



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Presentations have many purposes, including promoting a new business or idea, reporting on the status of projects or product performance, helping management and employees stay informed about business policies, or selling a product or service. Presentations give you opportunities to connect deeply with your audiences and convey and control your messages carefully.

Presentations place a spotlight on you and allow you to maintain and even build your credibility. When you clearly know what you're talking about, audiences judge you as competent. When you show that you are interested in the needs of your audience, they judge you as caring. When you offer your views honestly and transparently, audiences judge you as having character.

Although speaking is a normal part of every day for you, making business presentations is not necessarily automatic or natural. As speech expert Thomas Leech explained, "Developing proficiency in oral communications doesn't occur automatically. The ability to speak may have come much as did walking and breathing, but speaking well to groups is another matter."¹ As you read this chapter, identify the areas that will help you most in developing your presentation skills. This chapter focuses on planning your content. The next one focuses on delivering that content effectively.

Read the chapter case about Latisha Jackson and her plans to develop a presentation about transitioning from annual performance reviews to continuous reviews.

Hear Pete Cardon explain why this matters.
bit.ly/cardon14

LO14.1 Describe how planning your presentations leads to credibility.



CHAPTER CASE PLANNING A PRESENTATION AT EASTMOND NETWORKING



WHO'S INVOLVED

Latisha Jackson



HR Intern

- Hired for a summer internship to work on employee programs
- Double majoring in human resource management and health education

Jeff Brody



HR Director

- Worked as HR director at Eastmond Networking for the past five years

Eastmond Networking holds performance evaluations for employees once per year. Jeff sees the results of the company's internal, anonymous employee survey each year. Each year, he notices that employees do not like the performance



THE SITUATION

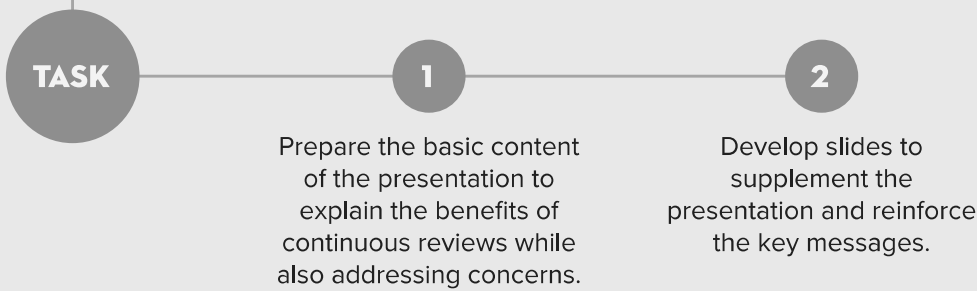
(Latisha Jackson character): LWA/Larry Williams/Blend Images LLC; (Jeff Brody character): Dougal Waters/Digital Vision/Getty Images

evaluations. They think the evaluations are not fair and do not help them improve. Jeff has talked to several human resource (HR) directors and learned that many companies now use continuous performance reviews with a lot of success. To learn more about and help transition to continuous performance reviews, he asked Latisha Jackson to help formulate a plan for this transition.

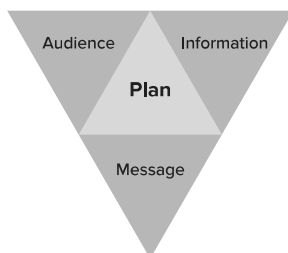
Over an approximately six-week period, Latisha collected information about continuous reviews from other companies and software vendors. She also ran a few employee focus groups and helped conduct a detailed employee survey about performance reviews. Jeff has asked her to develop a presentation about continuous reviews to deliver at a senior management meeting. The meeting will include roughly 15 of the company's leaders, most of whom Latisha has not met in person. They expect a data-driven presentation. Jeff recently told Latisha that he was so impressed with her performance that he might be able to open a permanent position for her. Latisha hopes that a strong presentation will improve her chances of getting a permanent spot on the Eastmond team.

Jeff tells Latisha that the senior managers will most likely have the following major objections to continuous reviews: (1) they won't promote candid feedback, (2) they won't get support from managers, and (3) they will cost too much. Jeff believes that senior managers will support initiatives that improve employee engagement because a consulting firm recently surveyed employees and concluded that Eastmond's employees were below average in all measures of engagement.

Later, once the senior managers have approved the new review system, Jeff asks Latisha to deliver a presentation to the employees. This presentation should be less data-driven and more motivational.



Applying the AIM Planning Process for Presentations



As you design your presentations and speeches, the AIM planning process will help you, just as it does in the writing process. You'll analyze your *audience* to make sure you're addressing audience members' needs and speaking to them in the way that is most appealing and easy to learn. You'll gather and develop your *information* and ideas by identifying the key facts and conclusions related to your topic. You'll also develop your *message* to focus on the key takeaway concepts and to provide supporting points throughout. In this chapter, we do not focus on developing your ideas, since this process is largely similar to that for writing. We instead discuss analyzing your audience and structuring your message since these processes have some unique features for presentations. Then, we discuss designing electronic slides since these are commonly included in many professional presentations.

Analyze Your Audience and Gather the Right Information

Understanding the needs of your audience is one of your first tasks as you develop your presentations. Of course, this is complicated by a variety of factors. Your audiences for presentations may differ in size and makeup, and in some cases, you won't know who they will be. As you do your homework about the audience, answer the following questions to the degree possible:

How Will Audience Members Benefit from the Product, Service, or Ideas I Am Proposing? This is the single most important question to guide you as you design your presentation. In particular, focus on benefits that fulfill an unmet need.²

In Latisha's case, she will focus primarily on improving employee engagement. Senior managers know this is a problem at Eastmond. She will explain that annual reviews lower engagement and continuous reviews improve engagement.

What Do the Audience Members Already Know about My Product, Service, or Ideas? Find out whatever you can about your audience members' knowledge level. If people know little about your product, you will need to spend a proportionately higher amount of your presentation time to inform them. Also, try to find out where they have gotten their information or how they have developed their perceptions about the topic. Knowing this allows you to more effectively deal with misinformation.

In Latisha's case, she thinks that senior managers don't know much about continuous performance reviews. She will need to explain the benefits clearly. Also, since continuous reviews depend on software platforms, she'll need to show the managers how these platforms operate. She assumes that these managers may not be able to visualize how the systems work unless she shows pictures or does a live demo.

What Are My Audience Members' Chief Concerns? Considering this question is particularly important for presentations. Whereas you can take time to gather your thoughts when responding in writing to someone's concerns, in presentations and other face-to-face communications you must respond immediately.

Latisha was wise to ask Jeff about the senior managers' chief concerns. Jeff told her they'd be worried about the candidness or accuracy of continuous reviews, support from managers, and cost.

Who Are the Key Decision Makers? Your presentation is generally intended to draw support from your whole audience. Typically, however, some people in your audience have more impact on your ability to achieve your work objectives than do others. These key decision makers are the ones you want to influence the most.

For internal presentations, think about those individuals who have the most influence and authority to act on your ideas. For presentations to clients, customers, and prospects, think about which individuals are the decision makers for their organizations or who you perceive as the most likely prospects for future business. Focus most of your attention on them.³

Once again, Latisha can rely on Jeff to identify which senior managers will have the most impact on whether continuous reviews get support. Latisha can think of ways to tailor her presentation to these individuals.

What Will Appeal to Your Audience? You can influence your audience by employing a combination of emotional and analytical appeals. Oral communications, especially speeches and presentations, are well suited to strong emotional appeal, as they create bonds between the speaker and the audience and emotional connections with products, services, and ideas. At the same time, your speeches and presentations will include a set of ideas that you want your audience to appreciate analytically. Plan to make both emotional and analytical connections with your audience.

LO14.2 Analyze presentation audiences in terms of message benefits, learning styles, and communicator styles.



Visit <http://connect.mheducation.com> for an exercise on this topic.

Principles of Audience Analysis

Identify the following:

- Audience benefits
- Existing knowledge
- Concerns
- Decision makers
- Appeals
- Communicator style
- Learning style

As you're thinking about emotional and analytical appeals, consider the motivational value systems (MVSs) of your audience members (see Chapter 2). Professionals with red MVSs will appreciate your ability to stay on point and discuss immediate goals. Emotionally and analytically, they are attracted to action-oriented and results-oriented language and logic. They generally think concise and confident presentations are more persuasive.

