

The Essentials of
**Technical
Communication**

THIRD EDITION

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Oral Reports

Your ability to give oral reports can be as critical to your success as your ability to write reports. In today's work environment, knowing how to speak effectively and use presentation slides has become an increasingly valuable asset, whether you work in an academic or a nonacademic environment. In applying for a job or admission to a graduate program, you may need to give an oral presentation on a specific topic or perhaps on a research project you have conducted. As an employee, you may need to prepare a written document of an oral presentation you have given. Or an employer may ask you to make an oral presentation of a written document. Whatever the venue, you will benefit from knowing and then practicing basic strategies of developing effective oral presentations.

Quick Tips

- In the introduction, interest the audience in the subject, and enumerate the key points you will cover (e.g., "I will cover the following five points.").
- In the discussion section, help your audience pay attention and track your progress in your presentation by numbering each point as you cover it (e.g., "Now let's proceed to my second point.").
- When you reach the conclusion, announce it. You want your audience to pay extra attention. Audiences know that you will now summarize what you've said, and they can catch anything they missed earlier. Once you've said "in conclusion," you have about a minute before you must stop talking. Audiences grow hostile to speakers who promise to stop but then don't. In the remaining minute of your presentation, fix in the audience's mind the one or two ideas you want them to remember or take away from your presentation.
- Keep your presentation as short as possible. Nobody wants to listen to a long presentation.

UNDERSTANDING THE SPEAKING-WRITING RELATIONSHIP

Effective oral and written presentations share the following requirements:

- Analyze your audience. Know what they will expect.
- Articulate your purpose clearly.
- Develop sufficient and appropriate supporting material.
- Understand the context in which your presentation will be received.
- Organize the material so that your audience can follow your points easily.
- Choose a speaking style—level of language, approach to the subject, and tone—suitable to your role as well as your audience and purpose.
- Select the presentation format—text, text and visuals, text and sound and/or animations—that will enhance your audience's understanding of your message.

ANALYZING THE AUDIENCE

Analyzing your listening audience follows the same principles discussed in Chapter 2:

- How much does my audience know about the subject?
- How much do they know about me?
- What do they expect from me?
- How much interest will they have in what I say?
- What is their attitude toward me?
- What is their attitude toward my subject?
- What is their age group?
- What positions do they occupy in the organization?
- What is their educational background?
- What is their cultural/ethnic background?
- What is their economic background?
- What are their political and religious views?
- What kinds of biases will they likely have toward me and my topic?

To be an effective speaker, you must know your audience, establish an effective relationship between you and them by being sincere and knowledgeable about the subject, and then conform to their expectations about dress, demeanor, choice of language, and attitude toward them and the topic. When you speak to people from other countries, you should plan to research the culture of that country. Be aware that hand gestures you use routinely may have different meanings in other cultures. Also, the clothing you choose to wear should be selected with the culture of the audience in mind: you want your audience to pay attention to what you are saying instead of what you are wearing. If your audience includes individuals with limited hearing or vision, you will need to make appropriate accommodations.

DETERMINING THE PURPOSE

Oral presentations, like written reports, have a purpose. By knowing what the audience can understand and what you want to achieve as you begin to plan. Announce your audience for the main purpose.

Remember that oral presentations are an opportunity to enhance your reputation within an organization and a chance to show your value to the organization.

CHOOSING AND PREPARING THE MESSAGE

Preparing the oral presentation involves several steps:

- Determine what information you need to gather.
- Choose information that is relevant to the audience's attitudes and perspectives.
- Consider a variety of factors, such as time, place, history, and purpose for your presentation.

ANALYZING THE CONTEXT

Analysis of context and audience involves several steps:

- What broader concern does the audience have?
- What immediate issue is the audience concerned with?
- How does your presentation relate to the audience's concerns?
- What will be happening during the presentation?
- How does your presentation fit into the audience's schedule?
- If you are one of several speakers, what role will you play?
- In what surroundings will the presentation take place?

CHOOSING THE ORAL PRESENTATION FORMAT

Like written communication, oral presentations have needs and perspective:

- Does your audience have the time and attention to listen?

DETERMINING THE GOAL OF YOUR PRESENTATION

Oral presentations, like written presentations, must be designed for a specific purpose. By knowing what they will hear from the beginning of the presentation, audiences can understand the reason for the content. State your goal in one sentence as you begin to plan. Announce your purpose early in the presentation, to prepare your audience for the main ideas to come.

Remember that oral presentations, like written presentations, can enhance your reputation within an organization. Therefore, consider every speaking opportunity as a chance to sell not only your ideas but also your competence and your value to the organization.

CHOOSING AND SHAPING CONTENT

Preparing the oral presentation often requires careful research:

- Determine what information you will need.
- Choose information that will appeal to your audience—particularly their attitudes and perspectives toward the topic.
- Consider a variety of information types: statistics, testimony, cases, illustrations, history, and particularly narratives that help convey the goal you have for your presentation. Be sure that every item you include pertains to the goal of your presentation.

ANALYZING THE CONTEXT

Analysis of context and analysis of audience are often inseparable:

- What broader concerns underlie the need for the presentation?
- What immediate issues underlie the presentation?
- How does your presentation relate to these issues?
- What will be happening in the organization when you make your presentation?
- How does your presentation fit into the organizational situation?
- If you are one of several speakers, what kinds of presentations will other speakers make?
- In what surroundings will you make the presentation?

CHOOSING THE ORGANIZATION

Like written communications, oral presentations must reflect your audience's needs and perspective:

- Does your audience have interest in what you will say?

- What main ideas do you want to convey?
- Based on your purpose and the needs and expectations of the audience, in what order should you present these ideas?

Answers to these questions will help you decide how to go about organizing your presentation. Generally, however, like the written presentation, oral presentations have distinct parts—an introduction, a main body, and a conclusion. The introduction should clearly tell the audience what the presentation will cover so that the audience is prepared for what is to come. The body should develop each point stated in the introduction, and the conclusion should reiterate the ideas presented and reinforce the purpose of the presentation.

As you do your research and collect content for your presentation, begin organizing your information. Divide your content into main categories of ideas:

- I. Idea 1
- II. Idea 2
- III. Idea 3, etc.

Once you have the main content “chunks” or divisions, begin to subdivide each main idea. Order the subdivisions so that the information moves in a logical sequence:

- I. Idea 1
 - A, B, C . . .
- II. Idea 2
 - A, B, C . . .
- III. Idea 3
 - A, B, C . . .

Introduction. Be sure that you state your goal near the beginning. Even if you use some type of opening statement to interest your audience, state the goal of your presentation next. Then, state how you will proceed in your presentation: what main issues you will discuss. The main ideas should be announced and enumerated here.

Main body. Here you must explain each of your key ideas in order. Also try to include at least one example or anecdote for each point to make your ideas more vivid and memorable. If you make your presentation easy for your listeners to follow and understand, the more they (and you) will profit from your presentation.

Conclusion. At a minimum, restate the main issues you want your audience to remember, but be concise. Nothing is worse than a conclusion that drags on and doesn’t conclude. Tell your audience exactly what you want them to remember from your presentation. Try to find a concluding narrative or statement that impacts your audience. The conclusion should leave the audience with a positive feeling about you and your ideas.

CHOOSING AN AP

How do you sound when you speak? You want to sound confident and accurate and support “make or break” the effectiveness of your presentation. Avoid being rude, overly solicitous, guinea pig, or using clichés, concrete language, and talking with them. Remember, your audience will dictate the pace. Avoid speaking too rapidly.

- Do they know you?
- Is your rank in the organization?
- Are you speaking to the organization?
- What demeanor, appearance, usually expect from you?
- Is the audience comfortable with you? well do they understand you?

If you are speaking before a large group, determine before you begin how comfortable with American customs, choose concrete words, and sentence to one idea.

CHOOSING VISUALS AND YOUR MEANS

Because we live in a time when technology can make your ideas more powerful, lines for using visuals in your presentation. They need to exemplify your ideas.

Formal presentations to help listeners follow the outline of your presentation. Graphs, diagrams, and flowcharts will be seen while the audience is listening. The audience will be seen while the audience is listening. The audience will be seen while the audience is listening.

