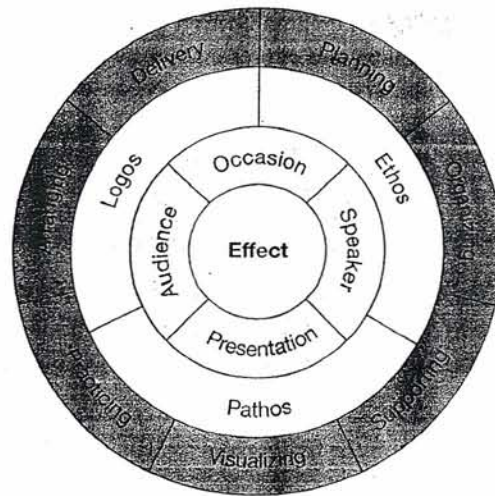
Researchers frequently present their findings orally. Exhibit 21-1 introduces the process and indicates its fit with research process model.

A research presentation has some unique characteristics that distinguish it from other kinds of public speaking but with which it shares similarities. A small group of people is normally involved; statistics often constitute an important portion of the topic; the audience members are usually managers with an interest in the topic, but they want to hear only the data and conclusions that will help them make critical decisions; speaking time will often be as short as 20 minutes but may run longer than an hour; and

>Exhibit 21-1 Oral Presentations and the Research Process



>Exhibit 21-2 A Model for Presentation Planning



the presentation is normally interspersed with questions and discussion. In this chapter, we cover the essential ingredients for a successful presentation or briefing: how to plan, organize, support, visualize, deliver, practice, and arrange your presentation.

A successful presentation requires condensing a lengthy and complex body of information. Speaking rates should not exceed 100 to 150 words per minute; thus, a 20-minute presentation limits you to about 2,000 to 3,000 words. If you are to communicate effectively under such conditions, you must plan carefully. Begin by asking two questions. First, how long should you plan to talk? Usually the research sponsor indicates the acceptable presentation length. Following organizational custom, an organization may allot a given amount of time for such briefings. If the time is severely limited, then the need for topical priorities is obvious. This leads to the second question: What is the purpose? Is it to raise concern about problems that have been uncovered? Is it to add to the knowledge of audience members? Is it to give them conclusions and recommendations for their decision making? This chapter answers these questions and leads to a plan for your success. In Exhibit 21-2 you will note that the outer ring of the concentric circles coincides with the organization of this chapter. The next ring represents the type of proofs that are required in all presentations, as described by Aristotle. Finally, the dynamics of the speaker, speech, occasion, and audience lead to the effect that the presenter seeks.

> Aristotle's Three Principles of Persuasive Communication

Most readers recognize Aristotle as the authority who developed a comprehensive theory of rhetoric. Does a Greek philosopher, born in 384 BC, still have influence on business presentation skills in the 21st century? We think so. Aristotle considered rhetoric as the ability to see persuasive possibilities in every presentational situation and gave us a method to discover all the means of persuasion on any topic whatsoever. "Aristotle is important precisely because the rhetoric he taught was *inventional*, concerned with developing the best possible story, rather than aiming at being elegant, or ornamental, or passionate or beautiful or even at being a post-modernist rhetoric of giving voice to marginal people."¹ Aristotle's advice is as relevant today as during his time and should be the basis of developing and improving our presentational skills.

The basis of persuasion was defined by Aristotle with his three principles of proof: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. He associated communication with persuasion and identified communication as the ability to discover, in any given case, the available means to achieve persuasion.² If we think of persuasive

discourse on a continuum from a conscious attempt to modify thinking to influencing the behavior and actions of the listener, then it is clear that all communication is persuasion, or at least includes a persuasive component. Understanding the communication process from this perspective seems more practical than artificially categorizing the types of presentations we give in business settings by purpose (informational, ceremonial, entertaining, and persuasive)—because more than one purpose is inevitably involved.

Ethos

Our perception of a presenter's character affects how believable or convincing we find that person. The projection of credibility via personal character is called the speaker's *ethos*. A strong research presentation relies on a researcher's ability to convince his or her audience of the following:

1. That he or she is credible.
2. That the findings from the research are credible.
3. That the audience should act upon the findings, as well as conclusions and recommendations drawn from these findings.

Ethos relies on how well the audience believes that the presenter is qualified to speak on the particular subject.³ To inspire confidence in the speaker, Aristotle says that three things move us to belief apart from any proof: good sense, goodwill, and good moral character. Revealing these personal characteristics in your delivery can play a large role in gaining credibility for your ideas. People whose education, experience, and previous performance qualify them to speak on a certain issue earn the special extrinsic *ethos* of authority when their reputation is known ahead of time.⁴ However, without prior experience, research presenters must borrow it by linking their methodology and procedures to credible sources with experience. In a culture where outward appearances have virtually taken over from the inner appeals of character (moral and intellectual), the appeal from *ethos* can be both problematic and advantageous.

Pathos

Rhetoricians over the centuries consider *pathos* the strongest of the appeals. *Pathos* relies on an emotional connection between the speaker and his or her audience. It involves an appeal to an audience's sense of identity, self-interest, and emotions. These appeals take advantage of common biases: we naturally move in the direction of what is advantageous, what serves our interests, or the interests of any group we are a part of.

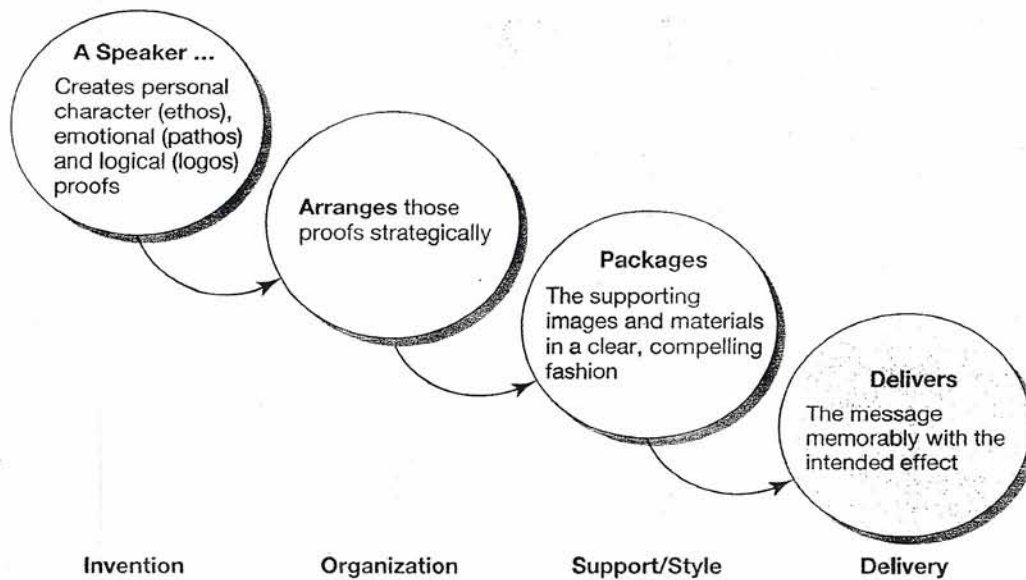
People hear messages based on their state of mind. If their emotional disposition is positive, they are more likely to be receptive to the message; if it is negative, they will be less receptive to the message.⁵ The research presenter must arouse emotions exactly because they have the power to modify the audience's predispositions and, thus, its judgments. Knowing the audience's predisposition (e.g., resistance or skepticism or receptivity) and predetermining a desired emotional response encourages the presenter to build the content and delivery of a presentation to stimulate a desired emotional state. Open-mindedness is the most important desired pre-presentation emotional state for any audience, and receptivity is the most desired post-presentation emotional state.

Logos

Finally, with *logos*, the logical argument, we find the explicit reasons that the speaker needs to support a position. This translates into supporting evidence and analytical techniques that reveal and uphold the researchers' findings and conclusions (described in more detail later in this chapter).

Appeals to *logos* most often use a variation of the syllogism called an enthymeme. The syllogism is a formal method of deductive reasoning (described in Chapter 3). You may recognize the enthymeme as a truncated syllogism where one or more minor premises are left unstated. This is done because people do not naturally speak in syllogistic form. The presenter gives the primary premise and expects

>Exhibit 21-3 The Role of Aristotle's Proofs in Persuasive Communication



Source: Adapted from Raymie McKerrow, Bruce E. Gronbeck, Douglas Ehninger, and Alan H. Monroe, *Principles and Types of Speech*, 14th ed. (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1999).

that the audience will supply the missing knowledge (premises) in order to reach the conclusion. In a research presentation, this planning is done in the audience analysis stage when estimating the audience's knowledge, predisposition, and attentiveness. However, most research presentations use the enthymeme to move from data to interpretations to conclusions. For example: "We do not have a sufficient advertising budget to improve consumers' perceptions of our second tier brand. The brand may falter and hinder our ability to remain competitive. We should divert resources to remain competitive."

Logos is the core of most research presentations; it is normally used to describe facts and findings that support the speaker's contentions about research results but it should not be the only content of the presentation. Since data are not likely to be manipulated by a trusted source, *logos* may sway cynical listeners. But, data can also be misleading, inaccurate, or unethically applied thereby eroding the goodwill and credibility previously established by the presenter. Researchers prone to build their presentations solely on *logos* reduce the likelihood that they will achieve their desired result—implementation of recommended actions inherent in the research findings. The role of Aristotle's three proofs is summarized in Exhibit 21-3.

> Plan

Where do we start to prepare for the research presentation? This is the dilemma faced by beginners and seasoned experts. Perhaps the more pertinent question is *how* do we start? From a Zen perspective, if we start from a beginner's mind we can see things more clearly, enthusiastically, and unburdened by fixed views. As Garr Reynolds, in *Presentation Zen*, advises, "If your state of mind is coming from a place of fear and risk avoidance, then you will always settle for the safe solutions—the solutions already applied many times before."⁶ Some research companies use templates that can be modified for specific presentations. But if multiple presentations are made to the same audience of managers using such a template, presentations may fail to hold attention and communicate persuasively. Thus, an attitude of openness produces a fresh approach to planning your presentation.

Authors with similar viewpoints ask us to consider spending most of our time in thinking, sketching, and scripting. We are counseled to have a story to tell before even thinking of opening PowerPoint, and have a 90-to-1 ratio of preparation to delivery time; in other words, plan in analog. Planning in analog involves all the things we should do outside the digital domain. A three-step process,

The Culture of Reporting

One of the few universally followed rules in presenting research results is to craft the message to fit the client. When the Team One/Lexus team ventured to Japan to share their early research findings, they knew they had to deliver any negatives with a polite, highly sensitive approach. The news was good. But to engineers who had crafted the Lexus SC 430 to be twice as good as the Jaguar XK8—more comfortable, quieter, and easier to handle—some of the findings would be puzzling. The team had held three static product clinics—where more than 250 luxury buyers were assembled to compare, but not drive, the Lexus SC 430 and its competitors. Shortly thereafter they had conducted numerous focus groups of the top tier of these interested luxury buyers, known as acceptors. Among the early findings the team learned that buyers expected the car to growl when the accelerator was

depressed, to show exhaust, and to handle more like a sports car. "Culturally, Japanese engineers have come to see themselves—and with justification—as entitled to make a car the way a car should be made," shared Arian Barrow, account manager for Lexus at Team One Advertising. This made telling them what they would consider negatives somewhat difficult. For example, buyers' expectations were that the car would zoom from zero to 60 in under five seconds, not arrive there in eight or nine seconds. "So we found ourselves sharing results in a less hard-hitting way than we would with a different client." How did they deliver the unexpected news? "People loved the car! But they would love it even more if it would go from zero to 60 in five seconds!"

www.teamoneadv.com; www.lexus.com.

writing—sketching—producing requires us to plot the story like a movie script. Using paper and pen to sketch ideas in the analog world leads to greater creativity and clarity for the finished product.⁷ The consultant behind Al Gore's global warming documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, suggests that the speaker should plan to spend as much as 90 hours to create a 1-hour presentation containing 30 slides.⁸ Our general checklist, which starts the planning process with five critical W's, accentuates the audience's role in the planning process.

- Who makes up the audience?
- What do they want to learn about?
- Why is this presentation occurring and how does it connect to the larger picture?
- When will the presentation take place and what are the time-of-day considerations?
- Where will the presentation take place—including nature of the venue and travel?⁹

Audience Analysis¹⁰

You have already noticed that most of these questions are audience-centered. So, let's look at some ways we can analyze the audience more effectively. First, good speakers understand that the primary purpose of their presentation is to gain a desired response from their listeners. The ultimate success of their presentation depends on the speaker's ability to anticipate audience response. An analysis of the expected attendees at a presentation or **audience analysis** is accomplished by keeping three questions in mind:

1. Who will I be addressing?
2. Why should my listeners really care about the information I present?
3. What do I want the audience to know, believe, and or do because of my presentation?

