

## 4.3.6: Creating an Informative Presentation

### Learning Objectives

1. Discuss the parts of an informational presentation.
2. Understand the five parts of any presentation.

An informational presentation is common request in business and industry. It's the verbal and visual equivalent of a written report. Information sharing is part of any business or organization. Informative presentations serve to present specific information for specific audiences for specific goals or functions. The type of presentation is often identified by its primary purpose or function. Informative presentations are often analytical or involve the rational analysis of information. Sometimes they simply "report the facts" with no analysis at all, but still need to communicate the information in a clear and concise format. While a presentation may have conclusions, propositions, or even a call to action, the demonstration of the analysis is the primary function.

A sales report presentation, for example, is not designed to make a sale. It is, however, supposed to report sales to date and may forecast future sales based on previous trends.

An informative presentation does not have to be a formal event, though it can be. It can be generic and nonspecific to the audience or listener, but the more you know about your audience, the better. When you tailor your message to that audience, you zero in on your target and increase your effectiveness. The emphasis is on clear and concise communication, but it may address several key questions:

- Topic: Product or Service?
- Who are you?
- Who is the target market?
- What is the revenue model?
- What are the specifications?
- How was the information gathered?
- How does the unit work?
- How does current information compare to previous information?

Table 4.3.6.1 lists the five main parts or components of any presentation (McLean, S., 2003).

Table 4.3.6.1: Presentation Components and Their Functions

| Component           | Function   |
|---------------------|--|
| Attention Statement | Raise interest and motivate the listener                 |
| Introduction        | Communicate a point and common ground                    |
| Body                | Address key points                                       |
| Conclusion          | Summarize key points                                     |
| Residual Message    | Communicate central theme, moral of story, or main point |

You will need to address the questions to establish relevance and meet the audience's needs. The five parts of any speech will serve to help you get organized.

### Sample Speech Guidelines

Imagine that you have been assigned to give an informative presentation lasting five to seven minutes. Follow the guidelines in Table 4.3.6.2 and apply them to your presentation.

Table 4.3.6.2: Sample Speech Guidelines

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1. Topic | Choose a product or service that interests you, research it, and report your findings in your speech. |
|----------|---|

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 2. Purpose              | Your general purpose, of course, is to inform. But you need to formulate a more specific purpose statement that expresses a point you have to make about your topic—what you hope to accomplish in your speech.   |
| 3. Audience             | Think about what your audience might already know about your topic and what they may not know, and perhaps any attitudes toward or concerns about it. Consider how this may affect the way that you will present your information.  |
| 4. Supporting Materials | Using the information gathered in your search for information, determine what is most worthwhile, interesting, and important to include in your speech. Time limits will require that you be selective about what you use. <b>Use visual aids!</b>  |
| 5. Organization         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write a central idea statement that expresses the message, or point, that you hope to get across to your listeners in the speech.</li> <li>2. Determine the two to three main points that will be needed to support your central idea.</li> <li>3. Finally, prepare a complete sentence outline of the body of the speech.</li> </ol> |
| 6. Introduction         | Develop an opening that will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. get the attention and interest of your listeners,</li> <li>2. express your central idea or message,</li> <li>3. lead into the body of your speech.</li> </ol>  |
| 7. Conclusion           | The conclusion should review and/or summarize the important ideas in your speech and bring it to a smooth close.  |
| 8. Delivery             | The speech should be delivered extemporaneously (not reading but speaking), using speaking notes and not reading from the manuscript. Work on maximum eye contact with your listeners. Use any visual aids or handouts that may be helpful.   |

## Key Takeaway

Informative presentations illustrate, explain, describe, and instruct the audience on topics and processes.

## Exercises

1. Write a brief summary of a class or presentation you personally observed recently; include what you learned. Compare with classmates.
2. Search online for an informative speech or presentation that applies to business or industry. Indicate one part or aspect of the presentation that you thought was effective and one you would improve. Provide the link to the presentation in your post or assignment.
3. Pick a product or service and come up with a list of five points that you could address in a two-minute informative speech. Place them in rank order and indicate why.
4. With the points discussed in this chapter in mind, observe someone presenting a speech. What elements of their speech could you use in your speech? What elements would you not want to use? Why? Compare with a classmate.

## References

McLean, S. (2003). *The basics of speech communication*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

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