- Limit the information to one point.
- Use a typeface that is easy to read.
- Use a nondistracting background.

11-4 shows a simple

CHOOSING AN APPROPRIATE SPEAKING STYLE

How do you sound when you speak? You may have effective content and ideas and accurate and supporting statistics. However, how you speak your ideas can "make or break" the effectiveness of what you say. Avoid sounding patronizing, rude, overly solicitous, gushing, or insincere. Use a conversational style: short sentences, concrete language, speech that suggests to your audience that you are really talking with them. Remember that your organizational role and your relationship to your audience will dictate the tone and degree of formality of your presentation. Avoid speaking too rapidly.

- Do they know you?
- Is your rank in the organization above or below them?
- Are you speaking to an audience of individuals from all levels within the organization?
- What demeanor, approach, and level of formality does the organization usually expect from those giving oral presentations?
- Is the audience composed of people who understand American English? How well do they understand American English?

If you are speaking before a group composed largely of people from another country, determine beforehand their fluency in American English. If they are not comfortable with American English, speak more slowly, avoid idiomatic expressions, choose concrete words, and speak in relatively short sentences. Limit each sentence to one idea.

CHOOSING VISUALS TO ENHANCE YOUR PURPOSE AND YOUR MEANING

Because we live in a time when communication is visual and verbal, illustrations can make your ideas more persuasive and more professional. Many of the guidelines for using visuals in oral presentations mirror those for written documents: they need to exemplify simplicity and clarity and fit the needs of the audience.

Formal presentations should use PowerPoint or similar presentation software to help listeners follow the ideas. PowerPoint allows you to give your listeners the outline of your presentation and insert pictures, graphs, tables, drawings, photographs, diagrams, and flow charts as well as sound and video. But because these will be seen while the audience is listening to you, be sure that all visuals are as simple and as easy to read as possible. The slide presentation in Figure 11-1 exemplifies effective use of the following guidelines:

- Limit the information on any single slide.
- Use a typeface that can be easily read.
- Use a nondistracting background that does not overpower content. Figure 11-4 shows a simple but effective background.

- Limit the typefaces you use to two per visual.
- Avoid using all caps.
- Use a typeface—size and font—that contrasts distinctly with the background.
- Don't crowd the information on your slide: keep it simple.
- Keep your presentation as short as possible; don't use too many slides.

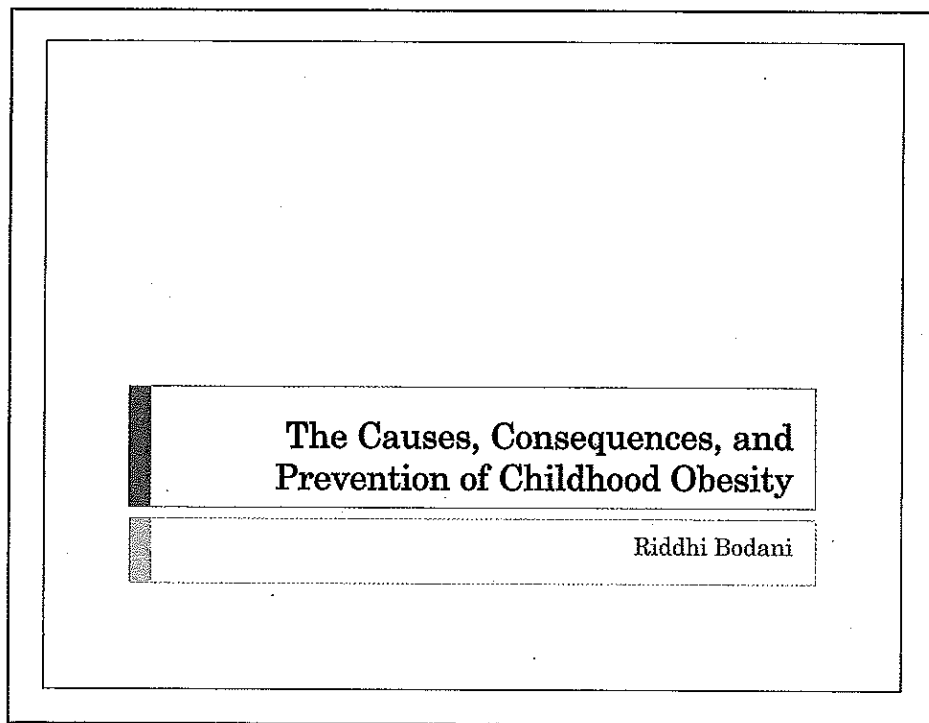


FIGURE 11-1 A PowerPoint Presentation Prepared for a Brown-Bag Luncheon

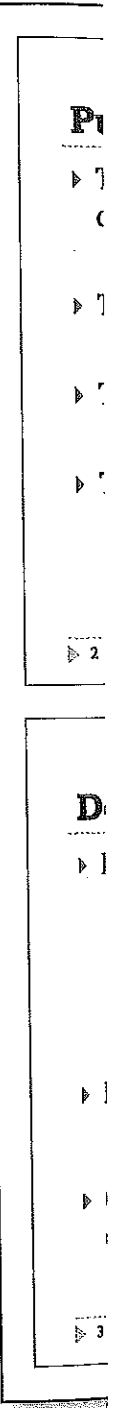


FIGURE 11

Purpose

- ▶ To understand recent developments and research concerning childhood obesity
- ▶ To outline major causes of obesity in children
- ▶ To examine consequences of childhood obesity
- ▶ To identify effective prevention measures

▶ 2

Defining Childhood Obesity

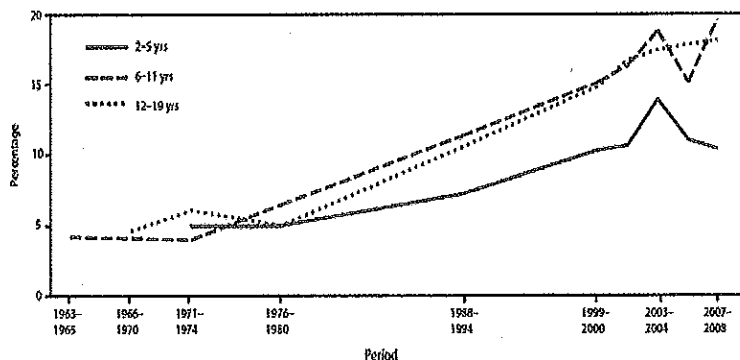
- ▶ Body Mass Index (BMI)
 - ▶ Overweight- BMI in 85th – 95th percentile
 - ▶ Obese- BMI > 95th percentile
- ▶ Defined differently in adults
- ▶ Controversial as children undergo rapid developmental changes

▶ 3

FIGURE 11-1 *continued*

Prevalence in the United States

- ▶ Increasing rates of childhood obesity



<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwr.html/mm6002a2.htm>

▶ 4

Prevalence in Developing Nations

- ▶ Most overweight or obese children are from developing nations
- ▶ Attributed to shift in diet
- ▶ "Double burden of malnutrition"
 - ▶ Infectious diseases and chronic conditions

▶ 5

FIGURE 11-1 continued

Genetic Fac

- ▶ Strong correlation obesity
- ▶ Genes associated
 - ▶ Fat mass and obesity
 - ▶ Melanocortin-4
- ▶ Influence growth
- ▶ Twin studies

▶ 6

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Environmen

- ▶ Prenatal and Postnatal
 - ▶ Maternal smoking during pregnancy
- ▶ Poor Nutrition
 - ▶ Carbonated beverages
 - ▶ Fast food consumption
- ▶ Lack of physical activity
- ▶ Lack of sleep
 - ▶ Associated with obesity

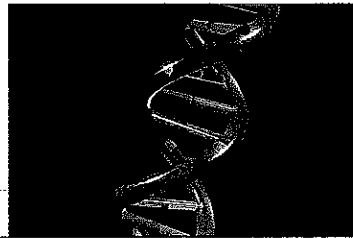
▶ 7

FIGURE 11-1 continued

Genetic Factors

- ▶ Strong correlation between parental and childhood obesity
- ▶ Genes associated with obesity:
 - ▶ Fat mass and obesity associated (*FTO*) gene
 - ▶ Melanocortin-4 receptor (*MC4R*) gene
- ▶ Influence growth and development at an early age
- ▶ Twin studies