The answers to these first two questions help develop the *pathos* of your presentation. Your most important understanding about audiences is that they are egocentric; they pay attention to messages that affect them directly. Their mantra is "Why should I care?" Elements of *pathos* can be discovered by collecting past impressions from prior associations; interviewing critical members of the intended audience; or, often less feasibly, surveying a sample of the invitees regarding agreement with a series of statements about issues (to determine predispositions).¹¹ The answers to the third question help

develop the *logos* of your presentation. Your research findings represent the core of the *logos* of your presentation.

Answers to these questions come from understanding the psychology of the audience. Several psychological principles have important implications for speakers.

- An audience member comes to the presentation venue with past knowledge of the speaker's topic and will judge the presentation based on selective perception (what they know and believe).
- As the audience listens to the speech and hears threads of information consistent with accumulated knowledge, their processed meanings will fluctuate between agreement/disagreement and clarity/confusion.
- As the speaker addresses an audience, he or she must attempt to imaginatively construct how the audience will interpret the message.
- Each audience member organizes his or her unique construct of the content presented, which is dependent on listener experience and openness to change.¹²

Demographic and dispositional audience characteristics also play an important role in assessing the answer to the first question. Audience composition in business now reflects a different mix than that of a few years ago. Speakers must adapt to the age of the group because generational similarities in experience and value affect receptivity. Gender can have a strong influence on audience response. In a multicultural and multiracial society, every audience will have a slightly different response to the speaker—just as religious views and cultural sensitivity need to be considered in a more narrow range of business situations. Finally, education, economic status, position in the organization, and group membership provide additional clues as to interest and attitude. The remote audience for a presentation (using Web services to present and connect) requires more, not less analysis, as the presenter has to work doubly hard to establish and maintain a connection.

The second question considers the disposition of the audience and their needs and attitudes. Targeting your presentation to fulfill appropriate needs differentiates successful presentations from those that fail. Knowing the needs of key audience members either through informal, advance conversations with the sponsor or psychological profiling can be critical to success. For example, once known, you are able to tailor your presentation to such need orientations as physiological, knowledge, social, or ego. And, you can have a good idea about the predispositions of decision makers regarding the importance they attach to achievement, status, career, recognition, or adherence to organizational norms.

General features of the presentation situation and unique features of the audience are also considerations of audience analysis. What is the physical setting of the presentation? The room size, seating arrangement, and temperature will all affect listeners. A large audience size may require a more formal presentation, or affect your language choice and visual aides. Presenting to an individual or a small group may dictate an informal briefing rather than a formal presentation. Although we will cover staging and arrangements in a later section, the audience affects these issues and should be part of your analysis. In Exhibit 21-4, we pose seven important questions to help you understand the nature of your audience.

Types of Learners

In planning for your presentation, it is wise to also consider that the audience is composed of three types of learners; the proportionate composition of learner types will vary based on topic and age group. Speakers can make an emotional connection with their audiences to the extent that they recognize the differences among visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. Audience members are more likely to act on information they have a connection with, but they cannot connect with anything that they have not internalized.

- **Visual learners.** About 40 percent of us are visual learners, people who learn through seeing. This group retains information that is highly visual. To address visual learners, avoid cramming too much text on visual aids. Build aids that have few words and key dominant images. As many visual aids used in research presentations employ graphs and charts, research presentations already appeal to visual learners. Visual learners connect through visual imagery.

>Exhibit 21-4 Seven Questions to Understand Your Audience

① Who are they?	Demographics and psychographics are a great start, but connecting with your audience means understanding them on a personal level.
② Why are they here?	Why did they come to hear you? Are they willing participants or mandatory attendees? What do they think they're going to get out of this presentation?
③ What keeps them up at night?	Everyone has a fear, a pain point. Let your audience know you empathize—and offer a solution.
④ Why should they care?	What's in it for the audience? How are you going to make their lives better?
⑤ What do you want them to do?	Make sure there's clear action for your audience to take.
⑥ Should you expect resistance?	What will keep them from adopting your message and carrying out your call to action?
⑦ How can you best reach them?	People vary in how they prefer to receive information. This can include everything from the setup of the room to the availability of materials after the presentation. Give the audience what they want, how they want it.

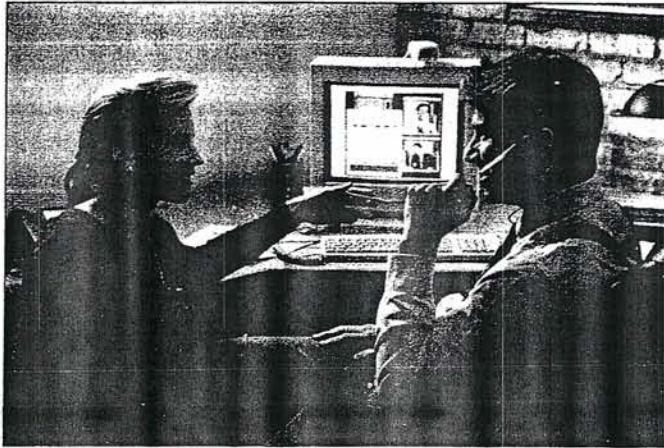
Source: Adapted from Nancy Duarte, *slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations*. (Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media, 2008), p. 15.

- **Auditory learners.** Auditory learners represent about 20 to 30 percent of your audience. These people learn through listening and benefit from verbal and rhetorical techniques. Tell personal stories or use vivid examples to support your key messages. Research presenters can incorporate actual participant experiences related during the research to enrich the presentation for this type of listener. Auditory learners connect through stories.
- **Kinesthetic learners.** These people learn by doing, moving, and touching. In short, they are “hands-on.” They get bored listening for long periods. Including activities in your presentation keeps kinesthetic listeners engaged. Pass around objects (as Steve Jobs did with the aluminum frame of a new laptop), conduct writing exercises, or have them participate in demonstrations.¹³ Research presenters can use examples of the types of exercises used with research participants, showcasing how research data were collected, to make a methodology come alive for this type of listener. Kinesthetic learners connect through activities.

Keep Your Audience from Checking Out

The ability for an audience to recall critical information and to avoid boredom is not, but should be, factored into the planning of presenters. There is experimental support for the finding that recall accuracy varies as a function of an item's position on a list or an argument's sequence, referred to as the Audience Memory Curve¹⁴ and otherwise known as the *serial position effect*. When asked to recall a list of items in any order (free recall), people recall best those items they hear at the end of the list (**recency effect**). Items at the end of the list seem to reside in short-term memory at the time of recall. Among earlier list items, or arguments, the first item in a list is initially distinguished as important (**primacy effect**) and may be transferred to long-term memory by the time of recall. The first few items are recalled more frequently than those in the middle of the presentation.¹⁵ The implication for research presenters is that arguments presented first or last will be highly influential to understanding and motivation to act.

Once thought of as a “20-minute fatigue factor,” audiences are now believed to become bored in 10 minutes—not 11 but 10.¹⁶ According to recent research in molecular biology, the brain appears to be making choices according to a timing pattern influenced by genetics and environment.¹⁷ Research presenters should observe the **10-minute rule** by varying their content by interspersing straight talk with graphs, videos, demonstrations, questions, and other means that allow the brain to seek new stimuli.



As technology advances, the Internet has become a medium for oral presentations and videoconferences. As with other presentations, you need to be cautious with equipment and look for software glitches. Have a backup copy of your presentation on your laptop or your company's server. Test your external mouse as well as the one that is connected to your computer. Be certain that your screensavers are disabled. And most important, be prepared to give your presentation even if the technology fails.

Planning and the Web-Delivered Presentation

With travel budgets reduced, managers interested in research projects often located in far-flung parts of the world, and the advance of Web-based technologies, web-delivered presentations are increasing. A **Web-delivered presentation** involves the use of a Web presentation platform (e.g., Live Meeting, WebEx, etc.), a presenter who remotely controls the delivery of the presentation visual aids to the audience's computer while he or she speaks to the audience via computer or a controlled-access phone line, and an invited audience who participates via the Web from their office or a Web-equipped room. The presentation platform builds in various participation opportunities—most notably the ability of the audience to type in questions throughout the presentation and the ability of the presenter to respond to questions, or to use intermittent survey questions to poll the audience on their understanding of material or their consensus on a conclusion or recommendation. Some platforms offer the ability of audience members to ask questions of the presenter through a phone connection. Most presentations can be archived for later viewing, but without the opportunity to participate. The biggest problems in planning for a Web-delivered presentation are the lower level of audience rapport affecting the pathos of the presentation and the longer time frame needed for planning, as is noted in Exhibit 21-5. Such a presentation format does, however, permit the audience to be large and offers built-in processes for pre-contact (all attendees must register, which is useful for audience analysis) and follow-up (useful for determining the effectiveness of the presentation). Web-delivered research presentations often use post-presentation surveys to query the audience's understanding, solicit additional questions, and deliver copies of the written report. These are actions the face-to-face presentation does not often duplicate.

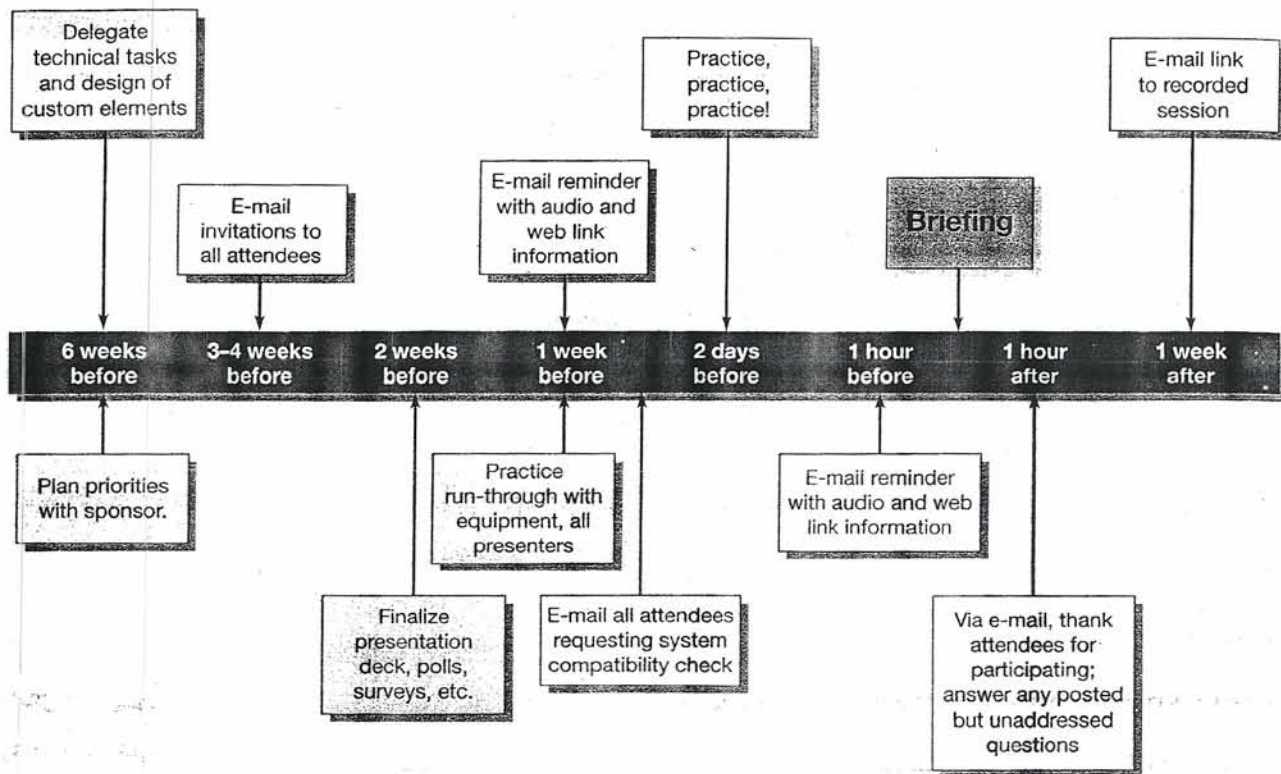
We close this section with a quote from noted presenter Nancy Duarte that reminds us of the need to treat your audience as your first priority: "They didn't come to your presentation to see you. They came to find out what you can do for them. Success means giving them a reason for taking their time, providing content that resonates, and ensuring that it's clear what they are to do."¹⁸

> Organize

Presentations have an organizational structure. Without a framework, it is difficult to visualize and organize your content and impossible for an audience to follow and understand you. In this section, we review a variety of organizational strategies.