Professionals with blue MVSs will appreciate your ability to discuss business relationships—such as benefits to work teams and colleagues and loyalty to customers and clients. Emotionally, blues will connect to you with your use of “we” language and other relationship-centered terms. Analytically, blues will connect with your holistic approach to business benefits. They are attracted to business logic that includes more than just bottom-line measures of performance.

Professionals with green MVSs will appreciate your ability to provide all of the facts and avoid rushing to judgment about conclusions. Greens generally pride themselves on a dispassionate (nonemotional) approach to decision making and may be turned off by what they consider blatant and irrelevant appeals to emotion. However, this in no way implies that emotional appeal is unimportant to thinkers. Greens are often emotionally connected to precise language; well-designed and conceptualized charts, models, and other figures; and the ability to handle tough questions.

Professionals with hub MVSs are most common. Hubs are by nature pragmatic and flexible. They prefer a presentation that holds clear business logic with an emphasis on benefits to people—clients, customers, colleagues, and others. They prefer option-oriented language. Excessively confident language is often interpreted by hubs as arrogant or rigid.

What Is the Learning Style of Your Audience? As with motivational value systems, audience members have different learning styles. **Visual learners**, who make up about 40 percent of the population, learn best from illustrations and simple diagrams that show relationships and key ideas. They also enjoy gestures and metaphors. Ironically, text-based PowerPoint slides do not appeal to them much. On the other hand, PowerPoint slides rich in images and figures do help visual learners respond to your message. **Auditory learners**, who also comprise roughly 40 percent of the population, like loud, clear voices and believe emotion is best conveyed through voice. **Kinesthetic learners**, who make up about 20 percent of the population, need to participate to focus their attention on your message and learn best. They need group activities, hands-on activities, or breaks at least every 20 minutes.⁴



Learning about the needs, concerns, priorities, and learning styles of your audience members is a critical first step for an effective presentation.

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock

Latisha can plan a presentation that appeals to all types of learners. She can use a variety of images and diagrams to appeal to visual learners, speak with energy and conviction to appeal to auditory learners, and provide handouts for participants to fill out to appeal to kinesthetic learners.

What Information Do I Need to Gather? As you ask questions about your audience, you'll naturally create a list of information you need. As with other types of messages, make sure to also create a list of research questions that helps you develop the content of your presentation. As mentioned in the opening case to this chapter, Latisha spent about six weeks gathering information about annual performance reviews versus continuous reviews.

Develop Your Message

As with written reports, successful presentations rely on well-developed takeaway messages, supporting information, and structure. You'll get lots of advice during your career about how to deliver a successful presentation. Much of this advice is good because delivery is important. However, developing your content is still the most critical factor in presentation success, so prepare your content before you spend too much time on your delivery.⁵

Identify a Few Takeaway Messages Your first task is to identify the two or three key messages you want to convey. Once you've developed these key messages, everything in the presentation should lead back to them.⁶ Particularly for presenting to busy executives, summarize your key takeaway messages at the outset and reemphasize them several times.⁷

Overall, your presentation will be most effective if you focus on how your key messages relate to the common interests of your audience. At the same time, be cautious about trying to please everyone. Some presenters broaden their messages in an attempt to appeal to everyone in the audience. This approach is risky, however, since broadening the message so much may dilute its impact and power.⁸

In Latisha's case, she frames her message in the following way: Continuous reviews increase employee engagement. She has a few key takeaway messages to support this idea: Continuous reviews provide more accurate and more motivating feedback; continuous reviews make managers' jobs easier; and continuous reviews are relatively inexpensive.

Structure Your Presentation with a Clear Preview, View, and Review Most audience members expect your presentation to include a **preview**, view, and review (analogous to the introduction, body, and conclusion in written documents). Typically, your preview occupies roughly 10 to 15 percent of your presentation time, your view takes up the vast majority (85 to 90 percent) of your time, and the review takes up the least time (5 percent).

Provide a Compelling Preview

The beginnings of your presentations and speeches are critical. Audience members who do not know you well often form quick impressions about you and your message. Even people who know you fairly well generally decide quickly if your message is important to them. Dana LaMon, who lost his sight at the age of four but went on to achieve a highly successful career as a judge and professional speaker, suggests that audiences make up their minds in the first minute or two of the presentation:

As an administrative law judge for 26 years, I have heard and written decisions in about 6,400 cases. My unscientific estimate is that in about 95 percent of them, I knew what I would decide before the hearing was over. After 19 years in Toastmasters and 16 years as a professional speaker, I have learned that the audience, too, will make quick decisions. They will judge a speaker and his or her speech well before the presentation is done. That is why I have come to believe that the most important part of my speech is the opening.⁹

Components of Presentations

- Preview (10–15 percent of time)
 - Attention-getter
 - Positioning statement
 - Overview: Takeaway messages
- View (85–90 percent of time)
 - Takeaway message #1
 - Takeaway message #2
 - Takeaway message #3
- Review (5 percent of time)
 - Recap
 - Call to action

LO14.3 Organize and gather content for a preview, view, and review.



 **connect**

Visit <http://connect.mheducation.com> for an exercise on this topic.

In other words, during that first few minutes, audience members have their answers to the following questions: Am I going to listen? Am I going to benefit from what is said? Will it be valuable enough to take with me? Am I going to act on what I hear?

The *preview* should generally include an attention-getter, a positioning statement, and an overview. The preview should accomplish the following: create interest, show benefits, demonstrate value, and encourage action (all related to the four questions in the prior paragraph).

Choose an Effective Attention-Getter In research among executives, the factors most likely to attract their attention were the following: The message was personalized, it evoked an emotional response, it came from a trustworthy source, and it was concise. In particular, personalized and emotion-evoking attention-getters led executives to pay close attention to presentations more than twice as often.¹⁰

Stephen Denning, one of the world's foremost authorities on leadership communication, spent decades working for the World Bank. While leading World Bank initiatives and meeting leaders throughout the world, he learned that influence in presentations depends heavily on first garnering attention. He explained:

Successful leaders communicate very differently from the traditional, abstract approach to communication. In all kinds of settings, they communicate by following a hidden pattern: first, they get attention. Then they stimulate desire, and only then do they reinforce with reasons.¹¹

The primary goals of attention-getters are to get your audience members emotionally invested in your presentation and engaged in thinking about your ideas. Table 14.1 focuses on seven types of attention-getters that Latisha could use in her presentation: rhetorical questions, vivid examples, dramatic demonstrations, testimonials or quotations, intriguing statistics, unexpected exercises, and challenges. This is not a comprehensive list; however, these strategies are among the most effective.¹² Think about how you might use each option in a presentation.

People enjoy humor in presentations. Generally, however, avoid opening with jokes. Few people do well when they open with jokes. Communication specialist Nick Morgan explains:

You need to start with something clever enough to catch everyone's attention, but you're at your most nervous, and thus it's hard to shine like you want to. So how to get started? The traditional advice—still followed by many business speakers—is to begin with a joke. . . . For everyone except the professional comedian, this is bad counsel indeed. You're at your worst in terms of nerves. Don't compound the problem by setting for yourself one of the most difficult public speaking chores of all right off the bat: Delivering a punch line with brilliant comic timing. It's extremely difficult to do under the best of circumstances—even for seasoned professionals.¹³

Even if you're one of the rare breed of people who can consistently pull them off, opening jokes may have unintended consequences. Audience members may remember your jokes more than your key messages, so if you choose a humorous opening, tie it to your key messages.

Starting with an overwhelming set of facts and numbers or telling the story of your company may not be particularly effective either. If you choose to give background on your company, do so concisely, and make sure you connect the story of your company to the needs of your audience.¹⁴

Creating a Positioning Statement A **positioning statement** frames your message in appealing terms to your audience members and demonstrates clear and valuable benefits to them. The positioning statement should be as concise as possible—ideally one to two sentences. With the attention-getter, you engage and capture interest. With the positioning statement, you demonstrate that your presentation is worth paying close attention to for its entirety.

