

## Prepare Any Presentation in 10 Minutes

Want more time on the golf course? Want more time to curl up with the latest Grisham novel? Stay with me through this article, and I will give you a tool guaranteed to free up a huge chunk of the time that you're devoting (maybe grudgingly) to preparing your presentations. I travel the globe teaching and coaching sales people, managers and executives how to be more effective in their presentations and get 100% buy-in in front of any audience. There is one element of my workshops and coaching that, without fail, produces a tremendous amount of enthusiasm from novice presenters and seasons pros alike. It is a process that I have developed for streamlining the preparation for *any* presentation. It is really a new way of looking at an old tool – one that will save until hours of your precious time. I use it for every presentation I make – and I make hundred of presentations every year. It's simple enough to teach to your beginning sales agents, yet effective enough to use for the toughest presentation you're called on to make.

As I have studied the part of presentation, the number one challenge I have discovered in truly being one's best is the lack of preparation. The difference between winning a high-dollar contract and walking away empty-handed is often a simple matter of preparation. Did the presenter take the time to develop a smooth-flowing presentation that clearly delivers all the necessary information and keeps the audience's attention while answering their potential objectives? Lack of preparation can be, for the beginning presenter, a pain avoidance technique. *If I dread doing something enough, I can put it off indefinitely.* For the more experienced presenter, however, it can be plain old procrastination. *So many other things are calling my name, I'll just put off preparing this pitch until another time.* The key for both ends of the spectrum is to take action NOW.

Whether the presentation is scheduled in several weeks, or in an hour, using my simple process can get the presentation on paper, and offer your stress list in 10 minutes.

The tool: the 3-D Outline™. This is not a traditional outline of key points – it is much more than that, yet it takes only a few minutes to learn. If you will invest a few minutes of your time absorbing the following paragraph, you will learn a skill that will cut the preparation time of your next presentation in half, significantly reduce pre-presentation anxiety, and improve your closing ratio.

We call this outline 3-D because it is three-dimensional. Traditional presentation outlines are simply one-dimensional. They describe the “what” usually in a list of points and, perhaps, sub-points. Our process takes on added dimensions with the addition of :

- “why” each point is included  
and
- “how” each point will be made (lecture, facilitate, show a prop, etc.)

As you will see, the 3-D Outline™ can become a multi-functioning document. With so much information captured on one or two pages, the presentation can be designed, revised and even delivered from this single document – even with multiple presenters.

In addition to saving lots of time, there are other benefits to the 3-D Outline™ process:

- It assures an exercise in “mental rehearsal”
- It assures you that all your points can be covered in the time allowed
- It “forces” you to link the points of your presentation to the core objectives
- It helps you apply appropriate media to the various points
- It is an excellent tool to help manage the presentation as it is in progress

**The Process:** An important point as you begin: *Keep in mind that much is gained by simply getting your ideas down on paper.* The beauty of the 3-D Outline™ process is

that it is never carved in stone. Get your ideas down and rearrange them later if necessary.

All you need is a piece of paper, a napkin, flip chart or computer – it doesn't matter. I was delighted at the resourcefulness of one client in Japan who dutifully created a 3-D Outline™ for a \$250,000 project on the back of an airline ticket jacket. It was beautiful – a bit of a challenge for the folks in the Dallas office to decipher – but it did the trick. We fully understood our assignment and the client could “see” what he wanted us to produce. With whatever writing medium you choose, draw five (or more) columns like this:

<b>3-D Outline™</b>		<b>Name of Presentation Title:</b> _____		<b>Audience Size:</b> _____
<b>Objectives:</b>				
1.		3.		
2.		4.		
#	TIME (Minutes)	WHAT	WHY	HOW
1	10	OPENING • Welcome • Agenda	(i.e. To build rapport and share the direction for the presentation)	(i.e., overheads, workbook, video, activity, discussion, Power Point)
	10	PURPOSE • Ice Breaker •		
	10	POINT 1 •		
	10	POINT 2 •		
	10	POINT 3 •		
	5	SUMMARY •		
	5	CLOSING •		

**NOTE:** This 3-D Outline™ can be expanded to include “Who” for multiple presenters and “Where” for multiple locations

Before you start filling in the 3-D Outline™, identify the objectives of the presentation. The elements of the presentation that you outline need to somehow support these stated objectives:

- WHAT will be the actual content of the presentation?
- HOW will the information be presented and HOW long will the presentation last?
- WHY will audience members wish to act when they leave the presentation?

