

2 Structuring your presentation

In this unit:

- using the Core Structure
- guiding your audience



2.1 Talking points

- 1 Before you watch the video, consider these questions.
What can make a presentation difficult to understand?
Do your presentations normally have a typical structure? What is it?
- 2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

2.2 The presentation

- 3 Marcus Stevenson, the Managing Director of the company Quartz Power Group, is talking to the heads of department about relocating the company's headquarters to another site at the town of Littlemore. As you watch, decide if the statements below are true (T) or false (F).
 - 1 The first point of his presentation is about dates and schedule. T / F
 - 2 The second point is about changes to working practices. T / F
 - 3 The third point is about the cost of relocation. T / F
 - 4 They have twelve months to complete the relocation. T / F
 - 5 The last department to move will be Marketing. T / F
 - 6 Managers will need to decide the deadlines for their departments. T / F
 - 7 Paul will be in charge of managing the flexitime policy. T / F
 - 8 The biggest concern for the managers is the deadline for relocation. T / F



2.3 The expert view

- 4 Before you watch Andrew describe how to structure a presentation, consider the questions below.

The Core Structure is a useful way to structure a presentation. Look at the illustration below. At which stages of the Core Structure do you think that you ...

- tell the audience what you're going to tell them?
- tell the audience what you've told them?
- tell the audience your key points?

The Core Structure



- 5 While you watch Andrew talk about structuring a presentation, check your answers about the Core Structure and make notes about the following questions.

- How much of your presentation will the audience probably remember?
- In the Core Structure, how many times do you repeat your key messages?
- Why is it important to announce the beginning and ending of each section? What two things does it achieve?
- In what ways can you show that one section is ending and another one is beginning?
- Andrew recaps three important points. What are they?

- _____
- _____
- _____

For a summary of the Core Structure, read the article on pages 52–53.

2.4 Analysis *- non necessarily to be done !!!*

- 6 While you watch Marcus's presentation again, evaluate his performance with this checklist.

The presenter ...

uses the Core Structure

tells the audience what he's going to tell them

guides the audience from one message to the next

changes his physical position to signal the end of a point

recaps the main message of a section to remind the audience

Is there anything you think the presenter could improve? _____

2.5 The expert feedback

- 7 How does Andrew's analysis of the presentation compare with yours?

Language focus

2.6 Structuring a presentation

- 1 In his presentation, Marcus uses the expressions below to guide the audience through the presentation. Match them to the correct section of his presentation.

| | |
|---|--------------|
| That is the end of my presentation ... | Introduction |
| Now today I'd like to talk to you about ... | |
| This brings me to my second point. | Messages |
| I'm going to go through three points. | |
| That more or less covers ... | |
| Let's move on to the last point ... | Conclusion |
| Let's leave that there for now, shall we? | |
| So let's start with ... | |
| First of all, I'll talk about ... | |
| Secondly, I'll cover ... | |
| And finally, I want to discuss ... | |

- 2 Now watch the presentation and check your answers.

Announcing the beginning and end of a message

- 3 As Andrew explained, you need to guide your audience by clearly introducing and ending a message and also by moving from one message to another. Look at the phrases in the *Messages* section of the table in 1. Put them in the correct category below.

| Introducing a message | Ending a message | Moving from one message to the next |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | |

- 4 Now look at some more phrases for guiding your audience. Add them to the correct part of the table in 3.

Moving on (from ...) to ... Now let's look at ... Now I'd like to consider ...
 That was my first point. Next I'd like to ... That covers all I wanted to say about ...
 Turning now to ... I'd like to begin by (examining) ... That's enough about ...

5 Read these sentences from different presentations. Replace the underlined phrase with an expression from the table in 3.

- 1 First of all, I'd like to start by talking about our new software and showing you how it works.
- 2 So I've told you how our new services work and now let's examine some of the benefits they'll bring to your company.
- 3 That's all I wanted to say about the closure of our plant in Ireland. So turning now to a more cheerful topic, I'd like to talk about ...
- 4 That more or less covers last month's sales results so now I'd like to consider my third and final point: our sales strategy for the coming year.
- 5 I've spoken enough about the sales targets for next year so I'll leave that there. Turning now to our current operation ...