TABLE 14.1

Types of Effective Attention-Getters

Attention-Getter	Example
Rhetorical question	Have any of you ever thought your performance review wasn't fair? Or, have you ever dreaded delivering a performance review? As we started looking at research about annual reviews, we found that most employees <i>and</i> managers don't think annual reviews improve performance. This attention-getter immediately evokes thinking about personal experiences for audience members. It focuses on an unmet need (using performance reviews to improve performance). It is also concise: It takes roughly 20 seconds to deliver (42 words).
Vivid example	We held two focus groups with employees about their views of annual reviews. Right at the start of the first focus group, one of the employees whom everyone recognizes as devoted, reliable, and friendly, simply said, "The reviews don't help us at all." Every person in the group nodded their heads. Nearly every comment I heard from employees came back to this simple theme: Annual reviews don't help the employees perform better, be more motivated, or be more invested in their work. This example captures the attention of the audience with its vivid, story-based description of what employees really think. Many audience members would take this example seriously. This example would take roughly 30 to 35 seconds to deliver (82 words).
Dramatic demonstration	(Live demo of the software) Some of you are probably wondering what makes continuous reviews possible. We can do it with a variety of software platforms. If you look at the screen, I'm going to take two to three minutes to demo how the platform works. You'll see how employees get immediate, helpful, and accurate feedback . . . This attention-getter gives the audience a tangible sense of how the platform can produce continuous, helpful feedback. This demonstration is delivered in a few minutes. Latisha should be prepared to demonstrate the technology rapidly or she'll lose the interest of audience members.
Testimonial or quotation	Managers at many companies say transitioning to continuous reviews has dramatically improved performance and morale. I talked to three HR directors who started using continuous review systems in the past few years. Janna Leahy, the HR director at Peakster Computing, told me that the company has increased billable hours in the consulting division by 35 percent. She attributes this to the coaching and motivating environment of continuous reviews. She said continuous reviews create an "enjoyable culture of performance." This short statement focuses on the testimonial of an HR manager who implemented a similar solution. The statement emphasizes a dramatic rise in profitability, which appeals to senior managers emotionally and rationally. It would take just 30 seconds to deliver (77 words). Ideally, a compelling video testimonial would be provided as well.
Intriguing statistic	It's no secret that employees don't think annual reviews are accurate indicators of their performance. In fact, roughly 50 to 75 percent of employees say this in various surveys. But, did you know that nearly 50 percent of HR managers don't even think annual reviews are accurate? This attention-getter focuses on a compelling but likely expected statistic about employees (50 to 75 percent don't think annual reviews are accurate indicators of their performance) and an unexpected statistic about HR managers (nearly 50 percent of HR managers don't even think annual reviews are accurate). These statistics rapidly create the message that annual reviews aren't considered reliable by all parties involved—the employees who receive them or managers who administer them. This concise statement takes roughly 20 seconds to deliver (47 words).
Unexpected exercise	As we get started, I'd like each of you to answer two questions with the person sitting next to you. First, ask your partner, "What was the worst experience you've had getting a performance review?" Then ask, "What was the best experience you've had getting a performance review?" This quick exercise gets participants talking right away about topics that are central to the presentation: performance, motivation, and management. This exercise may also get participants to open up and relax. Another benefit for Latisha is she can now adapt her presentation to the needs of her audience more effectively. This is a great approach for kinesthetic learners.

TABLE 14.1

(Continued)

Attention-Getter	Example
Challenge	Today I'm going to talk about transitioning from annual reviews to continuous reviews. I'm going to show you some new tools to provide feedback and coaching on a daily basis. Once I explain the tools, I'm going ask each of you to describe how you think this would impact your teams. This is a direct challenge to audience members to conceptualize and envision how the tools apply to their own teams. This approach will help many of the audience members become more engaged and active during the presentation. This is a concise opening at just 20 seconds or so (51 words).

In Latisha's case, she selects the following positioning statement: "Today I'm going to discuss how continuous reviews can significantly increase employee engagement. I'm also going to share our plan to implement continuous reviews throughout the company by January 2020." This positioning statement speaks directly to the needs of the senior managers. It employs positive and upbeat language.

Providing an Overview Statement The final part of the preview is the overview. Ideally, you can state your overview in one to three sentences in simple, conversational language. Immediately after Latisha makes her positioning statement, she provides an overview: "We'll discuss how continuous reviews provide more accurate and more motivating feedback; how continuous reviews make managers' jobs easier; and how continuous reviews are relatively inexpensive." This overview segments the presentation in terms of three key benefits or takeaway messages. These benefits are easy to remember and help audience members think about the benefits to their units within the company.

Justify Your Views

The majority of your presentation will be devoted to expressing and supporting your **views**—your two, three, or four key messages. Recognize that many of your audience members are skeptical. After all, you will likely be asking them to commit to your products, services, or ideas at the expense of their time, money, or other resources. In other words, you are generally asking people to take some type of professional and/or personal risk. Make sure you can back up your main positions with strong support material, including specific cases or examples, stories and illustrations, analogies, statistics and facts, quotations, or your own professional experiences.¹⁵

Use support materials in moderation, however. You can easily overwhelm your audience. Furthermore, most audience members prefer certain types of supporting material during presentations. For example, personalized case studies are more likely to influence audience members than statistics. At the same time, avoid any weak evidence, since that will undermine your case, and be prepared with additional support material if audience members request it.¹⁶ Furthermore, gain a sense of your audience members' preferences. For example, professionals with green MVSs are typically more influenced by quantitative information whereas professionals with blue MVSs are typically more influenced by personal experiences.

Executive communication coach Roly Grimshaw observes that the most serious mistake business managers make is to present the evidence (numbers, statistics, facts) first, or only the evidence, and leave out their primary conclusions or central positions.¹⁷ A

Components of PREP Method

- Position
- Reasons
- Example
- Position

TABLE 14.2

The PREP Method

	Sample Statements
Step 1: Position	With annual reviews, our employees often get feedback when it's too late to make any changes. With continuous reviews from managers and peers, our employees will receive constant feedback—positive and negative—that will help them improve their performance right away.
Step 2: Reasons	Many HR professionals in recent years have found that the timing of feedback, the amount of positive feedback, and feedback from a variety of colleagues all contribute to better performance.
Step 3: Example	Let me give you a quick example at Peakster Computing. Janna Leahy, the HR director, estimated that productivity increased by 15 to 20 percent because of continuous reviews. After using continuous reviews for one year, Janna conducted a complete evaluation of the types of feedback that employees received. Here's what she found. First, employees said that feedback was “actionable.” Before implementing continual reviews, employee surveys showed that only 23 percent of employees agreed with the statement <i>I've improved my performance due to performance reviews</i>. After a year of continuous reviews, employee surveys showed that 92 percent of employees agreed with the statement <i>I've improved my performance due to continuous reviews</i>. Clearly, the employees see value in this feedback. Janna estimates that employees now receive approximately 12 times more feedback throughout the course of a year! Of this feedback, roughly 80 percent is positive feedback and roughly 20 percent is negative or suggestion-based. She thinks that the positive feedback serves as motivation and confirmation of employee strengths. One concern many people have of continual feedback is that colleagues won't be candid about suggestions for one another's improvement. Janna has found this simply isn't the case. It's true most comments are positive. But, employees at her company regularly give tough love to each other. Janna estimates that the average employee last year received 31 clear recommendations about how to improve performance from fellow managers and employees. Now, compare that to an annual review from a single manager's viewpoint where an employee might get 5 to 6 suggestions. Finally, the amount of positive and negative feedback makes a huge difference. Janna estimates that employees now receive approximately 55 times more feedback throughout the course of a year! Of this feedback, roughly 80 percent is positive feedback and roughly 20 percent is negative or suggestion-based. She thinks that the positive feedback serves as motivation and confirmation of employee strengths. One concern many people have of continual feedback is that colleagues won't be candid about suggestions for one another's improvement. Janna has found this simply isn't the case. It's true most comments are positive. But, employees at her company regularly give tough love to each other. Janna estimates that the average employee last year received 22 clear recommendations about how to improve performance from fellow managers and employees. Now, compare that to an annual review from a single manager's viewpoint where an employee might get three to four suggestions.
Step 4: Position	So, we anticipate the same results here at Eastmond. Continuous reviews will ensure each employee gets more constructive feedback more often. We expect this helpful feedback will increase the performance level of our employees.

more successful approach is the **PREP method**, which involves stating your *position*, providing the *reasons*, giving an *example* or providing evidence, and then restating your *position*.¹⁸ Table 14.2 provides an instance of the PREP method from Latisha's presentation. As you read through this example, think about what Latisha gains from starting and ending with her position.