▶ 6

<http://www.zmescience.com/>

Environmental Factors

- ▶ Prenatal and Postnatal Influences
 - ▶ Maternal smoking, gestational diabetes and lack of sleep as infant
- ▶ Poor Nutrition
 - ▶ Carbonated beverages
 - ▶ Fast food-consumption
- ▶ Lack of physical activity
- ▶ Lack of sleep
 - ▶ Associated with high ghrelin levels and low leptin levels

▶ 7

FIGURE 11-1 *continued*

Environmental Factors

- ▶ School Environment
 - ▶ Promote junk food consumption
 - ▶ Contracts with soda companies pay for school facilities
 - ▶ Increases in portion sizes
- ▶ Television advertising
- ▶ Low socioeconomic status (SES)
 - ▶ Fast food is a cheap alternative
 - ▶ Less opportunity for physical activity
- ▶ Quality of home

▶ 8

Health Concerns

- ▶ Increased prevalence of chronic conditions among children
 - ▶ Cardiovascular problems
 - ▶ Type-2 diabetes mellitus
 - ▶ Osteoarthritis
 - ▶ Depression



<http://mathiesenclinic.com/>

▶ 9

FIGURE 11-1 continued

Other Con

- ▶ Economic Cor
 - ▶ Obesity adds
 - ▶ Direct Costs:
 - ▶ Indirect Cost
- ▶ Social Stigma
 - ▶ Increased sir
 - ▶ Study by Lat

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Role of Pa

- ▶ Mothers shou during pregn
- ▶ Children mod
- ▶ Parents can li juices
- ▶ Incorporate n children's die

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FIGURE 11-1 continued

Other Concerns

▶ Economic Concerns

- ▶ Obesity adds 9.1% to annual health care costs in U.S.
- ▶ Direct Costs: physician visits, medications, etc.
- ▶ Indirect Costs: morbidity and mortality costs



▶ Social Stigmatization

- ▶ Increased since 1961
- ▶ Study by Latner

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Role of Parents in Prevention

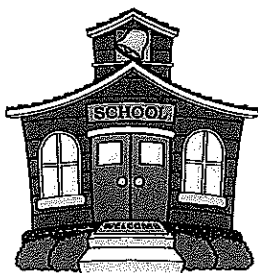
- ▶ Mothers should maintain a healthy weight before and during pregnancy
- ▶ Children model eating behavior of parents
- ▶ Parents can limit the consumption of sodas and fruit juices
- ▶ Incorporate more milk, fruits, and vegetables into children's diet

▶ 11

FIGURE 11-1 *continued*

Role of Schools in Prevention

- ▶ Nutrition education programs
- ▶ Restricting the sale of soft drinks
- ▶ Placing nutritional standards on foods sold in vending machines
- ▶ Promoting physical activity
 - ▶ Sports
 - ▶ P.E.
 - ▶ Recess



<http://pickens.clemson.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/announcementArchive.php>

▶ 12

Conclusions

- ▶ Developing nations have high rates of obesity
- ▶ Increases in soda consumption and fast food intake have increased simultaneously with rates of childhood obesity.
- ▶ Conditions previously only associated with adults are now prevalent among children.
- ▶ Depression and obesity in adolescents are linked.
- ▶ Parents and schools can play the biggest role in preventing childhood obesity.

▶ 13

FIGURE 11-1 continued

References

- ▶ Ogden, C., Carroll, M., Kit, trends in body mass index: 2010. *J Am Med Assoc* 307.
- ▶ Food and Agriculture Association hunger and obesity. <<http://www.fao.org/Ag>,
- ▶ Palca, J. (2007) Scientists <<http://www.npr.org/ter>
- ▶ Child obesity. (2012). *Harvard trends/global-obesity-trends* <<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/trends/global-obesity-trends>
- ▶ Latner, J., Stunkard, A. (2006) children. *Obesity Research*

▶ 14

FIGURE 11-1 continued

Other problems that can surface v

- Avoid "busy" or complicated
- Avoid making your audience require your audience to study slides, they will not listen to you and pictures exemplify stand to use, limit content to the core. Figure 11-8 shows a good example.
- Do not read your slides to your audience; it is available, then begin to communicate. Look at your audience.
- Be sure that what the visual Figures 11-2 and 11-3 fail to

References

- ▶ Ogden, C., Carroll, M., Kit, B., Flegal, K. (2012) Prevalence of obesity and trends in body mass index among U.S. children and adolescents, 1999-2010. *J Am Med Assoc* 307:483-490.
- ▶ Food and Agriculture Association of the United Nations. (2006) Fighting hunger and obesity. <<http://www.fao.org/Ag/magazine/0602sp1.htm>>.
- ▶ Palca, J. (2007) Scientists identify a gene linked to obesity. <<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=9545915>>.
- ▶ Child obesity. (2012). *Harvard School of Public Health* <<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-trends/global-obesity-trends-in-children/index.html>>.
- ▶ Latner, J., Stunkard, A. (2003) Getting worse: the stigmatization of obese children. *Obesity Research* 11:452-456.

▶ 14

FIGURE 11-1 *continued*

Other problems that can surface with slide presentations:

- Avoid “busy” or complicated visuals, as in Figure 11-2.
- Avoid making your audience study your slides. Figure 11-3, for example, will require your audience to study the map. If they have to focus to decipher your slides, they will not listen to you. Bar graphs, circle graphs, simple diagrams, and pictures exemplify standard types of visuals. Whatever visual you decide to use, limit content to the concept, data, or point you are trying to make. Figure 11-8 shows a good example of a line graph.
- Do not read your slides to your audience. Let them read each slide as you make it available, then begin to comment. Don’t look at your slides as you speak. Look at your audience.
- Be sure that what the visual says is immediately evident, a requirement that Figures 11-2 and 11-3 fail to meet.

FIVE MAJOR DRUG CARTELS

Area of influence Disputed territory



Source: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126890893>

IV. Juarez Cartel

The Vicente Carrillo Fuentes organization, or Juarez cartel, is headquartered in Ciudad Juarez. The area is considered one of the most coveted trafficking routes in the Americas. The cartel's enforcement arm is a gang called La Línea. The group was founded by Vicente's brother, Amado, who died in 1997 while undergoing plastic surgery. The cartel's influence has dropped because of the arrest in 2009 of its financier, Vicente Carrillo Leyva, and its ongoing battle with the Sinaloa cartel over control of the Juarez region. The continuing conflict makes Juarez the most violent city in Mexico and has given it one of the highest murder rates in the world. In 2009, more than 2,600 people were murdered in Juarez, a city of 1.3 million inhabitants.

FIGURE 11-2 This slide, from a presentation describing the problems that drug cartels create for Texas, includes too much descriptive text to explain the map.

CARTEL TERRITORIES AND DRUG ROUTES

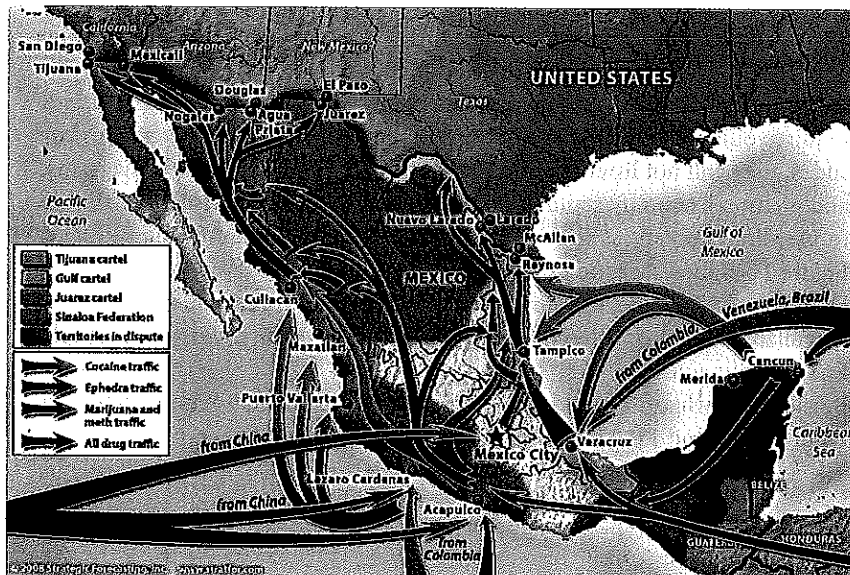


FIGURE 11-3 A Map Selected from an Online Source The quantity of information included could be daunting in a slide but helpful in a report, in which readers have time to study the information.