The research literature on speech organization covers (1) optimal order of arguments, (2) one-sided versus two-sided arguments, and (3) the effects of organized versus disorganized messages. Studies, however, do not support the conclusion of one overall superior method for organizing. Instead, presentations are organized into many patterns and tailored to the speaker, content, audience, occasion and venue, and intended effect. The pattern you choose will depend upon the purpose of your presentation.

>Exhibit 21-5 Timeline for a Web-Based Oral Research Presentation



Traditional Patterns of Organization

- *Topical*: there are several ideas to present, but one idea seems naturally to precede the others in order. In a research presentation on survey research, the presenter could organize according to topical areas of the questionnaire.
- *Spatial*: material is organized by physical space. In a research presentation about skiing accidents in Colorado resorts, the presentation might be arranged by each specific ski area within Colorado.
- *Classification*: puts ideas, objects, or arguments into categories. In a presentation about what potential customers revealed in testing prototype iPads, the order of the presentation would be arranged by iPad features.
- *Climax order*: material is organized from the least important information to the most important. In a research presentation, elements are ordered to lead from the foundation findings to the key finding to the recommended solution.
- *Problem/solution*: first part of a speech describes a problem, the middle presents research findings, and the second presents a solution. In research presentations, you start with the management problem, proceed to the research problem and methodology, and conclude with the findings and recommendations.
- *Chronological*: uses time sequence for a framework. In a research presentation on plant safety issues, the order would be determined by when each research activity (focus group, survey, experiment) occurred.
- *Past/present/future*: first part section discusses the past, the second the covers the present, and the third predicts the future. In a research presentation using predictive modeling of inventory patterns, the organization starts with the data patterns of the past, then the present, then models the future.

- *Cause/effect/solution*: first part describes the cause of a problem, the second describes its effect, and the third presents a solution. In a research presentation about the effectiveness of Toyota's solution for accelerator pedal malfunction, the presentation starts with the discovery of the engineering defect, describes the effect on sales, brand image, and customer loyalty; then presents information on what research discovered about solutions which might resonate with the auto-buying public.
- *Pros/cons/recommendation*: benefits, disadvantages, how benefits are superior are discussed. In a research presentation, what the researcher discovered about benefits of e-books, their perceived disadvantages, and what Amazon might do to enhance the advantage of the Kindle DX would be presented.
- *Research briefing*: a **research briefing** is another term for the oral presentation; it starts with a brief statement that sets the stage for the body of the findings and explains the nature of the project, how it came about, and what it attempted to do. This is followed by a discussion of the findings that support it. Where appropriate, recommendations are stated in the third stage.

The Motivated Sequence Organization

One specialized pattern of organization applicable to all types of presentations is called the **motivated sequence** and is defined as "the sequence of ideas which, by following the normal processes of human thinking, motivates an audience to respond to the speaker's purpose."¹⁹ The rationale, based on psychological principles, requires that the structure be designed to correspond to the way people habitually arrive at a decision despite individual differences. It consists of five steps:

- *Attention*: draw attention to the need for change.
- *Need*: call for change in existing conditions by creating dissatisfaction with them.
- *Satisfaction*: satisfy the need or address the dissatisfaction with an explanation, logical demonstration, or practical experience, or plan to meet objections.
- *Visualization*: picture the benefits the proposed action will bring.
- *Action*: detailed recommendation of what is needed to bring about the specified action.

When research presentations are designed to be persuasive rather than merely informative, this organization is powerful because it has as its goal stimulating overt action. In presentations that are more informative in nature, steps can be modified or deleted.

The Narrative Organization

The narrative pattern of presentation, or what is called *narrative imaging* by cognitive psychologists, is discussed in greater detail in the context of "stories" in the next section. The **narrative pattern** is an organizational framework that involves the use of stories as the primary vehicle for communicating the presenter's message.

We recognize that narration of stories alone may be the *sole organizing mechanism* for a presentation. Later in this chapter, you will see how a single story may be woven into the presentation as one means of supporting a point. A legend in the speech communication field once remarked, "The only possible way you can undermine a conviction is to tell a story with a point. . . . [it will be effective] when no other type of discourse can begin to do the job—argument won't do it, description can't do it, exposition won't do it. Narration is the only thing that can . . . tell a story. People will listen to stories."²⁰ In his book, Reynolds reminds us that we are "wired" to tell and listen to stories from the time we were kids. Unfortunately, the use of stories in business became marginalized as synonymous with fiction.²¹ The story's resurrection with speakers such as Steve Jobs of Apple, Howard Schultz of Starbucks, and John Chambers of Cisco Systems not only makes it a credible tool but opens opportunities for new presenters to observe how the "pros" use it effectively. See the elements for constructing a story in Exhibit 21-6.

>Exhibit 21-6 Constructing a Story

Story telling is a time-honored technique of engaging audiences. Author Cliff Atkins, in his book *Beyond Bullet Points*, suggests crafting such stories as three-act plays. Here is his format translated for a research project and its oral presentation.

- Act I: Sets up the key story elements: setting, characters, conflict, desired outcome

Affinity Bases for Athletic Alumni	
Presenter:	
Act I: Set up the story	
The Setting	Indicate the problem or stimuli that led to the research in <i>full sentence form using active tense, using conversational tone, limiting sentence length.</i> "It's important today for colleges to connect with their alumni."
The Protagonist	The protagonist is your audience, always. "Campus-wide efforts in fund raising need to enhance and maintain affinity."
The Imbalance	Define what is no longer as it used to be . . . why is audience here? "Economic and cultural conditions threaten donations."
The Balance	What do we want to see happen? "Customized affinity programs generate stronger alumni donations."
The Solution	How do we get there from here? "Use annual online surveys to discover an understanding of affinity connectors with athletic alumni and other alumni groups."

- Act II: Develops the conflict through actions and reactions of the characters in response to changing conditions

Act II: Develop the Action		
5-Minute Column:	15-Minute Column:	45-Minute Column:
Some of the things we do don't strengthen affinity.	Exhibit 1	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Athletic alumni affinity should be consistent across sports.	Exhibit 2	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Athletic alumni affinity should be consistent across sports.	Exhibit 3	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Some new ideas to strengthen athletic alumni affinity.	Exhibit 4	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Some new ideas to strengthen athletic alumni affinity.	Exhibit 5	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Some new ideas to strengthen athletic alumni affinity.	Exhibit 6	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Some new ideas to strengthen athletic alumni affinity.	Exhibit 7	Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
		Quote from ...
Turning Point	We can do things differently and affect contributions.	

>Exhibit 21-6 Constructing a Story (Continued)

- Act III: ends the story, frames the resolution (climax and decision), reveals something about his/her character

Act III: Frame the Resolution	
The crisis	If we don't continually discover what motivates affinity, donations will continue to be stagnant or decline.
The solution	Use online surveys to discover an understanding of affinity connectors with athletic alumni and other alumni groups.
The climax	Survey results reveal we should change everything we do—from reunion weekends to logo merchandise in the bookstore and online.
The resolution	Customize an affinity program for each major alumni segment.

Research evidence on the effectiveness of the narrative organization versus the motivated sequence organization is informative. While the motivated sequence produces superior immediate recall, the narrative pattern of organization results in significantly more favorable attitudes toward the presentation and the speaker and may contribute to long-term recall.²²

The Rule of Three and the Three-Point Speech

In the list of traditional patterns of organization, described at the beginning of this section, the last five examples used trios, triplets, or triads—the **rule of three**. This rhetorical device abounds in Western culture across many disciplines. It is found in religion (Three Wise Men with their *gold, frankincense, and myrrh*), movies (*Sex, Lies, and Videotape*), nursery rhymes (*Three Little Pigs* or *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*), government (*Executive, Judicial, and Legislative*), mottos (Fire safety: *Stop, Drop, and Roll*), and memorable speeches from Julius Caesar to Barack Obama (“*We must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America*”).²³ The favorite metaphor of a three-act play is a proven formula and extensively used in storytelling and screenwriting. By applying the rule of three as an organizing device, one is able to use any form of support, including narration. The result is that your presentation “gains warmth, familiarity, and understandability. With the three-part outline framing your ideas, your speech will be easier to follow and remember.”²⁴

Is there empirical support for the rule? In 1956, Bell Labs scientist George Miller summarized studies that showed that individuals have difficulty retaining more than seven to nine digits in short-term memory.²⁵ Recent studies put the number closer to three or four; that is, working memory has a capacity of about four chunks in young adults and somewhat less in children and older adults.²⁶ It is, therefore, no coincidence that Steve Jobs outlines a “roadmap” for his audience that is almost always divided into three sets: a product description with three features or a demonstration in three parts.²⁷

There are many variations on the **three-point speech** in addition to the ones listed earlier; some of which you are already familiar: introduction–body–conclusion; tell them what you are going to tell them–tell them–then tell them what you told them (overview–body–recap); introduction–three best supporting points–conclusion; surprising introduction–three stories (each with points)–a memorable conclusion tying the stories together. Good advice about the power of repetition as a speech construction technique is offered by Dlugan: “Take inspiration from Lewis Carroll in *The Hunting of the Snark*: ‘I have said it thrice: What I tell you three times is true.’”²⁸

> Support

Supporting materials are the leaves on the branches of your organizational framework. After selecting an organizational strategy, your efforts center on compiling supporting materials to develop and validate the points you are presenting for your listener’s consideration or action. In a research presentation, this not only means the actual data and its interpretation but also the stories or demonstrations that

>Exhibit 21-7 A Checklist for Better Supporting Material

- Relevant** — Each piece of support should be relevant to the point it is supporting and consistent with the topical theme.
- Appropriate** — Each item of support should fit the needs and style of the receivers, meet the demands of that particular audience, and fit the occasion.
- Believable** — The material must be accurate, ethically sourced, and fairly presented.
- Timely** — The material must be workable within time limits.
- Variety** — The presentation should not rely excessively on one type of support, but should instead use a number of different forms of support.
- Balanced** — The presentation should include adequate amount of support but show a balance between quantity and variety, while not overburdening the case.
- Speaker Specific** — The material should be selected to enhance the speaker's style of delivery as well as the message.
- Stylistic** — The presentation should benefit from the power of analogies and metaphors.
- Simplicity** — The presentation's statistics should be conveyed in understandable terms or through comparisons.
- Detail** — Each piece of support needs to be developed to the point that audience members can understand and visualize how the item fits the point it is used for.

Source: Adapted from Thomas Leech, *How to Prepare, Stage, and Deliver Winning Presentations* (New York: AMACOM, 2004), pp. 98–102; and the Speech Department at Maui Community College, http://www.hawaii.edu/mauispeech/html/supporting_materials.html, downloaded January 27, 2010.

corroborate the data. Supporting materials create interest, clarify the presenter's point, provide emphasis to a point, and offer proof that results in belief. Without supporting materials, an oral presentation is nothing more than a series of claims without evidence. See the checklist in Exhibit 21-7 for criteria you may use to evaluate your own materials.

The following list presents examples of frequently used materials for supporting your presentation's arguments:

- **Facts** are verifiable data about situations that exist or events that are known to have occurred. Facts often involve statistical data that can be demonstrated to be true. If true, they are not in dispute and thus provide powerful backing. Facts are the foundation of many research presentations.
- **Statistics** are numerical data used in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, but also found in data collection planning, measurement, and design. Statistics are useful and expected for research presentations. To be a credible source of support, the listener needs to know if a statistic is valid and reliable, used correctly, properly interpreted, and relevant to the point. Statistics used sparingly reduce audience fatigue. Visuals are essential in research presentations to facilitate understanding of statistics.
- **Specific instance** refers to a single and often critical incident selected to prove an overarching claim whereby specifics are translated into more general principles. These are brief rather than detailed stories. An instance used in the research presentation of a survey might relate the responses of an individual respondent.
- **Examples** include a single instance used to clarify a complex concept. These are often less developed than a specific instance but have a similar advantage of helping listeners visualize the point. Examples may be true or hypothetical; the latter make use of a fictitious situation. In a research presentation, an example might relate the impact of a recommended action based on the responses of a single respondent or group of respondents.
- **Testimony/Expert opinion** is the perspective of recognized experts on a topic. Experts project credibility with your audience when used properly on the topic with which they have expertise. When used as testimonials, opinions of credible third-party endorsers allow the audience to absorb success stories. This is often in the form of a video clip, a quote, or participation

of a recognized expert. These opinions represent an excellent source of support because they enhance *ethos*.

- **Analogy** is the use of reasoning or is used to explain parallel cases; it is a comparison between two different things to highlight a point of similarity. An analogy is not offered as conclusive proof for an argument, but a good analogy may be useful to clarify the argument or presenter's position.

Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle had a wider view of analogy. They saw it as a *shared abstraction*.²⁹ They believed analogous objects did not share necessarily a relation, but an idea, pattern, regularity, an attribute, an effect, or a function; for example, "Being obsessed with deficit reduction when the economy has suffered its largest setback since the Depression is like being obsessed with water conservation when your house is on fire—an admirable impulse, poorly timed."³⁰

- **Metaphor** is an implicit comparison between two unlike things that actually have something important in common. A metaphor expresses the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, achieving its effect via association, comparison, and resemblance. Metaphors "carry" meaning from one word, image, or idea to another. Students know that when Dr. Gregory House (in the TV series *House, M.D.*) says, "I'm a night owl, Wilson's an early bird. We're different species," he's speaking metaphorically.³¹

Despite similarities, an analogy is not the same as a metaphor. The analogy "is a figure of language that expresses a set of like relationships among two sets of terms. In essence, the analogy does not claim total identification, which is the property of the metaphor. It claims a *similarity* of relationships."³²

Conveying Personal Experience through Stories

In the previous section we introduced the power of the narrative form of organizing; now we emphasize individual stories *as a specific type of supporting material*. **Stories** tell the particulars of an act or occurrence or course of events. They are most powerful when involving personal experience. "Stories are who we are, and we are our stories. Good stories have interesting, clear beginnings; provocative, engaging content in the middle; and a clear conclusion."³³

Personal experience, especially in a research presentation, links your topic to the audience and helps them connect with you. In a presentation, describing your experience with the study lends a real-life impression that cannot be achieved through facts or statistics. A personal experience helps the audience create a natural, emotional response.

Examples from your world are more powerful than those you borrow. They are easier to remember and deliver because of their familiarity. Work, home, travel, or daily encounters provide a rich set of experiences and also some of the most humorous anecdotes. Professors often use self-effacing humor because students see themselves mirrored in our weaknesses. They are also some of the most memorable lessons for students (see Exhibit 21-8).

Take the example of Steve Jobs's 2005 Commencement Address at Stanford University, where he used the rule of three to convey three personal anecdotes about himself: "connecting the dots, love and loss, and a story about death." By also finding a way to inject humor into a very serious subject, he created a memorable speech and one that is still frequently watched on YouTube.³⁴ But more important than the humor was that his story was authentic; it was from his gut and his heart. Unlike his other performances, this one was from a manuscript, yet his stories were not memorized because they were real to him and consequently real to the students and families in attendance.

Demonstrations

A good **demonstration** teaches. It is a variation of speech with informative intent using visual aids. It appeals to visual and kinesthetic learners, especially if there is an opportunity to handle the object. In a research presentation, the audience, through listening, watching, or participating, learns something new. It may be showing a new design for corporate identity or demonstrating a product that has resulted

>Exhibit 21-8 Ten Steps to a Good Story

1. Use audience analysis to match the story to your audience and topic.
2. Select language that reflects the characteristics of the audience.
3. Center your story on a point and state that point clearly.
4. Use the story as a mechanism to show passion and excitement about your topic.
5. Learn your stories. If you forget an element, be prepared to improvise and go on.
6. True facts from your life are far superior to someone else's story.
7. Keep humorous stories short to capture the punch line quickly.
8. Write the story out to eliminate needless diversions and unnecessary wordiness.
9. Use the principle of "tweets"—140 characters or less—to keep your sentences dramatic and punchy.
10. Emphasize adjectives and verbs to make your stories sound more vivid.

Source: Adapted from Advanced Public Speaking Institute, "Public Speaking Storytelling Do's," downloaded January 15, 2010 (<http://www.public-speaking.org/public-speaking-storydo-article.htm>).

from your research. As the audience's guide, you will take them through a *show and tell* process, revealing each step from start to finish. In presenting marketing and advertising research, a good demo informs your audience about your product, shows the benefits of ownership, and inspires them to take action.³⁵ Here is an example of the criteria for a great demonstration using an iPhone 3G:

- *Short:* The EDGE versus 3G demo was less than two minutes.
- *Simple:* Showed two websites loading on a smartphone.
- *Sweet:* A head-to-head comparison of 3G with competitor EDGE.
- *Swift:* Kept the demo moving but remained silent at key points to build drama.
- *Substantial:* Demo resolved the problem of waiting for graphically rich sites to load.³⁶

> Visualize

Proficiency in your research presentation requires the ability to create good visuals and know how to use them. Because visuals are so fundamental to business presentations, we use the graphics concept of *visualization* to present the material in this section.

Eighty percent of the information humans receive comes through their eyes. For technical information, like research presentations, this number is probably higher.³⁷ Rick Altman, author of *Why Most PowerPoint Presentations Suck* and host of the PowerPoint Live User Conference, believes the real culprit of visually poor presentations is presenters who organize their thoughts with PowerPoint or other design software rather than away from the computer.³⁸

15

The percent of reduced information that is delivered verbally when using a Power-Point presentation.

Edward Tufte, the guru of displaying quantitative information says, "The PowerPoint style routinely disrupts, dominates, and trivializes content."³⁹ Another author in this chorus urges presenters to remember that there are three parts of a presentation: slides, notes, and handouts. Remember the difference between take-away documents (handouts) and slides. An attempt to merge the two results in what Reynolds calls "slideuments"—or badly detailed PowerPoint documents masquerading as slides. Presentations constructed this way result in the presenter supplying the verbal content of a document ineffectually because the audience reads faster than he or she can speak.⁴⁰

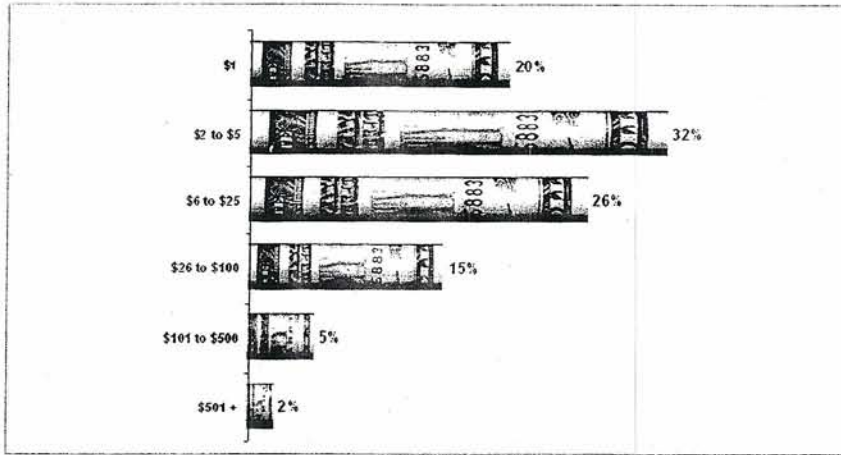
marcusthomas



Lowest Amount To Feel Like A Winner

Q.14A

- Among those Players who do not need to hit the jackpot in order to feel like a winner, over half would be satisfied with winning \$5 or less. Another quarter of Players would be satisfied winning up to \$25. This is in line with Instant Ticket prizes, the most popular lottery game.



Base: Players Who Consider Winning Less Than The Jackpot A Win (1,048)

MRSI

Ohio Lottery Segmentation Study (October 2005)

>picprofile

Because research findings are often presented orally to the research sponsor, bar charts composed of graphics that depict the subject of the finding are frequently used. In this sample slide from the research presentation, Marcus Thomas and MRSI depict the relatively low win-value necessary to encourage people to play a lottery game by using rolled currency to represent the horizontal bars. To read more about this research, download the case “Ohio Lottery: Innovative Research Design Drives Winning” from our text website, www.marcusthomasllc.com; www.mrsi.com; www.ohiolottery.com

Psychological and Physical Foundations⁴¹

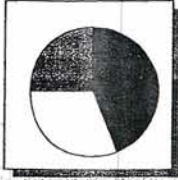
In his book *Clear and to the Point*, author Stephen Kosslyn argues that audience members of any presentation “should not have to search through a visual or conceptual haystack to find the needle you are talking about.” Thus the process of **visualization** involves developing and organizing support materials that help the audience share in your understanding of the data. The composition and knowledge of the audience, the venue, and amount of time all influence choices in visualization.

Several psychological principles influence your audience’s understanding of your findings. The **principle of relevance** infers that only information critical to understanding should be presented. Information that is presented verbally along with visual support will be perceived as more relevant than that mentioned only verbally without visual support. But the principle also indicates that we do not want to overwhelm the audience with too much information.

In the process of exploring your data, prior to developing a research presentation, you developed numerous tables, graphs, and textual summaries. Not all of these support materials, whether you use handouts, flip charts, or slides, can or should be used in most presentations due to time constraints. Any limitations in your audience’s knowledge level (**principle of appropriate knowledge**) or their inability to process large amounts of information at one time (**principle of capacity limitations**) reduces the complexity of your support. In your attempt to share an understanding of the data, some support materials—for example, graphing techniques like box plots with which your audience may be unfamiliar—may instead create confusion or obscure the points you are trying to convey. A familiar visualization technique—a bar or column chart or table—would always convey information more quickly than an unfamiliar one. However, you can design even appropriate and familiar techniques in too complex a fashion by including unnecessary information. Your audience, after all, has only moments to digest visually what you may have been studying for days or weeks. Exhibit 21-9 summarizes data graphing techniques that are appropriate for oral presentations.

>Exhibit 21-9 Graph Selection for Oral Presentations

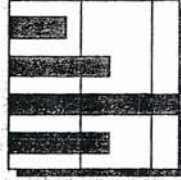
For components of a whole or frequency.



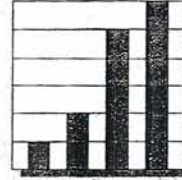
Pie: Shows relationship of parts to the whole. Wedges are row values of data.



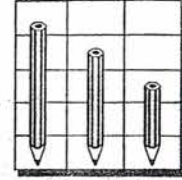
Exploded Pie: Draws attention to critical component within the whole.



Simple Bar: Places categories on the Y axis and amounts or percentages on the X axis.

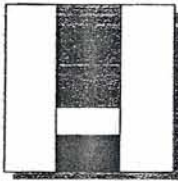


Simple Column: Places categories on the X axis and amounts or percentages on the Y axis.

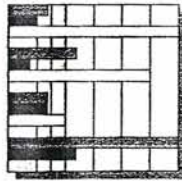


Pictograph: Represents values as pictures; either bar or column.

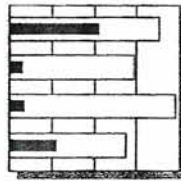
For relationship or comparisons



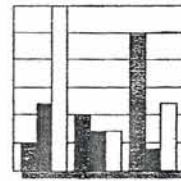
Stacked Bar: Shows amounts of component variables; either bars or columns.



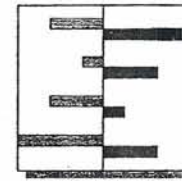
Bar: Compares different entities on the same variable or component of a variable.



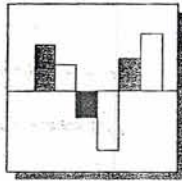
Bullet Bar: Compares different entities on the same variable or component of a variable.



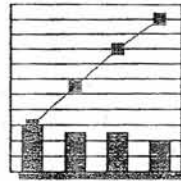
Column: Compares different entities on the same variable or component of a variable.



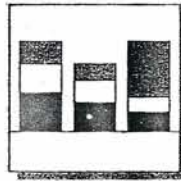
Mirror Image Bar: Positions categories on Y axis and values on X axis as mirror images for different entities.



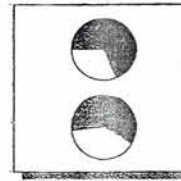
Deviations (Bar or Column): Positions categories on X axis and values on Y axis. Deviations distinguish positive from negative values.



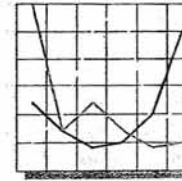
Pareto Diagram: Item of interest is presented in bars and compared to aggregate represented by lines.



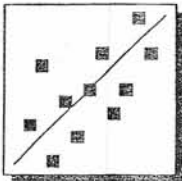
Side-by-Side Stacked Bar: Compares components of two or more items of interest.



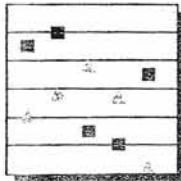
Multiple Pie: Uses same data as stacked pie but plots separate pies for each column of data without stacking.



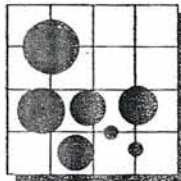
Line: Compares values over time to show changes in trends.



Scatter with Trend Line: Shows if pattern exist for a variable; X axis and values on Y axis.



Multiple Item Scatter: Multiple items are represented by different lines, with distinct markers for values; categories on X axis and values on Y axis.



Bubble: Used to introduce third variable (dots of different sizes). Axes could be sales, profits; bubbles are assets.

