



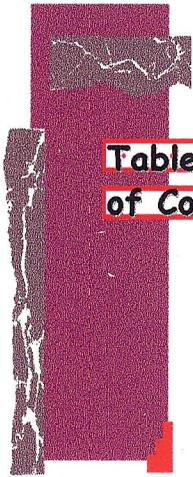
Effective

Briefing

Techniques

Designed to Improve the Art of Public Speaking

Jae Limited
www.jaelimited.com



EFFECTIVE BRIEFING TECHNIQUES

Chapter 1 - Writing Your Script	1
Chapter 2 - Public Speaking Overview	9
Chapter 3 - Nervousness	13
Chapter 4 - Types of Presentations	17
Chapter 5 - What is Style, and How Can I Make It Work for Me?	21
Chapter 6 - Verbal Communications	25
Chapter 7 - Understanding Your Nonverbal Communications	27
Chapter 8 - Tips to Improve Your Presentation	31
Chapter 9 - Those Incredible Props	35
Chapter 10- The Only Reason You're There - The Audience	39
Chapter 11- Does Your Appearance Play a Role in Successful Presentations?	45
Chapter 12- Handling Questions and Answers Like a Pro	47
Chapter 13- And Now in Closing	49
Chapter 14- Time to Look Inward - Your Personal Coaching Plan	51

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Chapter 1

WRITING YOUR SCRIPT

I did not inform my audience of the truth that I had stolen the line, with minimum alterations, from Dr. Samuel Johnson, I didn't want to burden them with too many footnotes. - Jack Valenti

■ Getting Started

Getting started is usually the hardest part of speech writing. Before you think about what you're going to say, start with: "Why am I giving the presentation?" Your entire presentation should be centered around your answer. Everything that you write and say should focus on the reason for your presentation.

Follow these simple steps for speech writing:

STEPS TO WRITING YOUR SCRIPT

1. Determine your goal
2. Analyze your audience
3. Define your content
4. Decide what to include
5. Gather the information
6. Organize the information
7. Write the script
8. Revise the script



Step 1: Determine Your Goal

Determining your goal is the first step in the speech writing process. *Why are you giving the presentation?* What result do you want to achieve after your audience has heard you? Also, factor in your host's expectations.

Step 2: Analyze Your Audience

The next step is to research and typify your audience. Who will be listening to your presentation? Who are they? What are their needs, values, beliefs, likes and dislikes? The more you know about your audience, the easier it is to prepare your presentation. It's easier to talk to people you know than it is to talk to strangers. Do your homework; get to know your audience.

Think about your presentation from your audience's perspective. Not yours!
What do they want or need from you?

There are several ways to gather information about your audience:

- ✘ Request a list of attendees from the person who asked you to present.
- ✘ Study background information on the organization you're speaking to, e.g., an organization chart, public information literature, or a mission statement.
- ✘ Interview others who have spoken to the group.
- ✘ Talk with some attendees in advance of your presentation.



AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

- How many people will be there?
- What is the gender make-up?
- How old are they?
- Will there be any cultural or regional influences?
- What are their educational levels?
- What are the occupational or professional levels?
- Do they use jargon?
- How much money do they make?
- Do they have any subject-matter knowledge? From where?
- Will technical experts be there?
- Do they have biases about your subject? You? Your material? Your organization? (Will they be receptive, hostile, indifferent?)
- Do you have to "prove yourself" before being accepted?
- Why are they there?
- What are their goals, expectations, wants?
- Will they appreciate humor?
- What would get and keep their attention?
- What would get negative reactions?
- What objections or questions might they have?
- Do they want to hear from you, will they even listen?