Avoid using too many slides to inundate them with too much information. Figure 11-1 had been asked to do a tertiary school workshop. Re

As shown in the next slide, the restricted use of color and a plain background can distract from the content. The contrast between the background and the text, which you work may have presentations.

Figure 11-4 exemplifies how the content of the slide supports the content of the presentation.

Figure 11-5 exemplifies how the content of the slide supports the content of the presentation. As shown in Figure 11-7,



FIGURE 11-4 This slide is visually distracting but supports the content of the presentation. When this page appears

Avoid using too many slides. Listeners will grow restless if you talk too long and inundate them with too many slides. The nutrition major who prepared Figure 11-1 had been asked to discuss the obesity problem in children during an elementary school workshop. Readers can grasp the ideas easily.

As shown in the next single-slide examples, PowerPoint allows you almost unrestricted use of color and background, but too much color or an ornate slide background can distract your audience. If you need to prepare slides or transparencies for video conferencing, use the plain background and a typeface color that contrasts with the background to enhance readability. The organization for which you work may have a template for their employees to use for all company presentations.

Figure 11-4 exemplifies effective use of a background that does not distract but supports the content of the slides.

Figure 11-5 exemplifies a three-dimensional pie chart, created with Excel and transported into PowerPoint. Viewers have to connect the legend with the segments and read the percentages on each segment. This chart could become more readable if each segment were labeled along with the percentages (see Figure 11-6). As shown in Figure 11-7, the boxed labels improve readability.

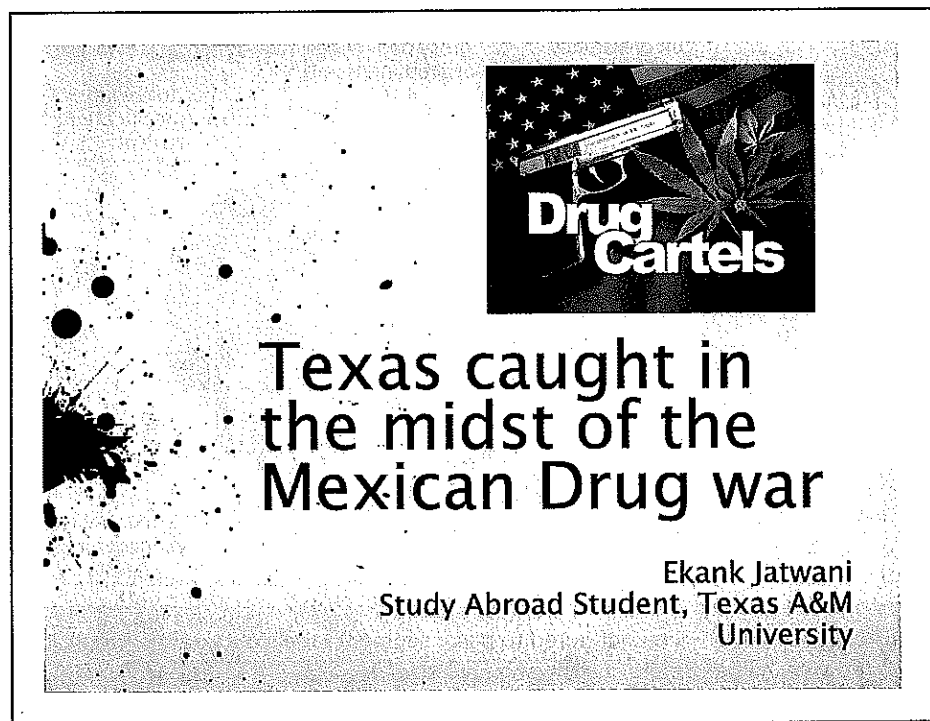


FIGURE 11-4 This slide exemplifies effective use of a background that does not distract but supports the content of the slide. The sound of the pistol firing occurs when this page appears.

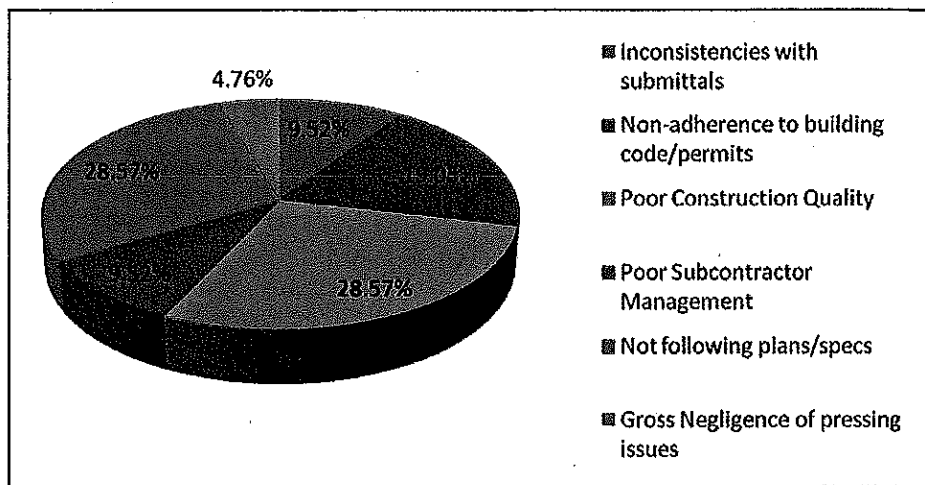


FIGURE 11-5 This slide displays a three-dimensional pie chart created with Excel and transported into PowerPoint. Use of a legend creates difficulties for listeners.

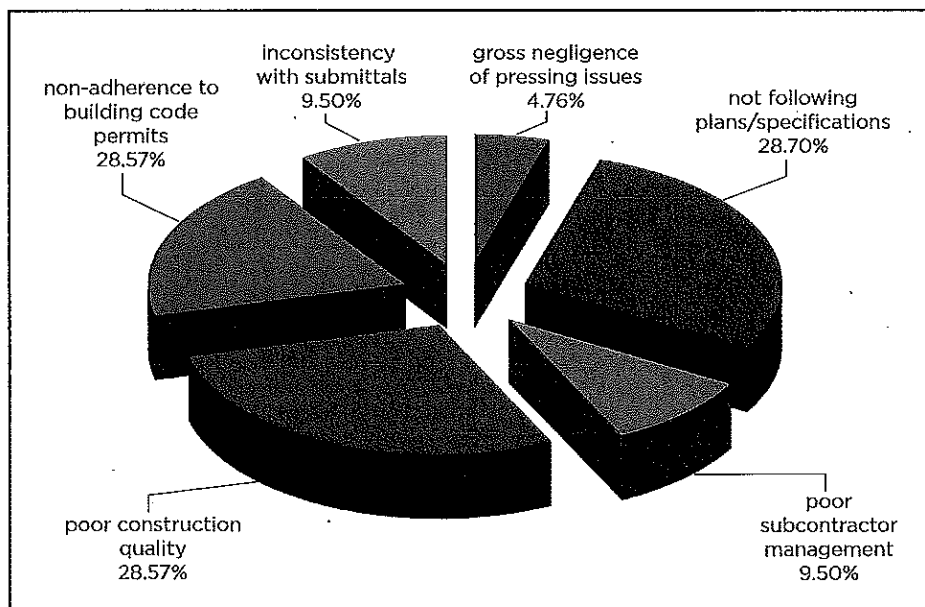


FIGURE 11-6 Figure 11-5 reconfigured to place segment labels outside the graph. The exploded view helps readers see the segment sizes.