According to the **principle of informative changes**, your audience will expect anything you speak about or show in your presentation to convey important information. Therefore, it is critical for your presentation to convey what is new or a change with a separate slide or handout, a new property presented on a slide or handout (e.g., flow aid change), or a new design format. Demonstrations or exercises relate to this principle; your audience will automatically pay more attention when you do something different to convey new information.

Several additional psychological principles should also influence the visualization of your presentation.

- **Principle of salience.** Your audience's attention is drawn to large perceptible differences. Thus you should choose charting and graphing techniques that naturally showcase such differences. An exploding pie or a bar chart can often serve this purpose.
- **Principle of discriminability.** Two properties must differ by a large amount to be discerned. This means that if an important difference exists in your data but the difference is not large enough to be visually discernable, you must use techniques—a single highlight color, a supersized component, or breakouts—for the item that is important. You should also note whether the difference presented is statistically significant in order to establish importance.
- **Principle of perceptual organization.** Your audience will automatically group items together, even if you do not give them such groupings. This is a mechanism they use to allow them to absorb and store large amounts of information. Thus, if you are trying to establish associations or correlations between key findings, your support materials should group themselves (in your organization plan, put them in proximity to each other or put them together with the same flow aid) and title them as a group.

Design Principles

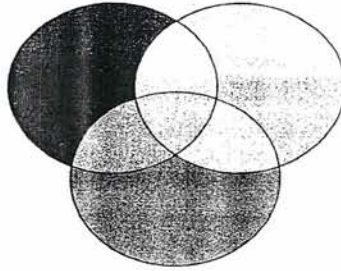
In addition to selecting the right visual elements to convey your findings and conclusions, overriding concepts should guide the design of visual support materials.⁴² All are achieved by what Reynolds describes as “careful reduction of the nonessential”⁴³—give the audience only what they need to understand your findings and conclusions, not everything you used to reach that level of understanding. Ideas reduced to their most simplistic tend to “stick” in the mind of the audience.⁴⁴

Using the collective ideas of Reynolds, Duarte, Kosslyn, and Altman, several principles and guidelines for powerful visual design emerge:⁴⁵

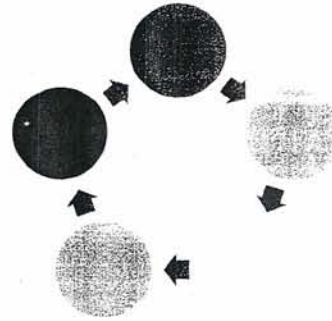
- **Visual preparation.** The presenter should conceptualize the visual support materials on paper before composing the digital versions.
 - A storyboard of slides, digital-camera documents, flip-chart ideas, or handouts allows the presenter to visually plot their argument and choose the appropriate visualization techniques.
 - Paper or sticky notes can be used to storyboard a presentation.
- **Flow aids.** Visual techniques, such as those shown in Exhibit 21-10, convey to the audience where the presenter is within the overall presentation.
 - Arrow or other flow symbols or diagrams are good at denoting location and direction within the presentation.
 - Images and diagrams should point toward slide content or center, not to the area beyond the screen.
 - Most animations draw attention away from the message incorporated into the support material; use animations sparingly.
 - Animation within charts (building a chart in PowerPoint or on a flip chart) can draw audience attention to a desired element.
- **Visibility.** The audience should be able to see the visual aids.
 - The bigger the room, the more likely you will need to use electronic visual aids.
 - Even small rooms need large visual aids to be seen.
 - The greater the distance between the audience and the visual aid, the larger the text and visual size you will need.

>Exhibit 21-10 Flow Aids for Structuring Presentations

Part A: Venn Diagram



Part B: Cycle Diagram



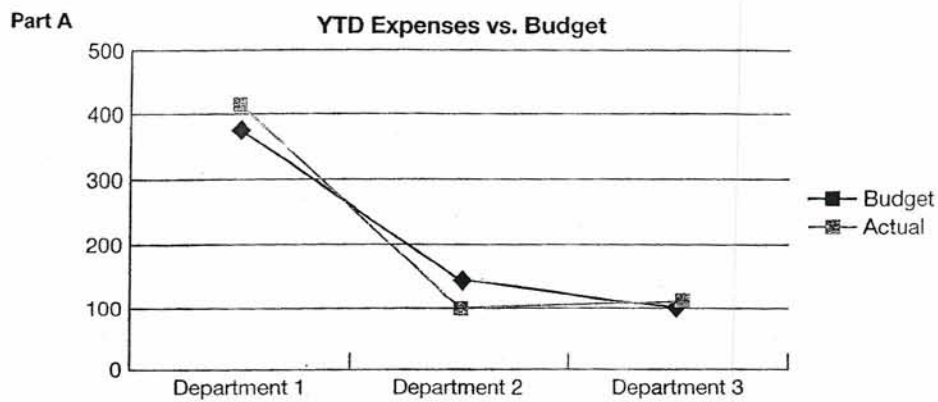
Part C: Arrow Diagram



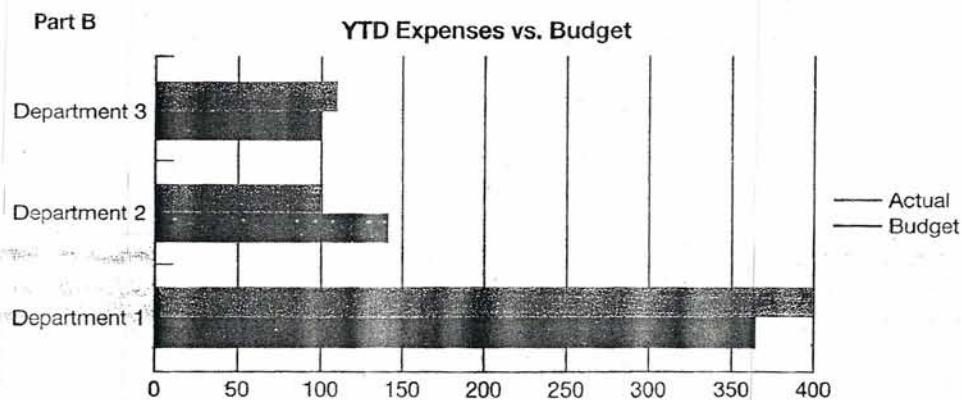
- A screen should be at least as wide as one-sixth of the distance between the screen and the farthest viewer from the screen.
- Individual copies of support materials can replace the need for supersizing your visual aids.
- **Whitespace.** Leave empty, uncluttered space surrounding important key visuals and text.
 - The audience should be able to achieve a visual focus.
 - Fewer but more compelling visual elements on each slide help achieve focus.
 - Bulleted keywords or phrases rather than sentences on a slide help achieve focus.
- **Picture supremacy.** According to research findings, graphics and photographic images are more memorable than text and oral presentation.⁴⁶ In one study, 10 percent of information presented orally was remembered 72 hours after presentation, with an increase to 65 percent if a picture was inserted.
 - Add pictures and reduce text to improve impact.
 - Allow pictures to dominate research presentations that are less statistical.
 - When using photographs, select situations that happen in real life; realism is appreciated by the audience more than staged images.
- **Photographic framing.** Create a focal point for all visuals.
 - By dividing a viewfinder by the **rule of thirds**, photographers compose their shots with real or imaginary cross-hairs that divide the field of view into thirds, vertically and horizontally. The cross-hairs form nine cells with four intersecting crossing points. These crossing points, also called *power points*, may be used to line up the image, creating a balanced, arresting visual, as well as a photograph.
 - The focal point of the image is off center—leaving whitespace around the visual.
 - Visual elements seem to present a better and more artistic sense of balance and flow.
 - The primary object is not on center, thereby avoiding predictability and redundancy and attracting attention.
- **Contrast.** Use high contrast to quickly draw audience attention to the main point.
 - Busy backgrounds detract from text and images or graphs.
 - Choosing high-contrast colors (e.g., black on white, black on yellow, red on white) for text, data, and background or colors on charts enhances readability and denotes change.
 - Highlighting text in a list or numbers on a table creates more contrast than dimming out elements you want to recede.

- By varying the thickness of a line, you add to its contrast.
- By adding color to an element, you add to its contrast.
- Using too many colors for graph elements diminishes contrast; highlight what helps make your point.
- **Compatibility.** The form of the message should be compatible with its content and the meaning of that content.
 - Organizational graphics can convey the overall presentation structure or illustrate sequences of steps.
 - Maps can be used to show location related information.
 - Data graphs can be used to reveal relative amounts.
 - Pie graphs and exploding pie graphs are used to show approximate, not absolute, proportions.
 - Tables convey impressions of relative amounts.
 - Line graphs can be used to convey trends over time.
 - Step graphs illustrate trends among two or more entities that vary along a noncontinuous scale.
 - Adjusting the size of elements (e.g., width of bars in bar chart or step graph) does not convey precise quantities.
 - An image or picture should be consistent with what it represents in a pictograph.
 - Photos or clipart can be used to define context, introduce abstract ideas, evoke emotion, or represent a finding or a conclusion.
- **Relationship.** The audience should be able to see the relationships between elements and sense what information goes together.
 - The presentation organization structure should make the hierarchy obvious.
 - Plotting different types of data in the same display only conveys meaning if the two are highly related.
 - Plotting two types of data when they are unrelated on the same graph to serves to confuse or clutter.
 - Keeping X and Y axis titles the same in comparative graphs facilitates the ability to see relationships.
 - Headers, titles, and colors can be used to group items.
 - Organizational diagrams that overlap, cluster elements, or radiate connecting elements can be used to group items.
 - Decreasing the space between bars or other graphing elements makes them easier for the audience to group in their mind.
- **Simplicity.** Reduce clutter and use only the information and visual techniques necessary to convey the data, idea, or conclusion (see Exhibit 21-11).
 - Only familiar graphs, symbols, images, and jargon should be used to enhance the transition of information.
 - Only the part of a graph that makes your point should be used.
 - Numerical labels are only necessary on graphs if precision is important.
 - Graph legends should be eliminated if element labels are used.
 - Background grids (horizontal or vertical) should be removed if value labels are used.
 - Graphic or pictorial backgrounds make quick understanding of a graph impossible by providing too much visual stimulation.
 - Graphical elements (wedges in a pie, bars on a chart) should be arranged in a simple progression (most to least, least to most), and this arrangement should be used consistently from graph to graph.
 - Corresponding bars, from graph to graph, should be marked in the same way (same color, same order).
 - Graphics or images should always help make the presenter's point or direct the audience's attention, not be included solely for appearance.
 - Numbered lists should be used to convey order; bulleted lists can be used when no order is implied.
 - Unnecessary borders (around legends, titles, axis titles) separate, rather than unify, elements.

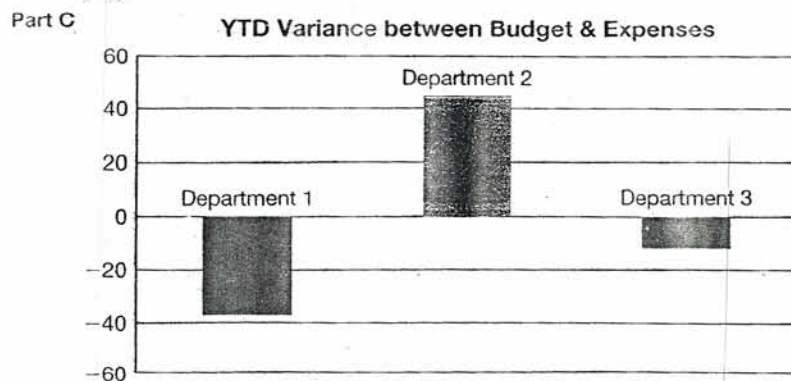
»Exhibit 21-11 Simplifying Visuals



Inappropriate technique because departments are not related. Line graphs are most effectively used to show trends over time, not relationships at a point in time.



Appropriate technique, but differences do not stand out as quickly due to need for Department 1's bars to be on the same plane as Department 2 and Department 3, which have smaller budgets.



Appropriate technique and the differences—which departments are exceeding their budgets (Departments 1, 3) and which aren't (Department 2)—are quickly discerned, both by the chart type and by the color that separates the positive from the negative.

- **Clarity.** The audience should be able to perceive meaning from the location of elements. Simplicity leads to clarity and is obtained by reducing nonessential elements. Find balance between communicating too many research findings and being too simple. In general, however, think in terms of subtracting not adding.
 - Larger elements will be perceived to be more important than smaller ones.
 - Elements with color will be perceived as more important than those without color.
 - Fewer bullet points improve understanding.
 - Support materials should attach desired interpretation or meaning to data.
 - Mixed-media displays (e.g., bar graph overlaid with a line graph) are difficult to interpret during a presentation because different media do not form simple visual patterns.