Conclude with an Effective Review

The **review** comprises a small percentage of your presentation time. However, make sure to have a strong finish—this is the place where you are hoping to gain buy-in on specific actions. First, you will recap your message in just a few sentences. Then, you'll provide a call to action, where you'll ask the audience members to make specific commitments. For example, Latisha ends with the following call to action: "Thank you for your time and thoughts today. Jeff and I want to continue getting your feedback as we select a software vendor and start the pilot phase. We'll send updates and requests for feedback every few weeks. Please feel free to contact us with more of your ideas about making continuous reviews work effectively." This call to action is polite and sincere. It shows genuine interest in getting the input of others.

LO14.4 Develop effective slide presentations.



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Visit <http://connect.mheducation.com> for an exercise on this topic.

Design Appealing Slides

Businesspeople frequently use PowerPoint or other electronic slide presentations as visual aids for their presentations (see the Technology Tips feature for alternatives to PowerPoint). The reason for doing so is compelling. Good visuals can increase communication effectiveness and persuasiveness by about 50 percent.¹⁹ After all, about 75 percent of what people learn comes visually; 12 percent through hearing; and 12 percent through smell, taste, and touch.²⁰

However, poorly designed or poorly selected visuals can actually detract from presentation effectiveness.²¹ While the use of electronic slides is often effective and nearly ubiquitous for business presentations, take caution. People in the workplace sometimes mock poor electronic slide presentations as *suffering death by PowerPoint*. Consider some of the comments in Figure 14.1 from business leaders.²²

While well-designed electronic slide presentations can dramatically increase audience learning, poorly designed ones can draw intense negative reactions, as evidenced by the quotations in Figure 14.1. Make sure your electronic slide presentations aid rather than detract from your presentation objectives. Consider the following advice as you design your slides:

You Are the Focus of Your Presentation From the beginning of the design process, resist the urge to make your slides the primary focal point; they are just an aid. Ideally, audience members will focus their eyes on you for the majority of the presentation. Consider the comments of Judith Humphrey, a prominent executive trainer:

Great leaders understand that they are the best visual. They instinctively know that their message will come through best if the audience looks at them and listens to them—with no distractions. Audiences that divide their attention will only be able to partially commit to you. PowerPoint slides are usually a dumbed-down version of the narrative script you are delivering. Visuals rely on bullet points; you speak in full sentences, with illustrations and stories. Slides are dispassionate; your voice and gestures provide passion and emphasis. So in deflecting the audience's attention away from you to the bullet points, you're reducing the quality of your material and its impact on the audience.²³

Create a Storyboard with Your PowerPoint Slide Titles Make sure that your presentations *tell a story* to your audience. To check whether your slides provide a flowing narrative rather than a disjointed set of ideas, line up your slide titles (see Table 14.3). Ask yourself whether the slide titles move naturally through the narrative of your presentation.²⁴

Latisha sets up her slides in a pattern that is solution-oriented. The order of these slides includes the elements of a classic narrative of persuasion: attention, need and solution, rationale, counterpoints, and call to action (see Chapter 10). Also, notice how the slides position Latisha to tell the story of continuous reviews. Stories contain

I actively despise how people use PowerPoint as a crutch. I think PowerPoint can be a way to cover up sloppy thinking, which makes it hard to differentiate between good ideas and bad ideas. I would much rather have somebody write something longhand, send it in ahead of the meeting and then assume everybody's read it, and then you start talking, and let them defend it. The question from the beginning of the meeting to the end of the meeting is, "Have we added value: yes or no?" And I would say that if the meeting is mostly the presentation of a deck of PowerPoint slides, you conveyed information, but you didn't actually add value.

—Cristóbal Conde, former CEO of SunGard

I prefer that people not go through a slide deck. If you're working in an area, and you are running a business, you ought to be able to stand up there and tell me about your business without referring to a big slide deck. When you are speaking, people should focus on you and focus on the message. They can't walk away remembering a whole bunch of different things, so you have to have three or four really key messages that you take them through, and you remind them of what's important.

—James J. Schiro, director at PepsiCo

Death by PowerPoint occurs because of the bullet trap. Speakers and presenters often reduce their presentations to series of bullets and thoughts in outline form. As a result, they often bore their audiences and lose connection with their audiences.

—Ellen Finkelstein, communication specialist

FIGURE 14.1

Avoiding Death by PowerPoint

TABLE 14.3

Setting Up Slide Titles to Help You Make a Smooth, Logical Presentation

Slide #	Title	Story Line
1	Improving Employee Engagement: Transitioning to Continuous Reviews and Recognition	<i>Positive overarching theme in the title slide:</i> higher employee engagement
2	Benefits of Employee Engagement	<i>Attention:</i> shows the benefits of increasing employee engagement
3	Problems with Annual Reviews	<i>Need:</i> shows how the current approach of annual reviews does not improve employee engagement
4	Our Employees' Views of Annual Reviews	<i>Need:</i> shows current disenchantment with annual reviews at this company
5	Benefits of Continuous Reviews	<i>Solution:</i> shows how continuous review systems overcome the problems of annual reviews and increase employee engagement
6	Our Employees' Views of Continuous Reviews	<i>Solution:</i> shows how continuous review systems have support from the employees
7	Positive, Helpful, and Candid Feedback	<i>Rationale/counterpoints:</i> describes the nature of feedback; addresses concerns that a new system won't promote candid feedback
8	Ease of Use for Managers	<i>Rationale/counterpoints:</i> describes how the system gets buy-in from managers; addresses concerns that a new system won't get support from managers
9	Cost-Effectiveness	<i>Rationale/counterpoints:</i> describes the costs of a system; addresses concerns that a new system costs too much
10	Proposed Implementation	<i>Call to action:</i> uses a timeline to identify implementation

answers to the questions *who? what? when? where?* and *why?* Latisha will engage her audience with responses to all these types of questions.

Setting out the titles in this storyboard approach helps you see which slides you really need. A common misperception of electronic slide presentations is that more is better. In fact, using fewer slides can help you tell the story more effectively. As one recruiter in a recent *Wall Street Journal* study stated, “Students seem to think a better grade is assigned based on the number of slides in a presentation. In real life, you have 10 minutes to present to management. If you can’t get the whole story in that time on two or three slides, you’re dead in your career.”²⁵

In Latisha’s presentation (see Figure 14.2), she uses a total of ten slides—one slide for every two minutes or so of her 20-minute presentation. As a rule, avoid showing more than one slide for every minute to two minutes of a presentation.

Design Your Slides for Ease of Processing In relation to speeches and presentations, you have likely heard of the KISS method: *Keep it simple, stupid*. Creating simple presentations is a good strategy. However, a more overarching and effective strategy is to focus on ease of processing. Your goal is to take your often complex data, relationships, and ideas and illustrate and depict them in easy-to-learn ways. Consider the following approaches to facilitate ease of processing:²⁶

- *Limit the amount of information on any given slide.* Readers should be able to grasp the content within 10 to 15 seconds. For text, rarely should you use more than ten words per line and more than five to six lines.
- *Use font sizes that all audience members can read easily.* For titles, use at least 24-point fonts; for body text, use at least 18-point fonts.
- *Focus on and highlight key information.* Use bold, italics, and other formatting features to make key phrases or key components in figures stand out.
- *Use plenty of white space.* White space is effective for borders and between items and text on slides; it provides an uncluttered appearance.
- *Use high-contrast backgrounds and colors.* Make sure backgrounds do not obscure text. For dark text, use light backgrounds. For light text, use dark backgrounds.
- *Use compelling images in moderation.* One of the basic reasons to use electronic slide presentations in the first place is to display images. You can use these images to convey powerful messages efficiently and with emotional power, especially for the visual learners in your audience. But make sure you are selective. Too many pictures, poor-quality pictures, or off-message pictures may detract from your message.
- *Develop simple charts and diagrams.* Charts and diagrams can be particularly helpful for simplifying complex data relationships. Make sure to use charts and figures that the audience can process in a matter of seconds. Otherwise, they have to spend an excessive amount of time trying to understand the chart or diagram and they’re not paying attention to you. In some cases, they may give up and become annoyed.
- *Get professional design help when possible.* For high-stakes presentations, consider getting help from public relations or design specialists. If you are part of a large organization, you can often get this help internally. In many cases, well-designed templates may already exist. For smaller organizations, you may need to hire outside help.