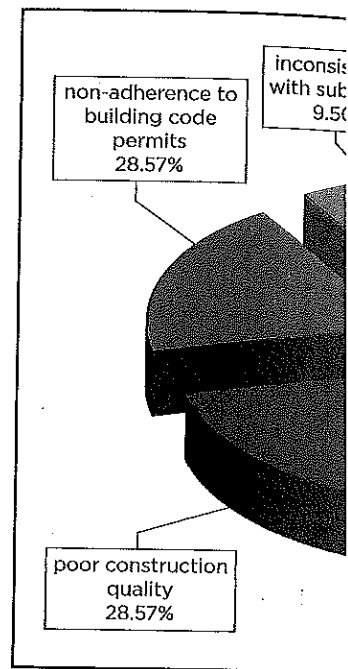


FIGURE 11-7 Use of Boxed Labels

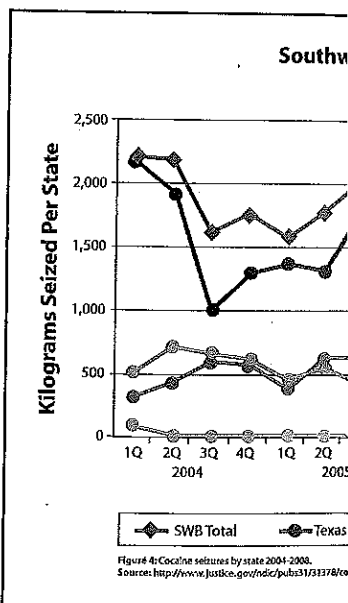


FIGURE 11-8 Effective Slide with

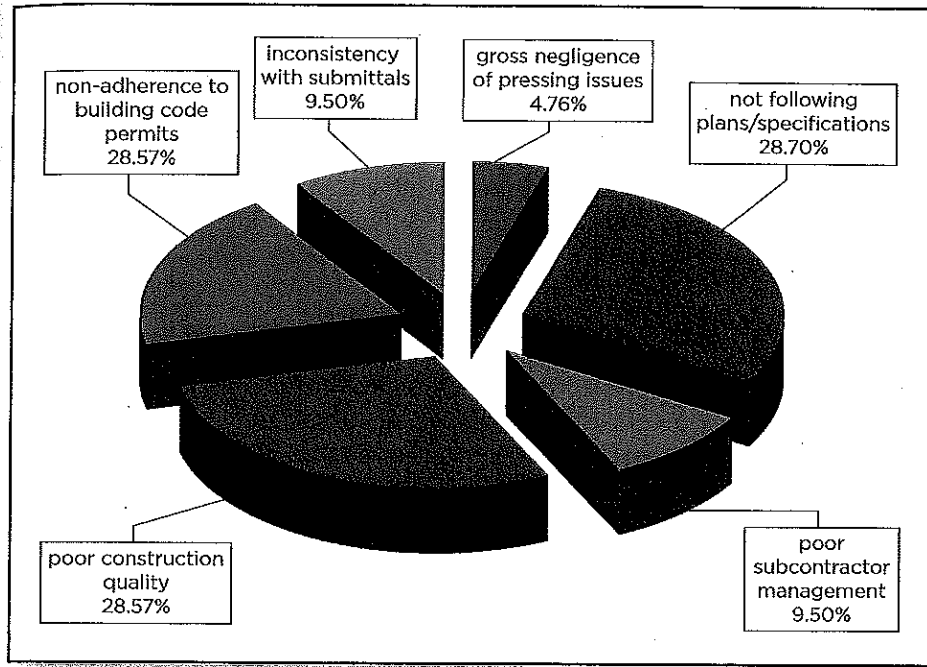


FIGURE 11-7 Use of Boxed Labels

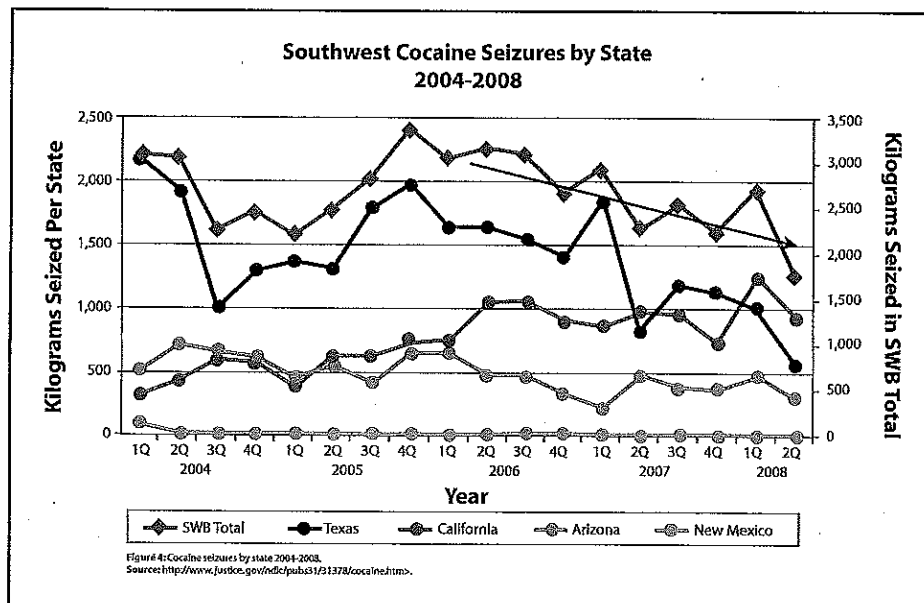


FIGURE 11-8 Effective Slide with a Line Graph

PLANNING YOUR PRESENTATION—QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK

Analyze each point listed previously by answering the following questions, just as you did in planning your written communication.

Audience.

- Who is my audience?
- What do I know about my audience—background, knowledge, position in the organization, attitudes toward me and my subject?

Purpose.

- What is my purpose in giving this oral presentation?
- Is there (should there be) a long-range purpose?
- What is the situation that led to this presentation?
- Given my audience's background and attitudes, do I need to reshape my purpose to make my presentation more acceptable to my audience?

Context.

- At what location will I speak?
- What events have occurred or may transpire in the organization (theirs or mine) that may affect how my audience perceives what I say?

Content.

- What ideas do I want to include and not include?
- Based on the audience and the context, what difficulties do I need to anticipate in choosing content?
- Can any ideas be misconstrued and prove harmful to me or my organization?

Graphics.

- What kinds of visuals will I need to enhance the ideas I will present?
- Where should I use these visuals in my presentation?

Style.

- What kind of tone do I want to use in addressing my audience?
- What kind of image—of myself and my organization—do I want to project?
- What level of language do I need to use, based on my audience's background and knowledge of my subject?
- What approach will my audience expect from me?
- How formal should I be?

SPEAKING TO MULTICULTURAL AUDIENCES

As organizations become more international, presentations to groups in other cultures must respond positively to your presentation. Understand how people from other cultures think, how they say it, how you dress, and how you behave. Your presentation may also have to be changed as you learn its different meaning in another culture.

In your library and online, you can find resources that help you understand the perspective of your audience and the content you will present. Your understanding of the cultural differences will help you correctly discerning their needs.

DESIGNING EACH SEGMENT

The oral presentation has to have a clear structure. If you have said something, the audience must understand it when you do not understand a sentence, you must repeat the passage as many times as necessary. You must design your presentation with a clear structure.

Audiences generally do not enjoy long presentations. Audiences will tire even when a presentation is good. Look for ways to keep your message clear. Look for your audience needs, but look for ways to keep your message clear without carefully analyzing your audience's background knowledge of the topic. Decide either content or arrangement.

Choose an interesting title. Give your audience a title that, at the very least, reflects the content in an interesting way. The title of an oral presentation is for the content you will present.

Develop your presentation around your audience. Your audience follow your message requires a certain amount of redundancy. That means repetition. In the introduction, you "tell them what you are going to tell them"; and in the conclusion, you "tell them what you have told them." Repetition helps your audience understand what you are making. (Again, readers can "re-

SPEAKING TO MULTICULTURAL AUDIENCES

As organizations become more international, you may find that you need to give presentations to groups in other countries. Because you will want any audience to respond positively to your presentation, you will need to do research to understand how people from other cultures will likely interpret what you say, how you say it, how you dress, and how you act in your dealings with them. The visuals you use may also have to be changed as symbols in one culture may have an entirely different meaning in another culture.