>Exhibit 21-12 Prescriptions for Better Slides

Rx for Better Slides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low word count. • Slideuments defeat you. • Keep it simple. • The 10–20–30 rule. • Font size = oldest age ÷ 2

Source: Based on an example from Nancy Duarte, *slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations* (Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media, 2008), p. 151.

Prescriptions for Better Slides

In summary, let us review some simple ideas for getting and holding your audience's attention (see Exhibit 21-12). Go for a very low word count on your slides. The default template for PowerPoint promotes a two-level title and numerous subpoints. This is a *slideument*, which defeats the presentation's purpose; therefore, consider using a title only. Then heed the bullet law: if you have to use bullets at all, use them in moderation, and remember they should represent keywords or brief headlines only. Sentences should be discouraged because they take your audience's attention away from the speaker while they read the sentence. Slide titles should be no more than one sentence (or a 140-character, memorable, Twitter-like statement). As Einstein said, "Everything should be as simple as possible but not simpler." Language and visuals that are simple to parse by the audience are memorable.

Use the good sense design ideas presented earlier to compose your slide. Venture capitalist, author, and noted public speaker Guy Kawasaki also promotes the idea that presenters always need to simplify their message. After being the audience for numerous funding proposals by entrepreneurs, he developed his *10–20–30 rule*: use no more than 10 slides, no more than 20 minutes (even if you have been allotted more time), and never use text on a slide smaller than 30 points.⁴⁷ Finding a good font is an art because each creates its own impression: serious or playful. But, finding its proper size is common sense: (1) not smaller than 30 points; (2) put your slides in the sorter option and view them at 66 percent—"if you can still read them, so can your audience"⁴⁸; and (3) divide the oldest audience member's age by 2 and use that font size.⁴⁹ Following these suggestions, as shown in Exhibit 21-12 will lead to simpler visuals.

> Deliver

Although the content of a presentation is a major priority, how the speaker delivers the message is very important. A polished presentation adds to the receptiveness of the audience, but there is always danger that style may overpower the message. Fortunately, the typical research audience knows why it is assembled, has a high level of interest, and does not need to be entertained. Even so, the speaker faces a real challenge in communicating effectively. In research presentations, the delivery should be more restrained than in those that seek action or behavioral change. Demeanor, posture, dress, and total appearance should be appropriate for the occasion. Speed of speech, clarity of enunciation, pauses, and gestures all play a part. Voice pitch, tone quality, and inflections are proper subjects for concern. Rapport-developing techniques are essential so that the speaker can get and hold the audience's attention.

Modes of Delivery

What will be the mechanism by which you communicate your message to the audience? Will your presentation be memorized, read from a manuscript, or given extemporaneously? We rule out the impromptu briefing because *impromptu speaking* does not involve preparation. Your reputation and the research effort should not be jeopardized by "winging it."

Memorization is a risky and time-consuming course to follow. Any memory slip during the presentation can be a catastrophe, and the delivery sounds stilted and distant. Memorization virtually precludes establishing rapport with the audience members and adapting to their reactions while you speak. It produces a self- or speaker-centered syndrome and is not recommended.

Manuscript reading is also not advisable. The verbatim delivery of a presentation script sounds dull and lifeless because most people are not trained to read aloud, and therefore they do it badly. They become focused on the manuscript to the exclusion of the audience. This heads-down preoccupation with the text is clearly inappropriate for research presentations. If you are a trained reader with access to a teleprompter, this mode might work for you; most researchers do not have the skill or the equipment for such delivery.

The **extemporaneous presentation** is audience-centered and made from minimal notes. This mode permits the speaker to be natural, conversational, and flexible. Clearly, it is the best choice for an organizational setting. Preparation for this mode consists of writing a draft along with a complete sentence outline and converting the main points to notes. In this way, you can try lines of argument, experiment with various supporting materials, and develop memorable phraseology. Along the way, the main points are fixed sequentially in your mind, and supporting connections are made.

Scripts and Notes

Ditch the script! Manuscripts are often required for ceremonial speeches but are inappropriate for the majority of business presentations. They have no place in research presentations where audience members want to engage in information exchange, not to be read to. Imagine the audience asking itself why they should not be conversing with the person who wrote the script rather than the one who is reading it poorly to them.

Scripts are important in the planning phase but should be shelved by the time you get to practice. Here are one author's suggestions for evolving from ideation and organizing to becoming scriptless:

- Write the script in full sentences in the notes section of PowerPoint—no more than four to five sentences.
- Do not script every word; just rework your material removing filler words from sentences, leaving only key words.
- Highlight key words and use them without regard to details to get key points into memory.
- Memorize the one key idea for each slide: ask, “What is my audience’s take-home message from this slide?”
- Practice the presentation without notes using the slide’s keywords, graph, or visual as the prompter.⁵⁰

Audiences accept **speaker note cards**, and their presence does wonders in allaying speaker fear. Even if you never use them, they are there for psychological support. Many prefer to use cards for their briefing notes. Card contents vary widely, but here are some general guidelines for their design:

- Place preliminary remarks on the first card.
- Use the remaining cards to carry a major section of the presentation. The amount of detail depends on the need for precision and the speaker’s memory but should not become a mini-manuscript containing, for example, the details of supporting information.
- If using PowerPoint, match cards to slides.
- Include keywords and phrases, illustrations, statistics, dates, and a pronunciation guide for difficult words. Include quotations and ideas that bear repeating.
- Along the margin, place instructions or cues, such as SLOW, FAST, EMPHASIZE, SLIDE, TURN CHART, and BACK TO CHART 3.
- Sequentially number your cards or notes, so you can return them quickly to order if they are accidentally shuffled.

>Exhibit 21-13 Using Key Word Prompts as a Substitute for Notes

Key Word – Number	Presentation Script
22,000 jobs	The estimated number of jobs generated between 2003 and 2008 in preparation for the Vancouver Winter Games
2,500 athletes	About 2,500 athletes competed in the Vancouver Games
258 athletes	The number of athletes from 16 nations that competed in 1924 at the first Winter Olympic Games in Chamonix, France
67.8 mph skier	Antoine Denerjaz's average speed; winner of the men's downhill in 2006 at Torino, Italy
\$1 million bonus	The amount of money Speedo gave Michael Phelps as a bonus after the Beijing Olympics for tying Mark Spitz's gold medal record

Source: Material adapted from "By the Numbers: The Olympics," *Sky* (January 2010), p. 25; www.deltaskymag.com.

When cards are not suited to the occasion, you might consider the example in Exhibit 21-13, which uses the previous advice on how a slide's keyword can serve as the prompter. In this example, the speaker is presenting, among other things, numerical information on the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Details Make a Difference

"Success is in the details" is our variation on German-born architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's (1886–1969) attributed remark that "God is in the details." In this section, we provide examples from often overlooked features of a presentation in a search for insights from the details.

Clutter

Careful language usage leads to clarity of your presentation and helps to establish one aspect of *ethos*, competence. **Clutter** in a speech includes repetition of fillers such as "ah," "um," "you know," "like," "basically," or "exactly." Clutter in a research presentation gives the impression of hesitancy and lack of competence. Caroline Kennedy was reported by *Time* to have botched her first interview with the New York press with "ums" and "you knows," cluttering the landscape of her comments with 144 "you knows" in an 8,500-word transcript.

Asked to justify her candidacy—after days spent with handlers advising her on how to fill Hillary Clinton's vacant New York Senate seat—she began in a dull monotone: "Um, this is a fairly unique moment both in our, you know, in our country's history, and, and in, in, you know, my own life, and um, you know, we are facing, you know, unbelievable challenges, our economy, you know, healthcare, people are losing their jobs here in New York obviously um, arh, you know . . ."⁵¹

Jargon

Jargon, language specific to a profession or academic discipline, is considered meaningless and generally unintelligible to people outside of that group. Using jargon is a particular danger in delivery of a research presentation where your audience may not be schooled in the techniques of research or of statistical analysis. Jargon adds clumsy language and reduces the simplicity of the message, ultimately confusing all but the insiders to the "code." Jargon often needs to be defined for the audience.

Unfortunately, you often learn of this only at the end of the presentation when questions are asked and you learn that several key points eluded the audience due to the jargon you embedded in your presentation. There are many types of business jargon or buzz words (see BuzzWhack.com) to avoid; here are a few examples:⁵²

Jargon	Clearer Meaning	Jargon	Clearer Meaning
conceptualize	imagine	output	results
downsizing	laying off	parameters	limits
infrastructure	framework	strategize	plan
interface	talk with	utilization	use
operational	working	viable	possible

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is meaning conveyed through other than verbal means; it encompasses clothing and bodily characteristics, physical environment (physical space and time), movement and body position (including kinesics, posture, gesture, touch), eye gaze, and paralanguage (nonverbal cues of the voice).

Nonverbal, a significant component of the speaker's presentation, represents approximately 50 to 60 percent of communication meaning. Some studies cite as high as 93 percent. Nonverbal communication is a complex medium that can regulate the pace of your presentation, may be ambiguous, is sometimes more believable than verbal communication, and reinforces or contradicts the spoken message. Albert Mehrabian found a 7–38–55 rule, supposedly reflecting the percentages of how much communication was attributed to words, tone, and body language. Mehrabian's research showed that the receiver will accept the dominant form of communication, nonverbal (38 percent + 55 percent), rather than the literal meaning of the words (7 percent) under conditions where a communicator is talking about their feelings or attitudes.⁵³

While a researcher making a presentation can use nonverbal communication to his or her advantage, it is equally important that he or she minimize distracting or contradictory nonverbal messages that interfere with achieving the purpose of the presentation. The complexity of this topic is such that we can only focus on four admonitions for the presenter.

- **Eye contact.** Do you focus above people's heads or on a wall when you present? Lack of eye contact is particularly bothersome to listeners and is common with inexperienced presenters. An important aspect of interpersonal communication is eye contact, which can also help regulate the flow of communication with your audience. The frequency of eye contact with the audience helps to establish rapport and comfort, thereby increasing the speaker's approachability. Presenters who make eye contact show concern, warmth, and authenticity. If you find eye contact difficult, practice using the drama coaches' advice: scan the room slowly, tracing an X or Z with your eyes, but varying the pattern size to avoid looking predictable. Stop and look at individuals long enough to communicate with them personally before moving on to another.
- **Gestures.** If you do not gesture while speaking, you may be perceived as unanimated, especially if you keep your hands at your sides. A speaking style that is animated and lively gains audience attention, facilitates learning, and makes your content more interesting. If you think consciously about your gestures, you are likely to gesture too late and as a result you will look stiff, awkward, and coached. In addition to hand gestures, facial expression (particularly smiling) is a powerful cue that transmits happiness, friendliness, warmth, liking, and affiliation. When you smile often, you will be perceived as more friendly, warm, and approachable. Luckily for the research presenter, gesturing to visual aids is almost mandatory and gets you started in the right

direction. But a caution, you can overgesture in a presentation, distracting the audience with your body language.

- **Posture and body orientation.** You communicate numerous messages by the way you walk and stand. Standing erect, but not rigid, and leaning slightly forward communicates that you are approachable, receptive, engaged, and friendly. Interpersonal closeness results when you and your audience face each other and nothing blocks the audience's view, such as a lectern. Speaking with your back turned or looking too long at a slide communicates disinterest. In some rooms, there is too much distance between you and your audience. To offset this, moving about the room increases interaction with your audience. Proximity enables you to make better eye contact and reveals your confidence. A research presenter needs to know what is on his or her visual aids so that the aid does not demand his or her full attention; the audience should have that.
- **Paralanguage.** This facet of nonverbal communication includes such vocal elements as tone, pitch, rhythm, pause, timbre, loudness, and inflection. Practice varying these seven elements of your voice. One of the major criticisms of presenters is speaking in a monotone. The audience perceives this as boring and dull. Modulate your voice to accentuate key words for impact.⁵⁴ Vary volume, tone quality, and rate of speaking. Any of these can be used successfully to add interest to the message and engage audience attention. Speakers should not let their words trail off as they complete a sentence. Do you speak so softly that someone cannot hear you well? It is helpful to have someone in the back of the room signal if your voice is not carrying far enough. Do you speak too rapidly? Remind yourself to slow down. Make deliberate pauses before sentences. Speak words with precision without exaggerating. However, some people talk too slowly, and this can make the audience restive.