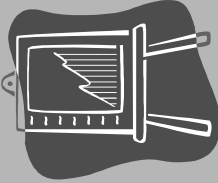
Notice in Figure 14.3 how some of these principles are applied to the PREP example found in Table 14.2.

To this point, most of the tips are based on the creation of PowerPoint slides (PowerPoint is clearly the most used slide software). However, you have many other options (see the Technology Tip).

FIGURE 14.2

Less Effective and More Effective Slides for Presentation

Less Effective Slide #1



Latisha Jackson
August 14,
2019

TRANSITIONING TO
CONTINUOUS REVIEWS
AND RECOGNITION

Key message does not stand out clearly; most prominent text is the presenter's name.

Clip art on title slide does not convey professional image.

Less Effective Slide #2

Research about Employee Engagement

- A 2013 meta-analysis of 263 studies of engagement involving 1.3 million employees found the following:
 - 47% fewer safety accidents
 - 21% higher productivity
 - 22% higher profitability
 - 41% higher quality
 - 37% reduced absenteeism

Source: Cameron, Yvette. (2013 December). *Social employee recognition systems reward the business with results*. Stamford, CT: Gartner.

The key messages of this slide take too long to process because of cluttered text, too much text at the beginning of the slide, and too many statistics.

More Effective Slide #1



Improving Employee Engagement
Transitioning to Continuous Reviews and Recognition
Latisha Jackson | HR Intern | August 14, 2019

Key message (improving employee engagement with continuous reviews) stands out clearly.

A professional photograph reinforces the theme of employee engagement.

More Effective Slide #2

Benefits of Employee Engagement

- 21% higher productivity
- 22% higher profitability
- 37% reduced absenteeism

Source and note: Cameron, Yvette. (2013 December). *Social employee recognition systems reward the business with results*. Stamford, CT: Gartner. These figures are based on the top quartile of employees in a 2013 meta-analysis of 263 studies involving 1.3 million employees.

These statistics tell the story of benefits of employee engagement. Most audience members would understand these statistics within seconds. Because the slide is so easy to process, it does not distract attention from the presenter.

FIGURE 14.2
(Continued)

Less Effective Slide #3

Problems with Annual Reviews

- Most employees think annual reviews are not accurate.
- Most employees think the feedback is too late to make changes.
- Most employees think annual reviews feel like punishment.

Without any special formatting, audience members must work too hard to read each sentence. This will draw attention away from the presenter.

Less Effective Slide #4

Results of Our Employee Survey

Annual reviews are . . .	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
accurate indicators of my performance.	12.6%	30.0%	14.8%	26.9%	15.7%
a productive experience.	21.5%	37.2%	9.4%	22.0%	9.9%
a forward-looking process.	21.1%	28.3%	14.3%	23.8%	12.6%
good recognition of my achievements.	25.6%	26.5%	19.3%	20.6%	8.1%
helpful in my career development.	18.4%	35.0%	10.8%	23.8%	12.1%
motivating.	22.9%	43.9%	12.6%	15.7%	4.9%

This table is accurate but difficult for audience members to process quickly. This much information would likely distract attention from the presenter.

More Effective Slide #3

Problems with Annual Reviews

- **Fairness:** most employees think annual reviews are not accurate.
- **Motivation:** most employees think the feedback is too late to make changes.
- **Morale:** most employees think annual reviews feel like punishment.



Key problems with annual reviews are recognizable within seconds.

The picture accentuates the message that annual reviews are dissatisfying to employees.

More Effective Slide #4

Our Employees' Views of Annual Reviews

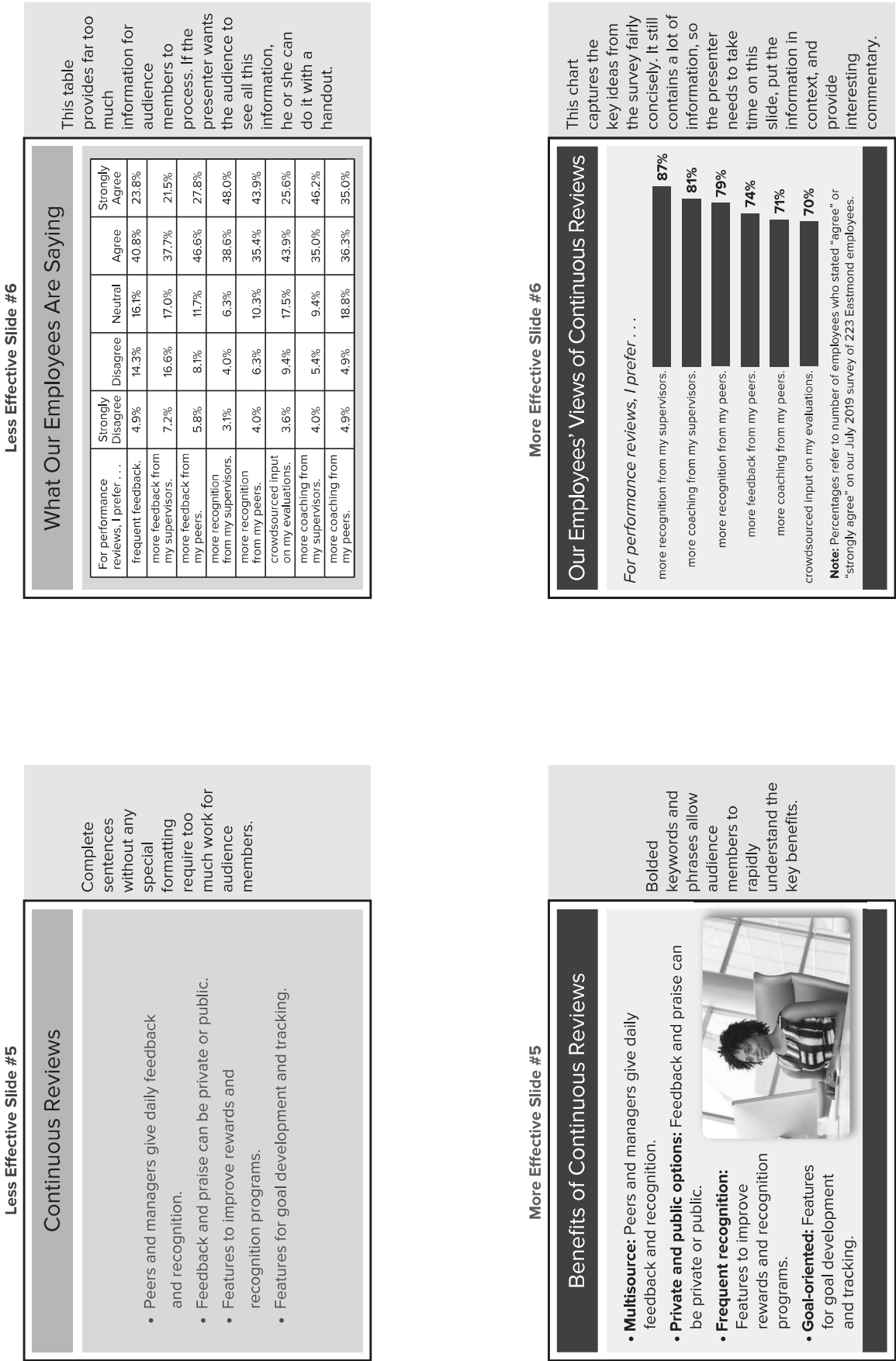
Annual reviews are . . .

- accurate indicators of my performance. **43%**
- helpful in my career development. **36%**
- a forward-looking process. **32%**
- a productive experience. **32%**
- good recognition of my achievements, motivating. **29%**
- motivating. **21%**

Note: Percentages refer to number of employees who stated "agree" or "strongly agree" on our July 2019 survey of 223 Eastmond employees.

This chart is easier to process because it contains condensed information without sacrificing accuracy.

FIGURE 14.2
(Continued)



Ariel Skelley/Getty Images

FIGURE 14.2
(Continued)

Less Effective Slide #7

The Continuous Review System Allows Positive, Helpful, and Candid Feedback

- Supervisors can provide regular and constant feedback for their employees via comment boxes (these can then be sent with email or posted to public spaces).
- Peers can also post comments.