In your library and online, you will find a list of resources and books that can help you understand the perspectives of international audiences. As you consider your audience and the content you want to present to this audience, remember that your understanding of the cultural profile of your listeners is perhaps as important as your correctly discerning their knowledge of your topic and their interest level.

DESIGNING EACH SEGMENT

The oral presentation has to have thoughtful structure for one main reason: once you have said something, the audience cannot “rehear” what you said. In reading, when you do not understand a sentence or paragraph, you can stop and reread the passage as many times as necessary. To help your audience follow what you say, you must design your presentation with your audience’s listening limitations in mind.

Audiences generally do not enjoy long presentations. Listening is difficult, and audiences will tire even when a presentation is utterly fascinating. For that reason, look for ways to keep your message as concise as possible. Don’t omit information your audience needs, but look for ways to eliminate nonessential material. Again, without carefully analyzing your audience—their attitude toward the subject, their background knowledge of the topic, their perspective toward you—you cannot decide either content or arrangement of content.

Choose an interesting title. Grab your audience’s attention by developing a title that, at the very least, reflects the content of your presentation but does so in an interesting way. The title of an oral presentation should prepare your audience for the content you will present.

Develop your presentation around three main divisions. Helping your audience follow your message requires that you build into your structure a certain amount of redundancy. That means that you reiterate main points. In the introduction, you “tell them what you are going to tell them”; in the main body, you “tell them”; and in the conclusion, you “tell them what you told them.” This kind of deliberate repetition helps your audience follow and remember the main points you are making. (Again, readers can “reread” text, but listeners cannot “rehear” oral

remarks.) To design your presentation with planned repetition, you must clearly know your purpose and what you want your audience to know.

Plan the introduction carefully. During the introduction you focus your audience's attention on your theme and the way you plan to present the theme. Unless the introduction is effective and interests the audience, you will have difficulty keeping your audience's attention. The effective introduction thus tells your audience how to listen, what to expect, and the path you will follow in presenting your message. You may also wish to introduce your topic with an attention-getting device: a startling fact, a relevant anecdote, a rhetorical question, or a statement designed to arouse your audience's interest. Again, the device you choose will depend on the audience, the occasion, and the purpose of the presentation.

Or if your audience is unreceptive or unfamiliar with the subject, you may want to include background material to help them grasp and process your main points:

1. Acknowledge that you perceive the problem that your audience has with you or your topic.
2. Establish a common ground with the audience—your points of agreement.
3. Attempt to refute (if you can do so efficiently) erroneous assumptions that you believe the audience may have about you or the subject.
4. Ask the audience to allow you the opportunity to present your information as objectively as possible.

Design the body. In the introduction you state the main issues or topics you plan to present. Thus, in designing the body of the presentation, you develop what you want to say about each of these main points or ideas. You may want to present your ideas in a chronological sequence, a logical sequence, or a simple topical sequence. This method will help your audience follow your ideas if you are giving an informative speech, an analytical speech, or a persuasive speech. The important point, however, is that you need to demarcate and announce each point in the body as you come to it so that your audience knows when you have completed one point and begun another.

Design the conclusion. The conclusion reinforces the main ideas you wish your audience to retain. How you design the conclusion will depend on your initial purpose. A strong conclusion is nearly as important as a strong introduction because both the beginning and the end will be the parts most likely remembered.

CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY STYLE

Avoid speaking in a "written" style. Use phrases, and use a variety of sentence lengths. Avoid excessively long, complex sentences as listeners may have difficulty following your ideas. In general, keep your sentences short. If you concentrate on getting your point across by having a conversation with the audience, you will

likely use a natural, also apply to clarity

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- Avoid jargon, u with all special
- Use short, activ

TECHNIQUES COMPREHENSIVE

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likely use a natural, conversational style. Many suggestions for clarity in writing also apply to clarity in speaking:

- Avoid long, cumbersome sentences. Long sentences can be as hard to hear as they are to read.
- Avoid abstract, polysyllabic words. Instead, use concrete language that your audience can visualize.
- Avoid jargon, unless you are sure that your audience will be readily familiar with all specialized terms.
- Use short, active-voice sentences.

TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE AUDIENCE COMPREHENSION

Because your audience cannot "rehear" ideas, once you have stated them, look for ways to help your audience easily follow your ideas:

1. Be sure you clearly demarcate the beginning and end of each point and segment of your presentation:
 - Announce each main topic as you come to it so that your audience knows when you have completed one topic and are beginning the next one.
 - Allow a slight pause to occur after you have completed your introduction, and then announce your first topic.
 - After completing your final topic in the main body of your presentation, allow a slight pause before you begin your conclusion.
2. Speak slowly, vigorously, and enthusiastically. Be sure you pronounce your words carefully, particularly if you are addressing a large group or a multicultural group.
3. Use gestures to accentuate points. Move your body deliberately, to aid you in announcing major transition points. In short, avoid standing transfixed before your audience.
4. Maintain eye contact with your audience. Doing so helps you keep your listeners involved in what you are saying. If you look at the ceiling, the floor, or the corners of the room, your audience may sense a lack of self-confidence. Lack of eye contact also tends to lessen your credibility. In contrast, consistent eye contact enhances the importance of the message. By looking at your audience, you can often sense their reaction to what you are saying and make adjustments in your presentation if necessary.
5. Do not memorize your presentation. You don't want it to sound like something you are reciting to your listeners. You want it to seem like your turn in a conversation you are having with your listeners.
6. Do not read your slides to your audience. Allow them to see the information on your slide before you begin discussing the material or points on each slide.

7. Rehearse your presentation until you feel comfortable. Try walking around, speaking each segment, and then speaking aloud the entire presentation. Rephrase ideas that are difficult for you to say—these will likely be hard for your audience to follow. Be sure to time your presentation so that it does not exceed the time limit. Keep your presentation as short as possible.
8. If possible, record or videotape your speech. Listen to what you have said as objectively as possible. As you listen, consider the main issues of audience, purpose, organization, context, content, and style.
9. Listen for tone, attitude, and clarity. Is the tone you project appropriate for your audience and your purpose? Is each sentence easy to understand? Are you speaking too rapidly? Are the major divisions in your presentation easy to hear? Are any sentences difficult to understand?
10. Try not to provide the audience handout material before you begin. To do so encourages your audience to read rather than listen. If you must provide written material, be sure the material is coordinated with your presentation so that you keep your audience's attention on what you are saying as you are saying it.
11. When you use slides, tell the audience what they will see, show them the slide, give them time to digest what they are seeing, and then comment on the slide. Do not begin talking about another topic while a slide depicting a past topic is still showing. Remember: people cannot read and listen at the same time. Avoid using too many slides.
12. When you are planning your presentation, determine how you will handle questions. Prepare for questions your audience may ask and decide how you will answer each one. Again, unless you have analyzed your audience and the reason for your presentation, you will not be able to anticipate questions that will likely arise.
13. Keep the question and answer time moving briskly. Answer each question as concisely as possible, and then move to the next question. If you are faced with a difficult question, reword it or break it into several parts. Then answer each part. Be sure to restate questions if listeners in the back of the room are unable to hear them asked by those near the front.

DESIGNING AND PRESENTING THE WRITTEN PAPER

Papers presented at professional meetings are frequently read from written manuscripts if the material to be delivered is complex. These papers may then be published in the official proceedings of the professional society.

However, presentations may need to be read for other reasons:

1. A presentation that discusses company policy, a sensitive issue, or a topic that must be approved by someone in the organization before the presentation. In

situations like these, the approved, written manuscript is required.

2. A presentation that will be read by someone other than the speaker, such as a spouse or a friend, particularly if a possibility exists that the speaker will forget the content in the audience.
3. Inexperienced speakers who are uncomfortable reading from a script in front of you on the lecture stage, or who are forgetful of the content or forgetting important points.

Written presentations can be prepared carefully and then revised to improve the effectiveness of the oral report.

Structuring the written report. The structure of the written report is the same as that of the extemporaneous speech: introduction, the main body, and conclusion. The written report is structured like the extemporaneous speech, but it is written completely. If you know you will be asked to read it, write it like an article for publication. The purpose is to reveal the content and organize the material.