Signposting

6 In his introduction, Marcus uses 'signposting' phrases that guide the audience and describe the structure of his presentation. For example:

'First of all, I'll talk about the key dates. Secondly, I'll cover some potential changes ... And finally, I want to discuss how the plan should be presented to all the staff ...'

He also tells the audience what he's told them:

'So, to sum up, the key to keeping people onside is openness and ...'

Match the 'signposting' words on the left with the phrases on the right with the same meaning. In some cases there is more than one answer.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Last of all | a To begin with / To start with |
| 2 Firstly / First of all | b To recap |
| 3 In conclusion | c Secondly / thirdly, etc. |
| 4 Next | d To conclude |
| 5 To sum up | e Finally / Lastly |

7 Complete the introduction and conclusion below using the phrases in 6. In some cases there is more than one answer.

I'm going to talk about three main points. ¹ _____, I'd like to look at some of the problems of introducing a flexitime scheme for your company. ² _____, I intend to outline the advantages for your staff and business. And ³ _____, I'll go through how our firm can help you to implement such change. Note that I'll be referring to the handout in front of you as we go ...

... so, ⁴ _____, we've looked at how this scheme would affect your working practices. We've outlined how these changes might be implemented and I've taken you through what my company could do to help you with this process. ⁵ _____, I'd just like to point out that while change may cause problems in the short term, in the long run I believe it will bring significant benefits. Now, does anyone have any questions?

TIP

So ..., Well ..., OK ..., Now ..., Right ...

We often use these words in presentations to:

- fill a moment of silence while you pause to think about your next point.
- introduce the transition to the next point.
- stop the audience talking so that they listen to you.

Presentation task

Prepare a short presentation. You can use a presentation you have given in the past or one that you are going to give. Make notes in this table.

| |
|--|
| Introduction – What is the main purpose of your presentation? What three points are you going to talk about? |
| Message 1? |
| Message 2? |
| Message 3? |
| Conclusion – What were your three points? What do you want your audience to do next? |

Alternative task

If you do not have a current presentation, think of a change you would like to make in your workplace. Include:

- Introduction – What change are you going to make?
- Message 1 – Why do you need to make this change?
- Message 2 – How will it be implemented? What will managers and staff need to do?
- Message 3 – What are the key dates and basic schedule for it?
- Conclusion

Your presentation is about five minutes long. Try to use some of the useful phrases listed below.

Useful phrases

Introducing the presentation

Hello / Good morning everyone.
 Thank you for coming.
 Today I want to talk about ...
 I'm going to cover three points ...
 First of all ..., Secondly ..., And finally...

Introducing a message

Let's start with ...
 Now I'd like to talk to about ...
 Let's look at ...
 I'm going to talk about ...
 In this first / next part of the presentation ...

Move on to your next message

That leads me on to my next point ...
 Let's move on to my next point.
 Moving on to ... / Turning to ...
 That brings me to ...
 Now let's look at / talk about ...
 So, next ...

Ending a message

So, that covers ...
 Let's leave that there.
 That's everything I want to say about ...
 That's all I wanted to say about ...
 So, I've reached the end of ...

Ending and concluding

That's the end of my presentation.
 So, we've looked at / talked about ...
 As I have pointed out ...
 To sum up ...
 In conclusion ...
 Do you have any questions?

Analysis

Use this analysis form as a checklist when you prepare your presentation. If you are working with other people on a course, ask someone to complete it for you while they watch your presentation.

The introduction

- Was the main purpose of the presentation clear?
- Did the presenter tell the audience what he / she was going to talk about?

Improvement notes: _____

Message 1

- Did the presenter introduce the first message?
- Did he / she clearly end the first message?

Improvement notes: _____

Message 2

- Did the presenter move on to and introduce the second message?
- Did he / she clearly end the second message?

Improvement notes: _____

Message 3

- Did the presenter move on to and introduce the third message?
- Did he / she clearly end the second message?

Improvement notes: _____

Conclusion

- Did the presenter summarize what he / she said in each message?
- Was it clear what the presenter wanted the audience to do as a result of the presentation?

Improvement notes: _____

Self-assessment

After your presentation, spend a few minutes thinking about your performance and make notes about the questions below.

1 What did I do well?

2 What do I need to work on for next time?

3 What have I learned from watching other people's presentations?
