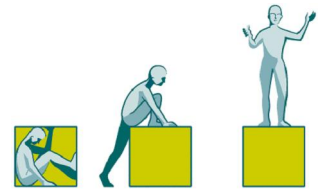


How to Plan a Presentation in Half the Time

By Tony Burns and Olivia Mitchell
Effective Speaking

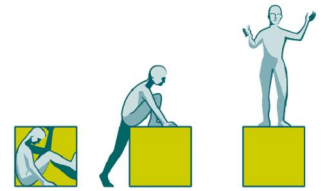
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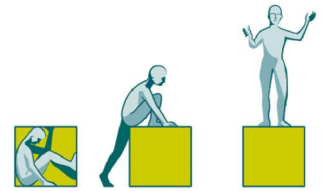


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Overview

The Problem - Why traditional planning doesn't work

Many people struggle to put together a presentation. It takes them far too long and doesn't result in an engaging and persuasive presentation.

A key problem is that they try to deliver too much information in a presentation. It can be hard to prioritise what should go in a presentation, and the easy solution is to include everything. But delivering all this information to your audience is likely to overwhelm them. Imagine your knowledge is a lump of dough. It's as if you took the entire lump and threw it at the audience. To put together an effective presentation, you'll need to discard most of what you know on your topic. There is a difference between your knowledge and the content that should go into your presentation. To continue the dough metaphor, roll out your dough (your knowledge) and then take a cookie cutter and precisely cut out the pieces that you want to go into the presentation. Discard the rest.

Time-saver tip



Some people like to brainstorm to gather material for their presentation. We don't recommend this. Part of the art of preparing a presenting is rigorous editing. If you try and capture everything you know on the topic, you'll need to spend more time later cutting information out of your presentation.

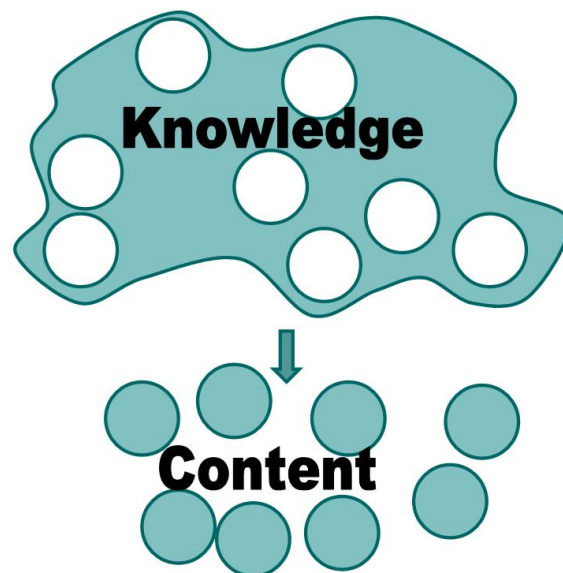
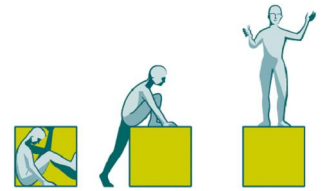


Fig 1. Use a cookie cutter to cut out the pieces of your knowledge you need.



The Solution – “Presenting by Boxes”

The Effective Speaking system called “Presenting by Boxes” will help you do this. Here’s an overview of the system:



Fig 2. The Presenting by Boxes system

You’ll construct your presentation by filling in the boxes. Here’s a preview of the boxes:

Setting the Scene

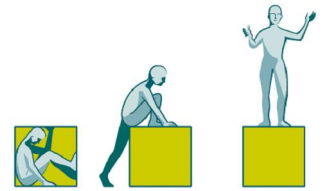
In Setting the Scene you’ll introduce your topic and get the audience ready to listen to your presentation.

Key Message

Your Key Message is the main point that you want to get across to your audience. You’ll see that the Key Message box is there twice. You repeat your Key Message at the end of the presentation to help the audience remember it.

Boxes 1, 2 and 3

You’ll organise the information to support your Key Message into three boxes of information. We’ll show you two different ways of doing this.



The Benefits of Presenting by Boxes

This Presenting by Boxes system will save you preparation time and help you create a presentation which is engaging and easy to follow. It helps you at every stage of your presentation:

Stage	Action	Benefits
Planning	Fill the boxes with pieces of your knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •You'll save time. •Ensures you don't include too much information. •Ensures a logical flow.
Rehearsal	Visualise the boxes in your mind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Easy to remember.
Delivery	Transfer the boxes to the audience members' minds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Easy to follow for the audience. •If you have a mind blank or start waffling, you can visualise your boxes to get started again. •If you run out of time, you can edit on the fly by summarising or skipping a box.