> Practice and Arrange

Rehearsal Is Essential

What do super achievers and star performers have in common? Practice. Malcolm Gladwell, in his best-selling book, *Outliers*, presents the case for the "The 10,000-Hour Rule," claiming that the key to success is repeated practice of a specific task for 10,000 hours. He asserts that greatness or mastery in any field requires massive amounts of time. With examples from the Beatles and Bill Gates, he showed how the Beatles performed live in Hamburg, Germany, more than 1,200 times from 1960 to 1964, accruing more than 10,000 hours of playing time. For Gates, it was access to a high school computer in 1968, at age 13, and then spending 10,000 hours programming on it.⁵⁵ Whether you practice 60 hours or 6 hours, the time you spend rehearsing is the difference between a mastery performance and a disappointment. Here are some suggestions for recreating the presentational setting as you practice. The value obtained will pay off in preventing embarrassment, allowing you to check your ratio of material versus available time, uncovering holes in your supporting material, and preparing for the unexpected.

- Practice early and often, leaving time for revision.
- Simulate the actual setting and facilities.
- Stand and move (reading from your computer screen does not give you realistic voice projection or allow you to practice movement).
- Rehearse with props and visual aids.
- Practice with an audience from your organization or people on your team who have backgrounds similar to the key people in the real audience.
- Start by reading your notes or using your cue cards/slide cues to familiarize yourself with the flow of the presentation.
- Stop yourself during the rehearsal to write both content and stylistic ideas as they come to mind. You will want to note awkward phrases that were not edited and self-conscious movements that were better avoided.

- Experiment with different aspects of paralanguage (as previously discussed), gestures, or staging of the environment.
- Mark your speaker note cards or the practice script as to when to pause, either for a breath or to stress an important point.
- Time your presentation at least three times, or have an audience member time you.
- Rehearse contingency plans to counter things that might go wrong.

Now that you have had initial practice, it is time for video recording. A video of yourself speaking is an amazingly potent tool. Your habits—both good and bad—are captured. As you watch the video, look for:

- *Eye contact.* What is the proportion of direct contact versus reading from notes? Have you used a simple slide cue to maintain your focus on the audience and not the slide? You should have a minimum of 75 percent eye contact in practice to obtain a higher goal in the presentation.
- *Body language.* Are there frequent unconscious gestures like touching hair, touching your face, standing awkwardly, pulling at your clothes? Are gestures unsynchronized with your words or unvaried? Do you detect body sway? If using a visual aid, demo, or a prop, are your transitions smooth?
- *Vocal characteristics.* Watch for irregular breathing with long sentences, pauses in the wrong places, dropping or raising your voice at the end of sentences, repeated phrases (e.g., “and then I,” “now,” or “next”) as transitions, rapid pace of delivery, repeated fillers words, and negligible variation in tone or pace.
- *Energy level.* Does delivering the presentation excite you? Are you enthusiastic, inspired, or bored? Do not underestimate the energy level necessary to generate enthusiastic listeners. One famous speech coach asks his clients, “On a scale of 1 to 10—1 being fast asleep and 10 being wildly pumped up like motivational speaker Tony Robbins—where you are right now?” Most place themselves at 3 to 6, leaving sufficient room to raise the level.⁵⁶

Watching yourself on video for the first time can be traumatic. In itself, the experience should help you overcome many problems. But if you are serious about improvement, ask the observers for feedback on your performance as you watch the video together. To get honest feedback, stick with open-ended questions such as the following: (1) Which supporting evidence was most effective? Why? Which supporting evidence with ineffective? Why? (2) Did the order of findings or arguments help support the conclusion? Why/Why not? (3) What was the most powerful element in the presentation? Why? (4) What would improve the presentation?⁵⁷

Controlling Performance Anxiety

Performance anxiety, or stage fright, is a fear produced by the need to make a presentation in front of an audience or before a camera. In public speaking, it arises in anticipation of a performance or accompanies the event and causes negative effects in presentational quality. In extreme cases, the fear is persistent phobia, which makes the individual dysfunctional in a presentation.

Performance anxiety has numerous physical symptoms: fluttering or pounding heart, tremor in the hands and legs, stomach cramping or nausea, facial nerve tics, flushing, hives, and dry mouth. More than 56 million citations on a Google search of “fear public speaking” give credence to the pervasiveness of such anxiety. Performance anxiety at various levels occurs to people of all experience levels and backgrounds, from students to seasoned professionals.⁵⁸

Research found five causal common denominators among individuals who experience performance anxiety—all based in negative self-perception:

1. I perceive or imagine the presence of significant others who are able to judge me.
2. I consider the possibility of my visible failure at a task.
3. I feel a need to do well to avoid failure.
4. I feel uncertain as to whether I will do well.
5. I focus on my own behavior and appearance.⁵⁹

>snapshot

Overcoming the Jitters

The fear of public speaking ranks up there with the fear of death and/or public nudity. Whether you are a seasoned pro or this is your first speech, stage fright, the illogical fear of facing an audience, can be a paralyzing emotion. How do you handle those times when your mind starts going blank and your stomach is turning? Patricia Fripp, an award-winning keynote speaker and speech coach, provides some answers. She suggests that you “need to anticipate your speech mentally, physically, and logistically.” Mental preparation is key and should be a six-to-one ratio: Invest three hours of preparation for a 30-minute speech. There is no substitute for rehearsal. Spend some time memorizing your opening and closing—three or four sentences each. Although you may speak from notes, knowing your opening and closing helps your fluency, allowing you to make the vital connection in rapport with your audience when you are likely to be most nervous.

Logistically, know the room. Go there as early as possible to get comfortable in the environment. Practice using the microphone and check the equipment. A quick review of your visual aids is also helpful. Then, during the presentation, you can focus on your audience and not be concerned with the environment.

The physical part of overcoming nervousness is varied and may be constrained by your setting. In a small-group setting, shake hands, exchange greetings, and make eye contact with everybody beforehand. In a larger meeting, at least connect with the people in the front row. Do so sincerely, and they’ll be cheering for your success. They are not waiting for you to fail—they are far too worried about themselves—and they are there to listen to you. If possible, avoid sitting while you’re waiting to speak. Find a position in the room where you can stand occasionally.



The presenter’s physical appearance often reveals performance anxiety with perspiration, blank stares, and facial nerve tics.

The rear of the room gives you access to the bathroom and drinking fountain.

If your anxiety level is still high, then you need an outlet for your energy. Comedians and actors find that doing light exercises in their dressing rooms or in another private area can relieve the excess energy. Fripp adds, “Find a private spot, and wave your hands in the air. Relax your jaw, and shake your head from side to side. Then shake your legs one at a time. Physically shake the tension out of your body.” The object is to release enough nervous energy to calm your anxieties—without becoming so stress-free that you forget your purpose and audience.

www.fripp.com

According to the authors, optimal strategies for coping with performance anxiety include (1) reduce the imagined power of others by increasing the sense of one’s own power; (2) eliminate the imagination of negative possibilities, and think about the positive outcomes of a successful presentation; (3) hold the performance in perspective by seeing its outcome as insignificant in relation to the totality of one’s life; (4) remember that one cannot control other’s reactions or judgments, but only one’s own performance; and (5) refocus one’s attention away from self and increase one’s awareness of others, without considering them as judges. In short, focus on “process rather than results, the moment of experience rather than the future, positive approach goals rather than negative avoidance goals, and self-acceptance rather than self doubt.”⁶⁰ See Exhibit 21-14 for strategies to reduce performance anxiety.

Some readers will say, I understand the psychology, but what can you suggest that is really practical? The best thing you can do is to be overwhelmingly, painstakingly, and totally prepared. After that, exercise. Presenters need regular exercise to reduce tension and stress. Desensitize with relaxation

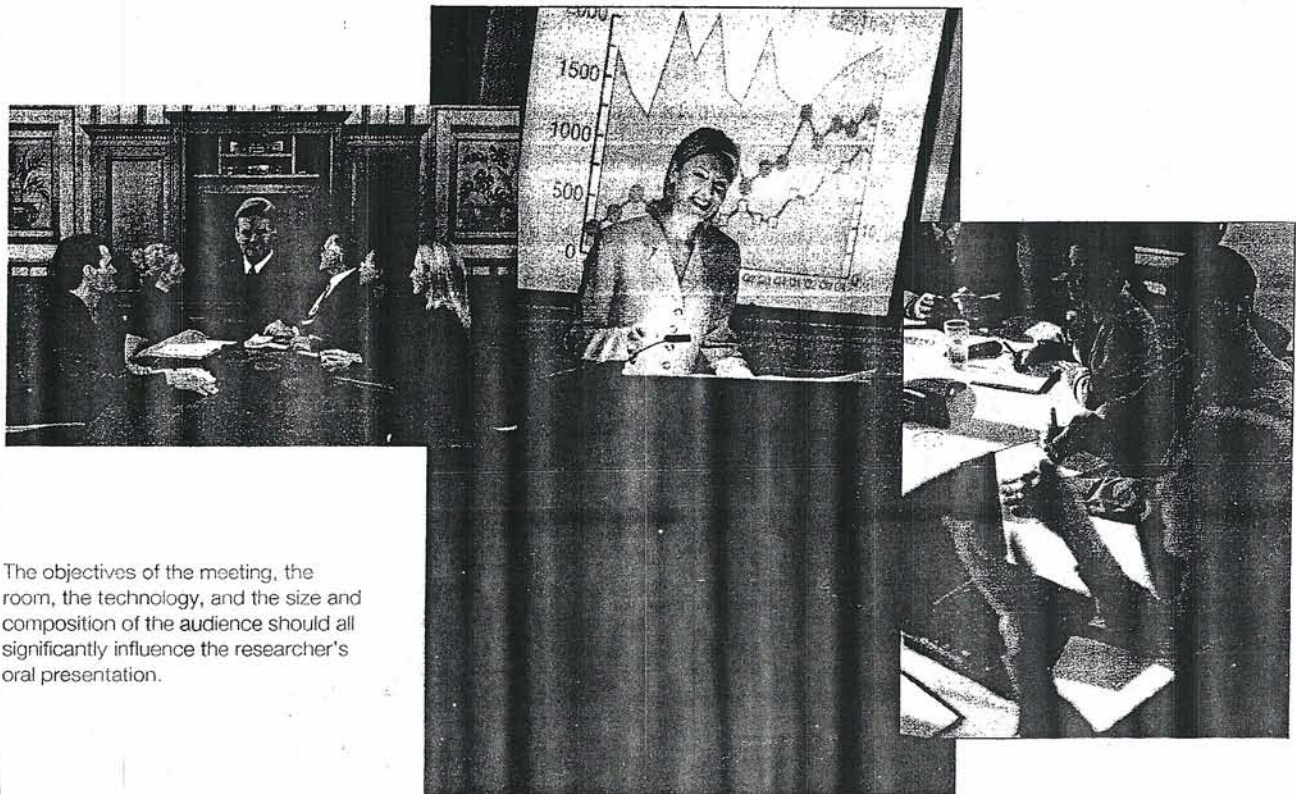
>Exhibit 21-14 Addressing Performance Anxiety

Suggested Strategy	Anxiety Reducing Actions
Reduce the imagined power of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind yourself that you know the methodology and the findings far better than anyone in the audience. • Remind yourself that you have new information and new insights that could help resolve the manager's problem. • See yourself as the audience's partner in solving their problem. • Wear clothing that increases your power (suits win out over causal apparel).
Eliminate imagining negative possibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind yourself of the positive outcomes of the sponsor adopting your recommendations... their company grows, avoids layoffs, etc. • Plan for contingencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a disaster kit with extra power cords, projection bulbs, and laptop. • Burn your presentation to CD, as well as to a USB thumb drive. • Make multiple copies of your script note cards or slide note pages, put them in different places (luggage, backpack, car). • Have multiple copies of handouts of your slides as a backup to a PowerPoint malfunction.
Hold the performance in perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of the presentation as an opportunity for career-enhancing experience. • Remind yourself of what you'll be doing later today or tomorrow that will provide you great joy. • Plan a dinner with friends the evening following the presentation. • Plan a celebration with your teammates for after the presentation.
Control your own performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get some exercise to burn off your nervous energy. • Eat a couple of hours before you go onstage to avoid low blood sugar (can make you feel light-headed) or too much undigested food (can make you nauseous). • Craft your support materials with great care. • Develop strong examples, exercises, slides, and handouts. • Practice, Practice, Practice. • Apply the visualization techniques that the professionals use. • Rest shaking hands on the podium to hide trembling.
Increase your awareness of others without considering them judges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet your audience (all or at least some) before your presentation. • Learn something personal about a few audience members that makes them appear more human . . . they have kids who eat bark, they like cherry Kool-Aid, they hate sunshine (or snow), they have a chihuahua named Brutus, etc.

techniques (meditation, yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, or EFT, as many entertainers do). If possible, talk with a few audience members before you speak to build your confidence and audience rapport. Before the presentation, or while being introduced, sit calmly and breathe slow, deep breaths.