This slide contains far too much text. By this point in the presentation, audience members are tiring. Typically, the slides need to get simpler near the end of the presentation.

Less Effective Slide #8

The Continuous Review System Helps Managers in Many Ways

- Managers can track feedback for their employees.
- Managers can create many types of reports.
- Managers can use the data to coach employees more effectively.

This slide contains far too much text. Audience members are getting more tired from trying to process this much text over the course of many slides.

More Effective Slide #7

Positive, Helpful, and Candid Feedback

Evaluation and Critique from Managers

Comments
Larisha was effective at implementing the program. She asked a lot of excellent questions. I think she could improve her spreadsheet skills, especially developing formulas for routine calculations.

Positive Feedback and Suggestions from Peers

Comments
Larisha appreciated Larisha's willingness to learn about the financial implications of this new program. She asked a lot of excellent questions. I think she could improve her spreadsheet skills, especially developing formulas for routine calculations.

This slide is essentially a mock-up of the continuous review software. It allows audience members to visualize how the system works. It also positions the presenter to explain various functions depicted in the picture.

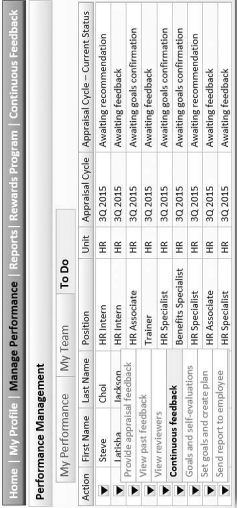
More Effective Slide #8

Ease of Use for Managers

Convenient Tracking

Easy Reporting

Effective Coaching



My Performance			My Team	To Do	Unit	Appraisal Cycle	Appraisal Status
Action	First Name	Last Name	Position		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting recommendation
▼	Steve	Choi	HR Intern		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting feedback
▼	Provide appraisal feedback		HR Associate		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting goal confirmation
▼	View past feedback		Trainer		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting feedback
▼	View reviewers		HR Specialist		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting goal confirmation
▼	Continuous feedback		Benefits Specialist		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting goal confirmation
▼	Guide and self-evaluations		HR Specialist		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting recommendation
▼	Set goals and create plan		HR Associate		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting feedback
▼	Send report to employee		HR Specialist		HR	3Q 2015	Awaiting feedback

Dougal Waters/Digital Vision/Getty Images; LWA/Larry Williams/Blend Images LLC; Polka Dot Images/Jupiterimages/Getty Images

FIGURE 14.2
(Continued)

Less Effective Slide #9

Costs of a Continuous Review System

- \$10 to \$20 per month per user (determined by the number of employees).
- Annual software administration fees of \$1,600 to \$2,100.
- Other indirect costs of around \$2,000.
- Final costs will depend on the vendor we choose.

This slide provides a lot of data but almost no meaning or appropriate frame of reference. It mixes monthly and annual figures. It does not contain any summary totals to provide audience members with perspective.

Less Effective Slide #10

Implementation

- Phase I (August to September 2017)
 - Vendor selection
- Phase II (October to December 2017)
 - Pilot in the HR department
- Phase III (December 2015)
 - Companywide training
- Phase IV (January 2016)
 - Companywide adoption
- All activities conducted by HR department

This slide contains slightly too much text. It presents the timeline and related activities in vertical format. Most people can process timeline information more easily in a horizontal format.

More Effective Slide #9

Cost-Effectiveness (Annual Figures)

Item	Amount*
Software user costs	\$2,750 to \$5,500
Software administration fees	\$1,600 to \$2,100
Other indirect costs	\$1,000 to \$2,000
TOTAL	\$5,350 to \$9,600

*Variation in costs depend on the software vendor we choose.

This slide includes summary totals on an annual basis. This provides decision makers with valuable and easy-to-process information.

More Effective Slide #10

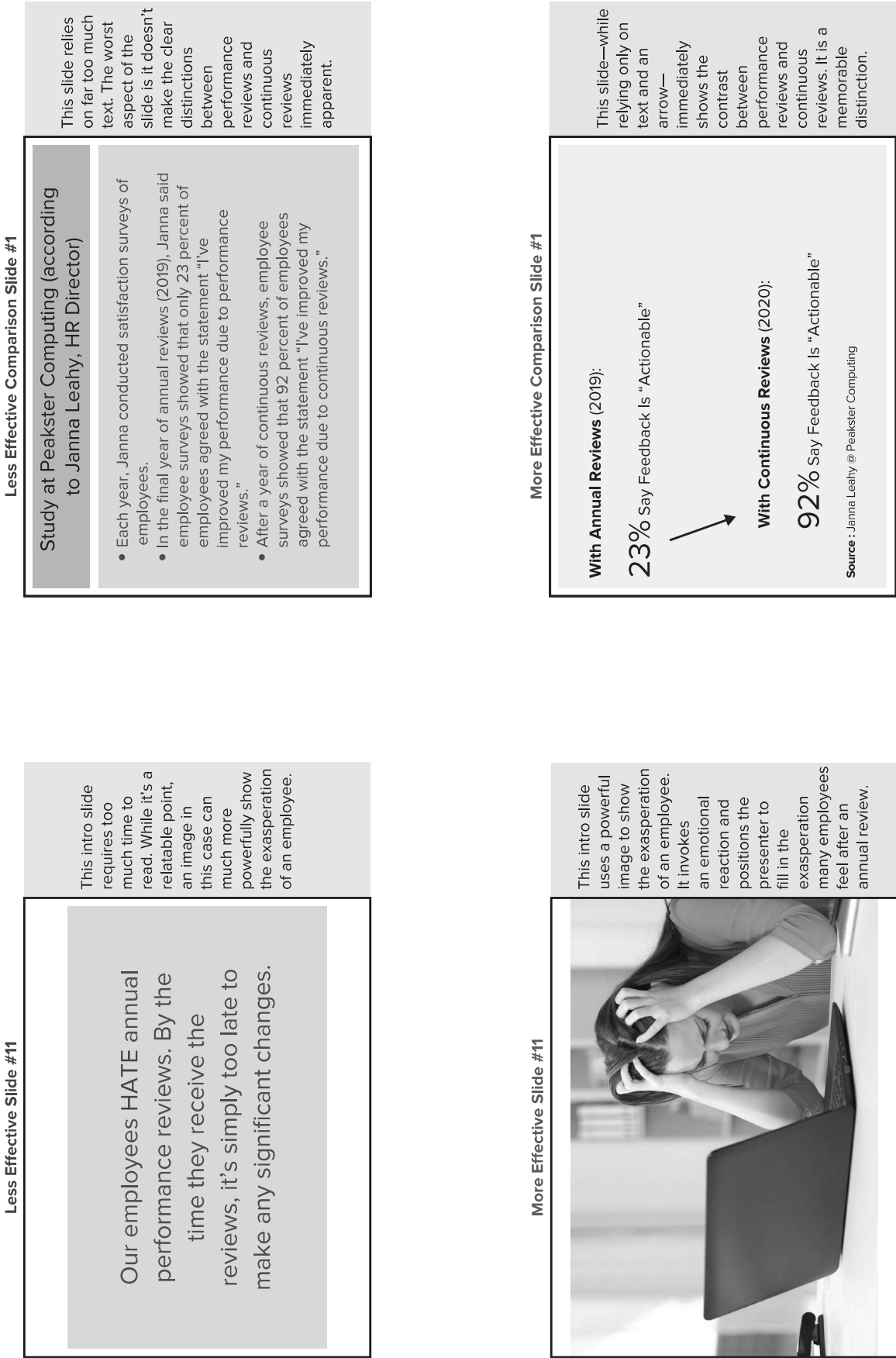
Proposed Implementation

Time Frame	Activities
Aug to Sept 2019	Vendor selection
Oct to Dec 2019	Pilot in the HR dept
Dec 2019	Companywide training
Jan 2020	Companywide adoption

This slide allows readers to rapidly recognize key time frames and related activities.