As you start filling in the details of your 3-D Outline™, write down the total number of minutes that you have available for the presentation. Then start assigning an appropriate number of minutes to each element or point until you have “spent” the allotted time. Remember, this is a work in-progress. Erase, or scratch out the number of minutes for each section until it feels right.

Keep in mind, most presentations have two things in common. They almost always have an Opening, and we hope they all have some sort of Closing. As I detail in *Inspire Any Audience* (TradeLife, 1997), these are possibly the most important parts of any presentation. How you use the Opening to alleviate audience tension, set up the topic and agenda, get involvement, etc. is the audience’s first impression of you and this presentation. Similarly, the Closing is the last, and possibly the most memorable moment of the presentation. Be sure to allow for any introductions or housekeeping issues that need to be addressed. A good rule of thumb is to use 10-15% of your time for the Opening and 5-10% for the Closing.

One more word on the Closing: *Keep it short, sweet and as emotional as possible.* Our advice to clients is to handle Q&A and summary *before* Closing to maximize the emotional impact of the Closing. Ending your presentation with an emotional call to

action and then asking for questions is a recipe for disaster. Answer the questions first, being sure to answer all hidden and stated objectives, and then hit 'em with the close. In fact, it is usually ideal to summarize briefly between the key points in the body of your presentation to help your audience remember important information and to avoid allowing an off-the-wall questions to derail your presentation at the crucial, emotional close.

Now that you have mapped out your Opening and Closing, and assigned the time for each, subtract their combined time from the total time that will be the number of minutes you have for the body of the presentation. Remember, stone tables were not in the recommended media list earlier, so if you see that you don't have enough time – or too much – CHANGE IT! You have the power.

Work the same process for each key area of your message. Decide on a way to sequence your material. Common ways to arrange data are chronological, current to vision, pain to pleasure, advantages and disadvantages, and so on.

Be honest with yourself in the “Why” column. Many times we will try to include a point, story or activity just because we like it, but when we get right down to it, it just doesn't fit the objectives we have to meet. Keep your objectives front and center and be sure that everything you say or do in your presentation has a good reason to be included.

Use the “How” column to show you when handouts should be distributed, what Power Point slides should be shown, when a group discussion is needed or when to tell a certain story or show a particular video clip. This column is invaluable in creating and keeping interest in your audience. Too often, we fall into rut in our presentations of always using overheads, or always using flip charts, or always using the same video clip.

A key to keeping the attention of your audience (and getting their buy-in) is to vary your media. The “How” column forces you to look more closely at how you will get your message across most effectively – and lets you see if you’re in a rut.

That’s it! The 3-D Outline™ sounds almost too simple to be effective. I have found, however, that no matter how good you are at preparing or delivering presentations right now, you will improve by using the 3-D Outline™. If, on the other hand, you, or the people you manage, are like the majority of the population, and feel somewhat inadequate in front of an audience, you have just uncovered a tool that can free you from endless hours of anxiety-ridden preparation and set you on a course toward a smooth-flowing virtually painless presentation.

There is one catch though. You have to actually *do* it. So, grab a pencil and paper and give yourself 10 minutes to map out your next presentation. The golf course and the enticing novel are beckoning.

Tony Jeary – Mr. Presentation™ - has conducted hundred of training events worldwide for a variety of clients including DaimlerChrysler, New York Life, Ford Wal-Mart, Sam’s Club and Texaco. Among his personal coaching clients are Peter Lowe and the president of Ford Motor Company. He is the author of over 10 books on the subject of presentation, including Inspire Any Audience and The Complete Guide to Effective Facilitation. For a free 1 page “10 Steps to Understanding, Building and Making Power Presentations” flow chart on the 3-D Outline™, and other information on personal coaching and custom presentation workshops, visit our website at [www.MrPresentation.com](http://www.MrPresentation.com), email Tony at [tony@hprinc.com](mailto:tony@hprinc.com), or call 1-877-2-INSPIRE

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