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## Part 4    Phrases for Presenting the Content

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# Part 1
# Preparing for Your Presentation

Whether you are speaking in your mother tongue or in a second language, a successful presentation requires thorough preparation. You can begin organizing your ideas by considering these six essential elements of presentation preparation:

↺ 1. Learning About the Audience
↺ 2. Assembling the Outline
↺ 3. Creating Your Own Outline
↺ 4. Preparing the Format
↺ 5. Enhancing Your Delivery
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# Learning About the Audience

With the subject of your presentation in mind, you should begin by learning all you can about your audience.

## 1→ Politics, culture, and language

Your ultimate goal is to deliver a clear message about the subject; however, to do that successfully, you must establish a good relationship with the audience. You can create good rapport with the audience members if you research information beforehand about their politics, culture, and language.

❶ Are there any cultural or political topics that you want to highlight or stay away from?

❷ Will engaging the audience with questions be offensive or inappropriate?

❸ Is humor appropriate or not? And if so, what kind?

❹ Are there other non-native speakers in the audience? Will you have to simplify your language?

## 2→ Professional backgrounds

Detailed information about your audience's professional background can also be extremely valuable. Knowing the professional roles, titles, and responsibilities of the audience members can help you decide what you want to say to them and how you want to say it.

❶ Does the audience include salespeople, technicians, managers, or entry-level staff?

❷ Have any audience members been employed by other major companies?

❸ Are there any mutual relationships with previous employers?

# 3 → Technical knowledge

Another bit of helpful information about audience members is their level of knowledge about the subject matter of your presentation. Knowing what your audience knows can help you present the material at the appropriate level—especially if the information is technical.

❶ How familiar is your audience with the technical parts of your presentation?

❷ What is the audience's area of expertise/level of education?

❸ How many years of experience in the field does the audience have?

# 4 → Opinions and values

In 380 B.C., Aristotle said, "The fool persuades me with his reasons; the wise man persuades me with my own."

Certainly, this idea remains true today. Here are some in-depth questions to consider about your audience's opinions and values:

❶ **What is the audience's position regarding the subject matter?**
→ Is your audience already for or against what you are going to say?

❷ **How does the audience feel about you as the presenter?**
→ Are there people in the audience who know you?

❸ **Will audience members be skeptical or supportive?**
→ What are the audience's expectations?

❹ **What kind of presentation is the audience used to?**
→ What is the audience's standard of excellence?

❺ **Are audience members attending because they want to be here?**
→ Do they actually care about what you have to say?

❻ **How will audience members benefit from the presentation?**
→ Can you give them valuable information?

❼ **What kind of information will be valuable to this particular audience?**
→ What motivates the audience?
→ How can audience members be inspired to act or buy?

## 5→Methods of background information research

**There are a number of ways to find out detailed background information:**

✓ ❶ Speak to individual audience members by telephone or email a few days or weeks before the presentation.

✓ ❷ Send a questionnaire or survey to all audience members.

✓ ❸ Talk with people's coworkers or managers.

✓ ❹ Research current data on the industry and company.

✓ ❺ Talk with audience members directly right before the presentation begins.

✓ ❻ Ask questions during the presentation.

✓ ❼ Talk to the audience after the presentation to confirm that people got your message and their needs were met.

✓ ❽ Ask audience members to complete an evaluation form after your presentation.

**Read the situation and audience descriptions below.**

### The situation

Imagine that you are a sales representative from an American car dealership that specializes in hybrid vehicles. You have been asked to give a presentation to a group of city council members who are considering purchasing hybrid vehicles for the city's Public Works Department. The city is rapidly growing and has about 82,000 people, with a modest downtown core, many parks, clean air, and a number of booming commercial and residential areas.

### The audience

The audience is a group of mostly liberal city council members who want to know the general benefits of hybrid cars and the specific benefits of employing the vehicles in this situation.

Analyze the general benefits of hybrid cars listed below and then imagine how the benefits could be altered slightly to appeal specifically to the situation and audience described above. Rewrite each benefit to fit this audience.

| 1. Cheaper operating costs | It costs almost $940 less per year to run a hybrid car (assuming 15,000 miles of driving per year). |
| --- | --- |
| 2. Audience-specific benefit | The cheaper operating costs of hybrid cars will save money for the city's taxpayers. |
| 3. Better mileage | In ideal conditions, a hybrid car is capable of 45.83 miles per gallon. |
| 4. Less air pollution | Hybrid cars can reduce air pollution by 90 percent. |
| 5. Less global warming | Increased fuel efficiency also results in lower production of carbon dioxide, a major factor in global warming. |

# EXERCISES

## Answer the summary questions below.

1 What has to be established in order to successfully deliver a message?

2 What are three things to consider for improving your rapport with the audience?

3 In addition to culture, politics, and language, what are four other kinds of valuable information about the audience members?

4 What did Aristotle say about persuading an audience?

5 List five methods for obtaining information about an audience that would be most suitable for your work environment.

6 Compare and discuss the answers to question 5.