Figure 14.3

Less Effective and More Effective Slides for a Presentation about Performance Reviews



Antonio Guillem/Shutterstock

FIGURE 14.3
(Continued)

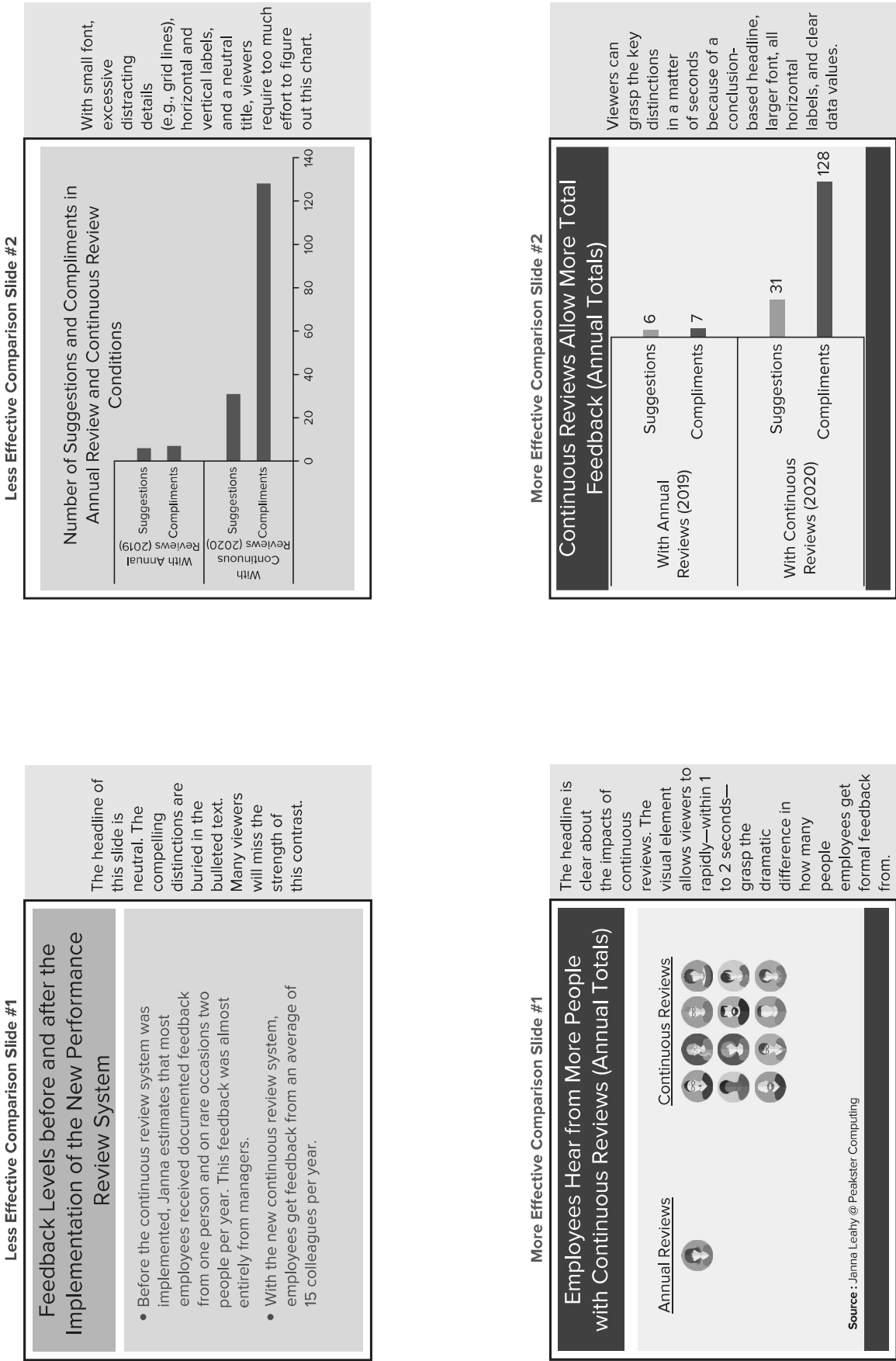
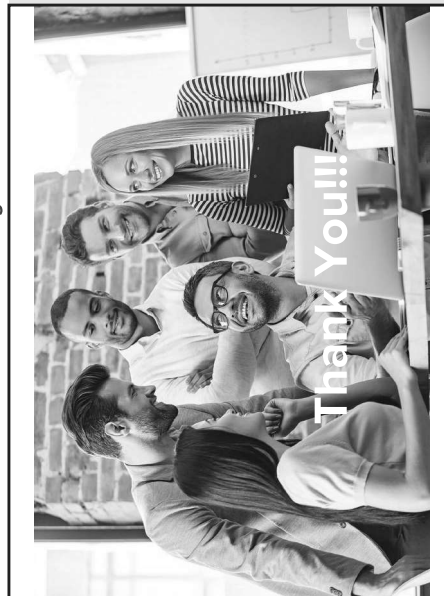


FIGURE 14.3
(Continued)

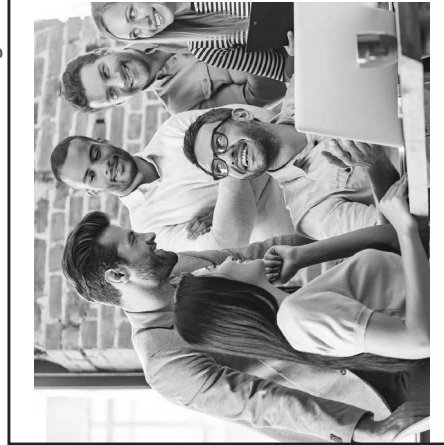
Less Effective Concluding Slide



The presenter has a good idea to conclude with a picture but misses an opportunity to emphasize the key impacts.

Ggstockstudio/123RF

More Effective Concluding Slide



Productivity

↑20%

Morale

↑32%

The picture highlights a more productive and enjoyable work environment, and the figures rapidly show concrete results.

Ggstockstudio/123RF

Technology Tips

ALTERNATIVES TO POWERPOINT

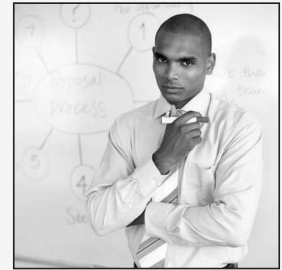
In many work environments, PowerPoint slides have become the standard visual aid for presentations and meetings. Even if you're great at using them, you might consider other types of visual aids and props to add impact, creativity, or simply variety to your presentations.

Try other electronic slide and presentation software. Consider trying Apple Keynote, Prezi, Google Slides, Canva, Zoho Show, Haiku Deck, or other software packages to see what you're most comfortable with. Many presenters find that presentation software such as Prezi does not box them into bullet-point-based, linear presentations and provides more flexibility.

Use smartboards, whiteboards, or chalkboards. The act of writing as you go with keyboards, markers, or chalk may allow you to engage your audience more effectively because you are presenting in the moment, avoiding the structure or order of electronic slides, and getting input from your audience as you go. Furthermore, you may find that drawing objects freehand allows you to depict ideas more accurately and forcefully than you can with the drawing tools in PowerPoint. Still, make sure you avoid spending too much time facing away from the audience.

Experiment with new presentation technologies. Hundreds of new and emerging presentation technologies are *social*. In other words, they allow you to get information and feedback from your audience that you can incorporate into your presentation. By experimenting with these technologies, you'll learn to tap into the incoming messages while also controlling your message or the conversation.

Your challenge: Take a slide deck you've already produced in PowerPoint and then convert it to two other presentation software programs. Try out the features of these other programs. Then, try out the presentation without slides but with a white board. What did you learn as you tried out these new tools and approaches?



Stockbyte/Getty Images

Applying the Story Line Approach to Your Presentations

Earlier in this chapter, you learned about the PREP method of providing rich examples to support your positions. You also learned that you should create electronic slides with a story line approach. This section explains how you can apply a story line approach to your entire presentation and enhance your ability to connect with and influence others.

The story line approach is useful for various types of presentations because it allows your listeners to engage on a deeper level emotionally and intellectually. Emotionally, they often feel a bond with you as a speaker. Furthermore, they tend to internalize stories, even developing their own parallel stories that evoke commitment, determination, sympathy, and other emotions. However, stories are far more than emotional tools. Research shows that people remember stories more easily than they do abstract information, and they are more likely to act on what they hear via stories.²⁷

When James E. Rogers, president and CEO of Duke Energy, was asked "What would you like business schools to teach more of, or less of?" he had this to say:

What I would really teach is how to write, and how to speak and make presentations. I've overused this term in this conversation, but *it's the ability to pull the salient facts together and tell a story, so that people feel it, sense it, they're convinced by it, and want to do something because of it.*

LO14.5 Use the story line approach to presentations.