Arrangements for Facilities and Equipment

Arrangements for the presentation occasion and venue, sometimes referred to as *staging*, involve detailed management of facilities, operational problems, equipment (lecterns, lights, projectors, cords, controls, sound systems, video, Internet conferencing, electronic boards, racks for charts, displays/models/props). Staging requires attention to the meeting room, seating arrangement, screens and lighting, testing of virtually everything, along with preparation/backup for disasters. Refer to Exhibit 21-15 for a detailed checklist of the activities involved in perfecting the arrangements.



The objectives of the meeting, the room, the technology, and the size and composition of the audience should all significantly influence the researcher's oral presentation.

>Exhibit 21-15 Facilities and Equipment Checklist A and B

Checklist A		
Source	Item	Considerations
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities	Meeting room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site vs. off-site • Adjacent facilities and noise • Plain walls: distraction avoidance • Clock placement • Ingres-egress opposite speaker • Barriers between presenter and audience
	Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rheostats • Screen proximity and wash-out • Access to bulbs and fixtures
	Electrical power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlets: location • Power extensions
	Lectern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moveable vs. fixed vs. podium • Location and visibility • Size adequate for presenter's equipment
	Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustable vs. central • Effect on audience
	Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theater vs. conference style • Conference table for small group: about 10 to 15 • Individual tables for larger group: 5 to 6 per table • U-shape for visibility and interaction
<input type="checkbox"/> Projection Screens	Size Visibility Projection Interfering barrier Brightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/6 distance from screen to last viewer • Side angle and elevation • 4 feet above floor level; keystoneing • Columns, hanging fixtures; lighting • Reflectivity: black and white vs. color • Dim vs. dark room

>Exhibit 21-15 Facilities and Equipment Checklist A and B (Continued)

Checklist B		
Source	Item	Considerations
<input type="checkbox"/> Sound System	Microphone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for professional sound specialist • System control access • Handheld: 6 to 10 inches vertical from chin • Fixed-handheld vs. wireless • Feedback proximity • Desirability of portable systems
<input type="checkbox"/> AV Equipment	LCD projector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable vs. installed in room • Projector-PC compatibility • Computer power • Operating location in room • Wireless controller/mouse • Wireless keyboard (meeting-related)
	Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVD/camcorder/VCR • Web streaming • Teleprompter • Playback monitor size • System tests
	Video conferencing/Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC vs. Mac requirements • VoIP • Speaker systems • One broadcast vs. two-way interaction • Supported browsers
	Flipcharts/posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and visibility • Support systems—racks
	Electronic whiteboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simulation of PC desktop • Create video files • Digital story telling • Brainstorming • Port over to PowerPoint • Use for review/repetition

Source: adapted in part from Thomas Leech, *How to Prepare, Stage, and Deliver Winning Presentations* (New York: AMACOM, 2004), pp. 167–87.

>summary

- 1 An oral research presentation has unique characteristics that distinguish it from public speaking but with which it shares similarities. A small group of people is normally involved; statistics often constitute an important portion of the topic; the audience members are usually managers with an interest in the topic, but they want to hear only the data and conclusions that will help them make critical decisions; speaking time will often be as short as 20 minutes, but may run longer than an hour; and the presentation is normally interspersed with questions and discussion.
- 2 Aristotle's rhetorical influence on business presentation in the 21st century acquaints us with persuasive possibilities in every presentational situation. The basis of persuasion has three principles of proof: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. Our perception of a presenter's character affects how believable or convincing we find that person. This is called the speaker's *ethos*. *Pathos* relies on an emotional connection between the speaker and his or her audience. It is an appeal to an audience's sense of identity, self-interest, and emotions. With *logos*, the logical argument, we find the explicit reasons

that the speaker needs to support a position. This translates into supporting evidence and analytical techniques that reveal and uphold the researchers' findings and conclusions.

- 3 We start to plan for the research presentation by accentuating the audience's role: Who is the audience? What do they want to learn? Why is this presentation occurring? When will it occur? Where will the presentation take place? The most important question is about the audience's mind-set: Why should I care? Demographic and dispositional characteristics of the audience also play a role. An audience is composed of three types of learners: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic—all with different needs and learning styles. To keep the audience attentive, research presenters should observe the 10-minute rule by varying their content. They should also understand that arguments presented first or last will be highly influential to understanding and motivate others to take action.
- 4 Presentations have a wide variety of organizational structures that the presenter can use to construct a framework, thereby assisting the audience to follow and understand the presentation. Numerous traditional patterns of organization (topical, spatial, classification, climax order, problem/solution, chronological, past/present/future, cause/effect/solution, pros/cons/recommendation, and research briefing) are viable options, although the motivated sequence, the narrative style of development, the rule of three, and the three-point speech are preferred organization strategies.
- 5 Supporting materials are leaves on the branches of the organizational framework. They include facts, statistics, specific instances, examples, testimony/expert opinion, analogy and metaphor, conveying personal experience through story, and demonstrations.
- 6 Proficiency in research presentation requires creating good visuals and knowing how to use them. The culprit of visually poor presentations is often presenters who create and organize their message with PowerPoint or other design software (which disrupts, dominates, and trivializes content) rather than in analog, away from the computer. Visualization involves developing and organizing supporting materials that help the audience understand your findings. Several psychological principles influence the visualization of your presentation: the principles of relevance (only information critical to understanding should be presented), appropriate knowledge (limitations in your audience's knowledge level), capacity limitations (inability to process large amounts of information at one time), informative changes (convey what is new with a separate slide or handout), saliency (the audience's attention is drawn to large perceptible differences), discriminability (two properties must differ by a large amount to be discerned), and perceptual organization (when establishing associations or correlations between key findings, your supporting materials should group in proximity to each other).

In addition to selecting the right visual elements to convey your findings and conclusions, design principles should guide the design of visual support materials. They include

visual preparation, flow aids, visibility, whitespace, picture supremacy, contrast, compatibility, relationship, simplicity, and clarity.

- 7 How the speaker delivers the message is very important. Demeanor, posture, dress, and total appearance should be appropriate for the occasion. Speed of speech, clarity of enunciation, pauses, and gestures all play their part. Voice pitch, tone quality, and inflections are proper subjects for concern. Rapport-developing techniques are essential so that the speaker can get and hold the audience's attention. The modes of delivery by which you communicate your message to the audience include impromptu speaking, memorization, manuscript reading, or extemporaneous presentation. We rule out the impromptu briefing, because it does not involve preparation, and discourage memorization and manuscript reading due to lack of audience connection. Scripts have no place in research presentations, where audience members want to engage in information exchange, but are important in the planning phase. Audiences accept the use of speaker notes, which are consistent with extemporaneous presentations.
- Details make a difference in effective delivery, including reducing clutter, which gives the impression of hesitancy and lack of competence (repetition of fillers such as "ah," "um," "you know," "like,"). Using jargon is a particular danger when your audience may not be schooled in the techniques of research or of statistical analysis. Jargon adds clumsy language and reduces the simplicity of the message. Nonverbal communication accounts for approximately 50 to 93 percent of communication meaning and, because it is sometimes more believable than verbal communication, deserves careful attention. Major categories include eye contact, gestures, posture and body orientation, and paralanguage.
- 8 Practice is the critical ingredient that super achievers and star performers have in common. It serves to recreate the presentational setting as you practice, prevent embarrassment later, check your ratio of material versus available time, uncover holes in your supporting material, and prepare for the unexpected. A video rehearsal helps overcome many problems, especially with feedback from your practice audience. Stage fright occurs to people of all experience levels and backgrounds, from students to seasoned professionals. While we suggest several means of coping, the best thing you can do is to be overwhelmingly, painstakingly, and totally prepared.

Arrangements for the presentation occasion and venue, sometimes referred to as staging, involve detailed management of facilities, operational problems, equipment (lecterns, lights, projectors, cords, controls, sound systems, video, Internet conferencing, electronic boards, racks for charts, displays/models/props). Furthermore, arrangements require attention to the meeting room, seating, screens and lighting, testing of virtually everything, along with preparation/backup for disasters.

>keyterms

- analogy 611
- audience analysis 602
- auditory learners 604
- clarity 618
- contrast 616
- compatibility 617
- clutter 621
- demonstration 611
- enthymeme 600
- ethos* 600
- example 610
- expert opinion 610
- extemporaneous presentation 620
- eye contact 622
- fact 610
- flow aids 615
- gestures 622
- impromptu speaking 619
- jargon 621
- kinesthetic learners 604
- logos* 600
- manuscript reading 620
- memorization 620
- metaphor 611
- motivated sequence 607
- narrative pattern 607
- nonverbal communication 622
- paralanguage 623
- pathos* 600
- performance anxiety 624
- photographic framing 616
- picture supremacy 616
- posture and body orientation 623
- primacy effect 604
- principle of appropriate knowledge 613
- principle of capacity limitations 613
- principle of discriminability 615
- principle of informative changes 615
- principle of perceptual organization 615
- principle of relevance 613
- principle of salience 615
- recency effect 604
- relationship 617
- research briefing 607
- rule of three 609
- rule of thirds 616
- script 620
- simplicity 617
- speaker note cards 620
- specific instance 610
- statistics 610
- stories 611
- 10-minute rule 604
- testimony 610
- three-point speech 609
- visibility 615
- visualization 613
- visual learners 603
- visual preparation 615
- Web-delivered presentation 605
- whitespace 616

>discussionquestions

Terms in Review

- 1 Distinguish between the following:
 - a Impromptu speaking and an extemporaneous presentation.
 - b The motivated sequence and the cause/effect/solution pattern of organization.
 - c The *rule of three* in organizing and the *rule of thirds* in visualizing.
 - d Clutter and jargon in the delivery of a presentation.
- 2 Describe the differences among *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* and their uses for the research presentation.
- 3 What are the three types of learners, and how is the presentation different for each of these groups in your audience?

Making Research Decisions

- 4 The day before your presentation, you are suffering from pounding heart, a slight tremor in your hands, and stomach problems. What specific measures can you take to build your confidence and reduce performance anxiety?

- 5 Outline a set of visual aids that you might use in an oral presentation on these topics:
 - a How to write a research report.
 - b The outlook for the economy over the next year.
 - c A major analytical article in the latest issue of *BusinessWeek*.
- 6 Your class team in research methods has completed a field project for a financial institution on branch location effectiveness. What questions about audience analysis should you answer as you plan your presentation?

Bringing Research to Life

- 7 Every presentation has its purpose. What was the purpose of Henry & Associates presentation to MindWriter?
- 8 How did the Henry & Associates presentation:
 - a Perform an audience analysis?
 - b Engage the audience?

From Concept to Practice

- 9 In your presentation to a venture capital company, you are pitching your research plan for a smartphone application that does short-term cash flow forecasts. Describe how you would use each type of supporting material to create interest, clarify your point, provide emphasis to a point, and offer proof that results in belief.
- 10 Using Exhibit 21-9, choose an appropriate graphing technique to show the difference between men's and women's attitudes on the top five Super Bowl ads. (You can find this listing on <http://adbowl.com>.)
- 11 You are creating slides for a presentation that is being given to seek a research contract with a leading toy manufacturer. Considering the following aspects of your presentation (introduction, problem to be solved, market opportunity, technology, manufacturing/production, financials, conclusion), create slides representing four of these areas using Exhibit 21-13.

From the Headlines

- 12 You are preparing to give a research presentation about the effectiveness of Toyota's advertising to restore public confidence in the wake of their delays in solving the

accelerator pedal malfunction and antilock braking problems for high-tech hybrid vehicles. Which of the patterns of organization would be appropriate for your purpose? Why?

- 13 At an Apple press event, Apple CEO Steve Jobs announces the iPad, a new mobile device that is a half-inch thin and weighs 1.5 pounds; plays movies, music, and TV shows; and acts as an e-reader. It is powered with a 1-GHz Apple chip and comes with Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity. Here are some quotes from his presentation:
 - "iPad is an awesome way to enjoy your music collection"
 - "You can discover music, you can purchase it, iTunes university . . . everything!"
 - "YouTube. You can watch YouTube on it!"
 - "It's awesome to watch TV and movies on."
 - "It's so much more intimate than a laptop, and so much more capable than a smart phone."
- a What rhetorical devices is Jobs using in his presentation?
- b How would you prepare the informational content and slides to announce the price?

>cases*

Inquiring Minds Want to Know—NOW!

Mastering Teacher Leadership

NCRCC: Teeing Up and New

Strategic Direction

Ohio Lottery: Innovative Research

Design Drives Winning

Proofpoint: Capitalizing on a Reporter's Love of Statistics

* You will find a description of each case in the Case Abstracts section of this textbook. Check the Case Index to determine whether a case provides data, the research instrument, video, or other supplementary material. Written cases are downloadable from the text website (www.mhhe.com/cooper11e). All video material and video cases are available from the Online Learning Center.