Writing the speech. After you have made final revisions in your manuscript, write the speech in sentences and paragraphs since it will be read aloud.

1. Be sure that you separate each section so that each section is beginning. Each section should begin with a sentence that summarizes the section. This is a device for revealing or summarizing what you have just heard or what you have just said.
2. Limit each section and paragraph length so that your audience can follow you while presenting.
3. Avoid excessive detail.
4. Use enumeration to help the audience know when one point is being made.
5. Avoid long sentences. If you must use a long sentence, make it easy to hear and follow as they are spoken.
6. Prune every sentence to its essentials.
7. Use active voice whenever possible to maintain the natural quality of spoken language.

situations like these, the presentation is carefully written and read from the approved, written manuscript to ensure accuracy.

2. A presentation that will be circulated or filed as documentation. In a situation like this one, a spokesperson may read a carefully prepared statement, particularly if a possibility exists that material may be misconstrued by those in the audience.
3. Inexperienced speakers who must deal with a difficult problem may be more comfortable reading from a prepared manuscript. With the manuscript in front of you on the lectern, you don't have to worry about losing your train of thought or forgetting important details.

Written presentations can be effective if the speaker plans and writes the presentation carefully and then utilizes a number of delivery techniques to enhance the effectiveness of the oral reading.

Structuring the written speech. The structure of the written speech is the same as that of the extemporaneous speech. The speech has three main parts: the introduction, the main body, and the conclusion. Each section should be structured like the extemporaneous speech. However, you will need to write each section completely. If you know that the speech will be published, you may wish to write it like an article for publication or a report and use headings and subheadings to reveal the content and organization of the speech.

Writing the speech. After you have designed the content of your paper and made final revisions in your ideas, you will need to give close attention to your sentences and paragraphs since you will be reading these directly from the page.

1. Be sure that you separate each section from the other sections. This means that each section should have an overview that clearly announces that the section is beginning. Each paragraph should also begin with a topic sentence that summarizes the content of the paragraph. In short, in writing a speech to be read, you are making a concerted effort to accentuate every device for revealing organization since your audience cannot stop and re-hear what you have just said.
2. Limit each section and each paragraph within sections to one idea. Watch length so that your audience will not lose track of the main idea you are presenting.
3. Avoid excessive detail.
4. Use enumeration to help your audience follow your main points and to know when one point has ended and the next point is beginning.
5. Avoid long sentences. Long sentences are as difficult (or more difficult) to hear and follow as they are to read.
6. Prune every sentence to make it as clear and concise as possible.
7. Use active voice whenever possible so that your sentences will preserve the natural quality of spoken language.

8. Type your presentation in a large type—12-point type or larger. Triple space and leave wide margins on each side of the page.
9. With a marker, draw a “break” line after the introduction, between each main point in the body, and before the conclusion.
10. Underline or highlight important phrases or sentences throughout the presentation.
11. Consider using visuals, even though these may not be published separately.

Again, choose visuals that will clarify any difficult or important points.

Practicing the presentation.

1. Read each sentence aloud. Rewrite sentences that are difficult for you to say.
2. As you practice reading the presentation, try to look directly at your audience and speak important phrases or sentences to the audience.
3. Use overviews and topic sentences to announce each major topic as you come to it. To further alert your audience to the beginning of a new point, pause briefly, look at your audience, then read your overview statement or topic sentence. If possible, try to speak these to your audience instead of reading them.
4. As you practice reading your presentation, continue to listen for any sentences or words that are difficult to articulate. Recast sentences and paragraphs that do not sound organized, logical, and clear. If possible, replace difficult words with others that are easier to speak.
5. As you read, speak slowly and enunciate clearly and distinctly.
6. Once you can read each sentence with ease and without haste, time your presentation to be sure that it does not exceed a time limit if you have been given one.
7. Read your speech into a recorder. Allow some time between recording and listening so that you can gain some objectivity. As you listen, check for sentences that are hard to follow. Listen for breaks between major sections and major points.

CHECKLIST PREPARING

Audience

- ☐ Who is your audience?
- ☐ What do you know about their position in the organization?
- ☐ What is the reason for the presentation?
- ☐ What is the audience likely to be?
- ☐ Is your audience likely to make adjustments?

Purpose

- ☐ What is your purpose?
- ☐ Is there (should be) a specific purpose?
- ☐ What is the specific purpose?
- ☐ Given your audience, adjust your purpose?

Context

- ☐ Where and when will the presentation be held?
- ☐ What events may affect the presentation?
- ☐ What equipment will be needed?
 - Slideware?
 - Audio?
 - Video?
 - Internet connection?
 - Chalkboard?
 - Flipchart?
 - Handouts?

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARING ORAL REPORTS

Audience

- ☐ Who is your audience?
- ☐ What do you know about your audience—background, knowledge, position in the organization, attitudes toward you and your subject?
- ☐ What is the relationship between you and your audience?
- ☐ What is the attitude of your audience toward you and your presentation likely to be?
- ☐ Is your audience from a culture markedly different from yours? What adjustments to your presentation will any such differences require?

Purpose

- ☐ What is your purpose in giving this oral presentation?
- ☐ Is there (should there be) a long-range purpose?
- ☐ What is the situation that led to this presentation?
- ☐ Given your audience's background and attitudes, do you need to adjust your purpose to make your presentation more suitable for your audience?

Context

- ☐ Where and when will you be speaking?
- ☐ What events will be transpiring in the organization (theirs or yours) that may affect how your audience perceives what you say?
- ☐ What equipment, applications, and materials are available to you?
 - Slideware?
 - Audio?
 - Video?
 - Internet connection?
 - Chalkboard?
 - Flipchart and easel?
 - Handouts?

continued

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARING ORAL REPORTS

continued

Content

- ☐ What ideas do you want to include and exclude?
- ☐ Based on the audience and the context, what difficulties do you need to anticipate in choosing content?
- ☐ Can any ideas be misconstrued and prove harmful to you or your organization?
- ☐ Do you have a good opening that will interest your audience and create a friendly atmosphere?
- ☐ Have you limited your major points to fit within your allotted time?
- ☐ Does your talk contain sufficient examples, analogies, narratives, and data to support your generalizations? Have you repeated key points?
- ☐ Can you relate your subject matter to some vital interest of your audience?

Graphics

- ☐ What kinds of visuals will you need to clarify or reinforce the ideas you will discuss?
- ☐ Where should you use these in your presentation?
- ☐ Are these visuals immediately readable and understandable?
- ☐ Do they successfully focus the listeners' attention and augment and clarify your message?
- ☐ Do they meet the four criteria that govern good graphics?
 - Visibility
 - Clarity
 - Simplicity
 - Controllability

Style

- ☐ What kind of tone do you want to use in addressing your audience?
- ☐ What kind of image—of yourself and your organization—do you want to project?
- ☐ What level of language do you need to use, based on your audience's background and knowledge of your subject?
- ☐ What approach will your audience expect from you?
- ☐ How formal should you be?
- ☐ Which delivery technique will be more appropriate? Extemporaneous? Manuscript?

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARING ORAL REPORTS

- ☐ If you are speaking extemporaneously, do you have an outline to guide you?
- ☐ If you will be reading from a script, do you have a conversational tone in your delivery?
- ☐ Do you have a good example of an anecdote that supports your main point?
- ☐ Have you rehearsed your presentation?

Questions and Answers

- ☐ What questions might you expect? Have you prepared answers to these questions?
- ☐ How will you keep your audience interested?
- ☐ Do you have a specific time limit for your presentation?

EXERCISES

1. Examine Figure 11-9, a drawing of a field. A manager will read and glance at the drawing. He will also give the feedback in terms of the advice given at the beginning of the chapter. Suggest ways to improve the drawing.
2. Prepare a five-minute/seven-minute presentation on your field the job opportunity.
3. Prepare a slide presentation on your field the job opportunity. Your slides to distribute to your audience.
4. Your supervisor asks you to prepare a report on your findings. He is pleased with your report and asks you to prepare a manuscript on the job. Adapt

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARING ORAL REPORTS *continued*

- ☐ If you are speaking extemporaneously, have you prepared a speech outline to guide you?
- ☐ If you will be reading from a manuscript, have you introduced a conversational tone into your talk? Is your typed manuscript easy to read from?
- ☐ Do you have a good ending ready, perhaps a summary of key points or an anecdote that supports your purpose? If you began with a story, do you want to go back to it now?
- ☐ Have you rehearsed your talk several times?

