

Presentation Tips: Design and Structure

1. Relate every point to these two questions: (1) What's in it for me?; and (2) Why should I care?
2. The more your audience is the star, and not you, the more you'll be the star (It's a conundrum, of sorts, a little like Woody Allen's film, Love & Death, where 'Old Kopltnick' was actually younger than 'Young Kopltnick.' Go figure.)
3. When you can forget about "how you're doing" and totally focus on the audience, you've achieved a rare, and wonderful state of flow.
4. Nothing sells your points like STORIES. People think in story terms. History has been passed down in stories, as have ancient myths and traditions. According to Victoria Labalme, "The Bible was written in parables, not bullet points." Years after hearing a speech, it's the stories that are remembered, not "your third point on client service." Find the hidden message in 5 stories - and we all have them - and craft them into a speech.
5. You are one character in the drama, the audience is the other. Determine your "character," then find elements in you that also exist in the character.
6. Use quotes, pictures, and cartoons in your written handouts and slides (if used).
7. Make the connections for the audience; tell them what they're learning.
8. Statistics suggest that newspaper readers only read 1.5 out of 12 major articles in depth, and the one that gets read has the most intriguing title. Compare: Fundamentals of Estate Planning versus 11 Things You've Never Heard at an Estate Planning Seminar!
9. Use the Multiple Intelligences to increase understanding. Demonstrate with theatrics, let the audience experience the learning. Black and white, linear learning is akin to 8 track tapes in the 70s.
10. Use vignettes to show it can work with this particular audience.

11. Decide what kind of “entry point” you want to use when moving into a new area, e.g., experiential, aesthetic, quantitative, foundational, narrative, etc.
12. Use “Mind Maps” to formulate presentations.
13. To help illustrate a point, ask: “What is this like?” Then, use analogies to further clarify the point.
14. TED talks are less than 20 minutes. Pacing is critical.
15. Know your place on the agenda and, where possible, try to present at the time best for you and your audience.
16. Stay connected to your Throughline, i.e., the driving force behind your presentation.
17. Ask: What do I want the audience to KNOW? DO? FEEL?
18. Use the Constellation Technique.
19. Consider the “Mom/Daughter Talk Before the Wedding” when considering using slides.
20. Divide items in “threes.”
21. Create suspense. Like music, build tension and then resolve. Structure “Red Envelope Moments” where the audience waits to see the resolution and gets there at the same time.
22. Do you have a repeatable tag line or image?
23. Use “Tent Poles” to keep energy in the presentation.
24. Read “Slideology” by Nancy Duarte and watch her TED talk.
25. If you must use Powerpoint, use pictures not bullet points. And vastly reduce the number of slides.
26. Slides should be like a billboard, i.e., they convey a concept quickly.

27. Avoid walking in front of the screen or talking to it. 11.
28. Use vivid, sensory-rich language and really paint a picture of what you are conveying.