Step 3: Define Your Content

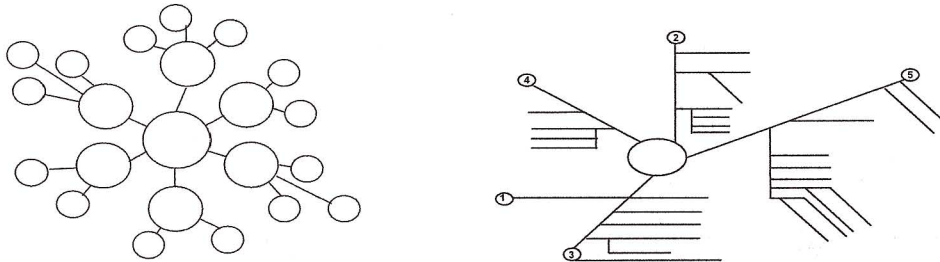
What does your audience need to know in order to achieve your goal? What information or knowledge must they gain by the end of your presentation so that you will achieve the desired outcome? That's the information you need to cover; it's called the subject or topic.



Step 4: Decide What to Include

Now decide what specific information to include. It's called brainstorming. You can do this either alone or with others. List everything you can think of that might be relevant to your subject. Simply put the main ideas and subordinate ideas on paper. Then determine which ideas relate to the purpose of your presentation. Later, cross out those that don't support your purpose. Brainstorming is often done with a group of people.

You can still brainstorm when you're alone. This is called mind-mapping or clustering. Put your central theme in the middle of the paper then place supporting points around that theme. Also, list subpoints. Finally, connect related thoughts together with lines. Here are two samples:



As you're considering what material to include in your presentation, ask yourself:

- ⊗ What points are critical so that I can achieve my purpose?
- ⊗ What points do I want my audience to remember?

Limit your material to these points. Extra points may be viewed as extraneous, off-topic and a waste of time.

Step 5: Gather the Information

This step takes time and a little research. That can mean reading and reviewing agency files or correspondence, having discussions with colleagues and interviewing technical experts. Do whatever it takes to know your subject to the proper degree. You can't give an effective presentation on a topic that you don't know yourself.

In order to prepare an in-depth presentation, do plenty of research. If the research is poor or incomplete, even good writing and speaking skills won't cover up weak material.

There are three general ways to research; it all depends on your subject-matter knowledge and the purpose of your presentation. The methods are interviewing, observing and reading. Depending on your own expertise, complexity of the subject or other factors, you may find it necessary to use one or more of the methods.

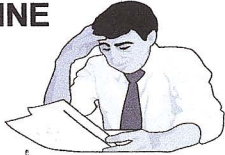
Step 6: Organize the Information

For some, organizing the information is the toughest part. Start to organize your material by writing an outline from your mind-mapped picture. Order the information so that it's understandable and logical for your audience. Choose a simple pattern or sequence, for example, background, analysis, options, solutions with supporting rationale, request for approval. Your material must be organized so that the facts lead to or support your conclusion.

In your outline, ensure that your key points:

- ✘ Are interesting and few in number
- ✘ Support the purpose of your presentation
- ✘ Lead the audience to reach your desired conclusion

SUPPORTING DATA FOR YOUR OUTLINE	
✘ Examples	✘ Comparisons
✘ Quotes	✘ Findings
✘ Statistics	✘ Graphs and charts
✘ Testimonials	✘ Stories



Your outline is your blueprint or road map when you start to write your script. Without an outline, script writing becomes more difficult and time consuming because there's no destination in sight. In essence, you're writing aimlessly without direction.

Step 7: Write the Script

Based on your outline, start your first draft by amplifying the important points with their supporting points.

To make it a little easier to organize your thoughts, think about the following:

- ✘ Decide what would get the audience's attention.
- ✘ Think about what you'd like to get across.
- ✘ Imagine being in front of the group. Are you the only speaker or one of several? Who is before or after you? Are you going before or after lunch? Will your audience be hungry, sleepy? Will anyone argue with your views?

Your script should be as conversational as possible. That means *write as you speak*. Remember, your presentation is spoken, so write it as you would typically talk. A briefing that sounds like a written report ultimately puts your audience to sleep and keeps you from showing off your personality. Conversational language is far less artificial than written words.