 **connect**[®]

Visit <http://connect.mheducation.com> for an exercise on this topic.

My first full-time job, I worked at night as a newspaper reporter, going to school during the day. So, I really started out covering police news, and then federal courts and political news. And I really kind of developed a sense of the importance of trying to find the essence of the story and trying to arrange the facts in some chronology to make sense out of it. In a sense, as a CEO, part of my job is not only to help develop direction but to teach the storytelling. Those early years as a reporter gave me a sense of that in terms of how to tell the story, how to communicate.²⁸

Rogers is not the only business professional who emphasizes storytelling. Jathan Janove, who did extensive HR training about sexual harassment in the early to mid-1990s, described his transition to storytelling for presentations. Penalties to employers and employees had increased substantially, and his job was to explain new laws governing appropriate behavior. As he lectured employees, he found that they often resented the perceived intrusiveness of the new laws and the fear tactics of describing harsh penalties. And they found the lectures boring. Here is what Janove did:

It didn't take a great leap to realize that this training wasn't working, so I adopted a new approach, jettisoning scare-you-straight legal points. I substituted stories illustrating types of behaviors employees should avoid and how they unwittingly get themselves in trouble. Something amazing happened: Suddenly, the rooms were full of bright eyes. Discovering that telling stories is an excellent way to train employees about workplace law, I began collecting parables.²⁹

Janove further explained that once he adopted a story-based approach to business training, he became far more influential. Audiences listened more attentively, learned more, and changed their behaviors.

You can use stories in many kinds of business presentations. For example, Sally Herigstad, a CPA and consultant to *MSN Money*, spoke about using this strategy for delivering financial presentations:

Financial presentations tell a story. You're not just showing a collection of profit-and-loss statements and balance sheets—you're telling a story that your audience needs to hear. It may be a story of a new company with promising growth. Or maybe it's a story about meeting market challenges. Whatever your story is, stick to it: Toss everything that doesn't help you tell it in a compelling, easy-to-follow way. Tell your story with simplicity and clarity.³⁰

Typically, stories for business connect facts with people and their business goals. Ideally, they are true, factual, and based on real events. In some cases, they may be hypothetical, but listeners still must find them realistic and relevant.³¹ Generally, stories for business include the following components:³²

- *Plot*: a business situation that involves challenges or tensions to overcome and a clear beginning and end.
- *Setting*: the time, place, characters, and context of the business situation.
- *Resolution*: a solution to the challenges or tensions.
- *Moral or lesson*: a point to the story.

In Figure 14.4, you'll find a story Latisha uses to explain how continuous review systems allow for better employee recognition and rewards. The story contains a plot, a setting, a resolution, and a moral. It speaks directly to a concern senior managers have—high employee turnover. This story is part of a larger story line that Latisha carries across her entire presentation.

Keep in mind that stories should be short. Even when audience members are engaged, their patience is limited. They expect to get the point quickly. Typically, stories should last 30 seconds to one minute. In some cases, a story can last two to three minutes. Use your judgment and pay attention to your audiences. To help you identify how long a story is, time it while you rehearse. Or write it out and estimate how much time it will take to tell. Most people are comfortable with speaking at about 150 to 160 words per minute (this is the pace of most audio books). So, a 75-word story takes roughly 30 seconds, and a 150-word story takes about one minute.

FIGURE 14.4

Telling Stories to Connect with and Influence Audience Members

One of the pressing issues we're facing is high turnover among our employees. In the past three years, our annual turnover rate has been nearly 25 percent—nearly twice that of companies in our industry. As we've considered our strategies to address this problem, we've recognized that continuous review systems with frequent recognition and rewards are an effective way to reduce employee turnover.

Let me share with you what happened at Peakster Computing, a company that was in a similar situation five years ago. Its annual employee turnover was roughly 18 percent. It estimated that replacing each employee cost about \$25,000. Across Peakster locations, it estimated excessive turnover was costing at least \$35 million per year.

Janna, Peakster's HR director, tried a variety of approaches to learn about the high employee turnover. She used exit surveys and focus groups, and even contacted past employees. The message she kept getting from former employees was this: "No one appreciated us."

As a result, Peakster started instituting a variety of employee recognition programs. After several years of these programs, the company concluded the programs hadn't made any difference. Why? Because recognition and rewards still occurred only every six months or so. In other words, the recognition and rewards simply did not occur frequently enough.

Then, Janna adopted a continuous review system with the ability to give frequent recognition and rewards. Employees were getting highly visible compliments and kudos from managers and peers. Many employees got some type of recognition almost daily. Instead of employee recognition awards that arrived every six months, every year, or even every five years, employees were now getting smaller but more frequent rewards. Part of the rewards program involved receiving redeemable rewards points. On average employees were redeeming these points every five to six weeks for movie tickets, meals, other prizes, and even cash.

The results have been dramatic. Employee turnover is now around 11 percent. Janna says the drop in turnover alone accounts for millions of dollars in savings. She also says that improved morale is leading to far higher productivity. What Janna says makes all the difference is a "culture of appreciation."

What we've learned from Janna is that continuous review systems with options for frequent recognition and rewards lead to lower employee turnover. The main reason is that employees respond best to frequent recognition and small rewards more so than infrequent recognition and more prestigious rewards.

Plot: This plot is about how continuous review systems can lower employee turnover.

Setting: The setting focuses on Peakster Computing, where high employee turnover was costing the company millions of dollars. The company tried a variety of strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Resolution: By using continuous review systems, Peakster Computing was able to dramatically reduce employee turnover.

Moral or lesson: Frequent recognition and small rewards reduce employee turnover more effectively than infrequent recognition and large rewards.

At 399 words, this story would take roughly 2½ minutes.

It takes time to gather true stories for your presentations, so be alert for good ones. Remember, the purpose is always to make a point, not to entertain. If the stories have entertainment value, that's an added bonus.

Reviewing Your Presentations for Fairness and Effectiveness

LO14.6 Evaluate your presentations for fairness and effectiveness.



Review your presentations in the same way you review your written communications. In the first place, double-check every aspect of your supplementary materials as well as the technology you will use to ensure that it is perfect and working. Typos on electronic slides can be a glaring display of carelessness. Also, seek feedback from colleagues and clients before and after your presentations. Ask them how they would change the presentation to better meet their needs.

As with all of your communications, ask yourself how fair your business presentations are. Is the content based on *facts*? Have you granted others *access* to your real motives and reasoning? Have you been forthright about *impacts* on audience members and other stakeholders? Have you ensured that you show *respect* for audience members (see Figure 14.5)?

In Latisha's case, she evaluates her presentation in each regard. In particular, she has provided claims about the impacts of continuous review systems on employee engagement. Latisha is comfortable with these claims. She has researched these impacts carefully. She provides access to the sources of her information so senior managers can make judgments about the reliability of the information. She discusses impacts on stakeholders and explains that these changes require a new approach to managing employees. Finally, she should be respectful in every way as senior managers ask tough questions (you'll see some of these tough questions in Chapter 15).

FIGURE 14.5

Are Your Presentations FAIR?

Facts (How *factual* is your presentation?)

- Have you presented *all* the facts correctly?
- Have you presented information that allows colleagues, customers, and consumers to make informed decisions that are in their best interests?
- Have you carefully considered various interpretations of your data? Have you assessed the quality of your information?

Access (How *accessible* or *transparent* are your motives, reasoning, and information?)

- Are your motives clear, or will others think you have a hidden agenda? Have you made yourself accessible to others so that they can learn more about your viewpoints?
- Have you fully disclosed information that colleagues, customers, or consumers should expect to receive?
- Are you hiding any information to cast your recommendations in a better light or real reasons for making certain claims or recommendations?

Impacts (How does your communication *impact* stakeholders?)

- Have you carefully considered how your ideas, products, and services will impact colleagues, customers, and consumers?
- Have you made recommendations to colleagues, customers, and consumers that are in their best interests?

Respect (How *respectful* is your presentation?)

- Does the message offend or pressure in any way? Does it show that your colleagues' and customers' needs are important?
- Would a neutral observer consider your communication respectful?