Questions and Answers

- ☐ What questions might the audience ask? Are you prepared to answer these questions?
- ☐ How will you keep your answers concise and direct?
- ☐ Do you have a specific time limit for questions? How will you keep track of your time?

EXERCISES

1. Examine Figure 11-9, a draft of a presentation about ethanol that a college agriculture engineering student will give to a high school FFA class. The speaker will read and glance at the written paper as he does not feel confident in speaking. He will also give the FFA teacher his written speech. Examine the speech in terms of the advice given above for writing a speech that you will read. Can you suggest ways to improve the style?
2. Prepare a five-minute/seven-slide presentation explaining to new majors in your field the job opportunities available to graduates of the program.
3. Prepare a slide presentation of your major semester project, including a copy of your slides to distribute to your audience as a pdf file for their mobile devices.
4. Your supervisor asks you to study the use of Facebook in the workplace and report your findings. He is pleased with your slide presentation (see Figure 11-10) and asks you to prepare a memo to all new hires stipulating the "rules" for using Facebook on the job. Adapt your slide presentation for this memo.

Ethanol in Fuel: Benefits and Problems

Introduction

Good morning! Mr. Bradshaw has asked me to explain to our FFA the benefits and problems of using gasoline that contains ethanol in engines of farm equipment. The abundance of corn and the increasing price of gasoline have made ethanol seem like the obvious solution to the energy crisis. However, when we look deeper into the issue, we find that ethanol has many flaws that possibly lower its value as a fuel alternative. Although ethanol does have benefits, the negative effects, from my perspective, overshadow the benefits.

Ethanol at a Glance—The Main Facts

- Gasoline that contains ethanol is named for the percentage of ethanol in the mixture (i.e., E10 contains 10% ethanol and E15 contains 15% ethanol).
- Congress has approved gasoline to contain up to 15% ethanol.
- Fermented plants such as corn and grain produce ethanol.
- Ethanol oxygenates gasoline, which causes the gasoline to combust cleaner and more completely.
- Those of you who live on farms which have corn as the main crop see ethanol as a financial windfall.

Keep in mind that ethanol has two sides.

Benefits of Ethanol

First, Ethanol burns cleaner than gasoline. As a result, ethanol, when added to gasoline, reduces harmful exhaust emissions. Experts claim that greenhouse gases released by an ethanol-gasoline mixture are 12% to 19% less than pure gasoline.[1] **Second**, ethanol supplements gasoline, which is often imported. Thus, ethanol advocates see it as a way to reduce dependence on foreign oil. Ethanol, on average, is cheaper than its equivalent volume in gasoline. **Third**, advocates see ethanol as a renewable resource, created from plants. Thus, many people see it as a solution to the energy crisis.[2] After ethanol is created, the remains of the corn are used for animal feed. Ethanol can be recycled into the agriculture industry.[1] **Fourth**, agriculture benefits from ethanol production because of the stability that the need for grains brings to the industry. Over the past few years, the price of corn has increased. This increase has a strong correlation to the increased use of ethanol in gasoline. The increase value of corn means more jobs and one way to improve the economy of America.

However, ethanol also has a downside:

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FIGURE 11-9 Written Report for Exercise 1

FIGURE 11-10

Ethanol's Downside

Reduced Fuel Efficiency

Yes, ethanol can be used as an alternative to gasoline. However, the efficiency of ethanol as compared to gasoline is lower. Studies have shown that E10 and E15 have produced 3–5% less mileage than the equivalent volume of pure gasoline.[3] This trend is magnified in vehicles with low fuel efficiency ratings. Recently, Consumer Reports tested a 2007 Chevy Tahoe with E85 and pure gasoline. The study showed a decrease from 14 mpg to 10 mpg, a 28.5% decrease, when E85 replaced gasoline.[2]

Corrosive Properties of Ethanol

Ethanol, an alcohol, is created through a distillation process.[4] Ethanol is considered a solvent, which means that it can wear away plastics, rubbers, and other materials.[2] This becomes a problem when the worn parts are inside an engine. These parts must be replaced regularly to keep the engine running at its full potential. Repairs can cost hundreds, even thousands, of dollars. The residue from the dissolved parts builds up on filters and valves and further reduces engine efficiency.[3] Seals, hoses, and even fuel tanks can weaken, causing interruptions in the fuel flow and, in worst-case scenarios, leaks of the highly flammable fuel. Older engines and parts are especially susceptible to the corrosive properties of ethanol because engine designers did not make these parts to withstand the damage ethanol could cause.[4]

Tendency to Attract Water

Alcohols have a tendency to attract and retain water, and ethanol is no exception. [3] When you store an ethanol–gasoline mix for long periods of time, the ethanol will attract all of the water in the tank. As a result, water will cause the mixture to separate. If the separated mixture is then used in the engine, the engine will not run properly, and damage could occur.

Conclusion

The information provided should raise concerns about the use of ethanol in mechanized farm equipment. Although the increased use of corn, to distill ethanol, has provided growth and stability in the agriculture industry, the harmful effects of ethanol could outweigh its positive effects. While ethanol reduces the release of greenhouse gases into the air, the loss of fuel efficiency requires more fuel to be burned. The result: release of more greenhouse gases. This factor counteracts any positive effects of ethanol. You need to compare reduction of gasoline price with the cost of engine repair.

continued

FIGURE 11-9 *continued*

Agriculture equipment companies are looking at ways to slow damage of ethanol to engine parts. Using pure unleaded gas offers another solution, but until congressional action occurs, ag engineers must focus on making engine parts resistant to the corrosive effects of ethanol. E10 causes the lowest amount of damage, but many states have already shifted to E20, which has proven extremely corrosive.

One further point: the price of engine repair also has to be considered when you figure the cost of ethanol.

Questions?

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FIGURE 11-9 *continued*

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Dalton Jones

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FIGURE 11-10 Document

Facebook

Dalton Jones

Background

- Facebook is a social networking site where users can interact with friends and family through messaging, posts, pictures, and much more
- Users can choose to have their profile selectively or completely private
- Users can also interact with fan pages that are made by companies or certain groups

FIGURE 11-10 Document for Exercise 4

Does Facebook Fit Our Needs?

- Is Facebook a useful tool to review applicants or employees?
 - Is the company following the law when retrieving this information?
- What should the company policy be inside and outside the workplace?
- Should the company have a Facebook page?

Part of the Community

- "If you can use social networking sites as ways to connect to real people ... your business will do better"
- The company can respond to the public's complaints or concerns in real time
- Having positive comments is a good way for customers to refer us to their friends
- Do we have a big enough fan base to make a Facebook page?³

FIGURE 11-10 *continued*

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E-Professionalism

- Employees should also be aware of privacy settings
 - Younger age groups have been shown to be more proactive in changing their privacy settings⁴
- "Companies should adopt a social media policy to address use."¹
 - "The safest legal path is to have a policy that clearly sets forth prohibited posts"¹
- Problems with treating Facebook as a casual media site are very similar to the early days of e-mails¹

8

Monitoring

- Legal repercussions may occur if discrimination is taking place
- Some states have made it illegal to terminate an employee for "lawful, off-work conduct"¹
- Policy evolves, and we need to keep updated on it
- The main concern of intellectual property being leaked might be a good enough reason to monitor employees¹

FIGURE 11-10 *continued*

Conclusion

- You must take many issues into account when making these choices
- Legally monitoring employees will help maintain the company's reputation
- Meetings that go over company guidelines will be needed
- Without a public consumer base, the company doesn't need a Facebook page to receive customer feedback

Small Tip

- The default settings on Facebook don't include secure browsing
- Why?
 - Facebook applications can't assure a secure network
 - Loading times are longer
- If you aren't on a secure connection, your login information could be compromised
- Is your company password the same as your Facebook password?²

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FIGURE 11-10 continued

FIGURE 11-10 continued

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FIGURE 11-10 *continued*