

**'Good presenters work hard to make presenting look easy.
The Presentation Book is their secret.'**

Denise Fay, founder and MD, Achieve Marketing, award-winning author, TEDx speaker



THE PRESENTATION BOOK

**HOW TO CREATE IT,
SHAPE IT AND DELIVER IT!**

second edition

Emma Ledden

Praise for *The Presentation Book*

'A succinctly written book on the dos and don'ts of presenting. Detailed and informative, this book not only teaches you the best skills to have in your presenting tool-belt, but also teaches you the importance of a good presentation in the modern world. A must-have for anyone entering or already part of the work-place!'

Claire Fox,
Freelance writer

'This book isn't just for presentation beginners! It has very valuable insights on how to get an audience spellbound and engaged with your presentation. This is a must-have for beginners and experts alike. If you like the stage, this book will make your audience like you on stage. If you have any degree of stage fright, this book will give you the confidence to be the presenter you always wanted to be.'

Frank Hattann, *The Sales Institute of Ireland*,
Digital Sales Advisory Council Member

'Not surprisingly, Emma has delivered the best book on presentation skills I have ever come across. Having experienced her training course first hand, and immediate success in selling consulting work shortly after, I can say with full confidence that she is exceptional at what she does. *The Presentation Book* provides compelling, practical and pithy advice that is easy to take in and apply. It will be my go-to resource for presentations and communications in general from now on.'

Robert Freese, *Director, Talent and Organisation Development*,
First Data Corporation

'*The Presentation Book* exemplifies what Emma does best – communicate the complex clearly, concisely and with great consideration for her audience. This is a truly insightful and practical book that will undoubtedly inspire many in the delivery of more impactful and influential communications.'

Johanna Fullerton, *business psychologist and Director*,
SEVEN, *Psychology at Work*

If you want people to know what's coming up once you have hooked them in, instead of giving them a full topic list, give them an overview of what is going to be covered to keep them interested or tell them what value they will walk away with at the end.

TODAY WE ARE GOING TO:

Talk about you and your needs

Tell you how we plan to solve your problem

Share some real life examples with you

You don't get a second chance to make a first impression

I cannot stress how important the beginning of your presentation is. The stronger the hook the more durable the audience's engagement will be. It is not easy to get someone to listen to you, but if you make sure they really understand the value of your information and what it can do for them you will succeed in getting their attention.

You do not need to employ any out-of-the-ordinary antics like juggling or joke-telling at the beginning of your presentation to get attention. I have seen so many of these tricks go horribly wrong and the presenter doesn't recover from the bad start.

All you have to do is answer one very simple question for your audience:

'Why should I listen to this presentation?'

4. Start at the end

The presentation structures I typically see fall into three categories:

▲ THE MYSTERY TOUR



The idea with a mystery tour is that the guide knows exactly where they are going but the audience hasn't got a clue. **This may be fun if you are on a team bonding day but in a presentation audiences do not favour this approach.** They are not willing to wait till the end for the best bit, to get what they need or understand why they should listen.

▲ THE MAZE



In this case the audience has no idea where the presentation is going and the presenter seems very confused as well. The presenter thought they had a clear path worked out in their head before they stood up, alas now the clear path is more of a labyrinth: 'No, wait hang on. No, not that way, sorry, I seem to have lost my way. Hang on . . . Let's try this way . . . Eh no. Any questions?'

▲ BACK TO THE FUTURE



I recently attended a presentation about the budget for this year. The presenter spent three-quarters of the presentation talking about the budget for 2007. I was very confused. I asked her afterwards why she took this approach. She told me she wanted to put things into context. **Giving a detailed background to support an eventual conclusion is not what your audience wants.** They are sitting there thinking, 'What's the point of this?' They want the result, the solution, the answer to their question and they want it now. Once you give them this you can then go back to the background, contextualise or give your perspective

Presenting the wrong way up

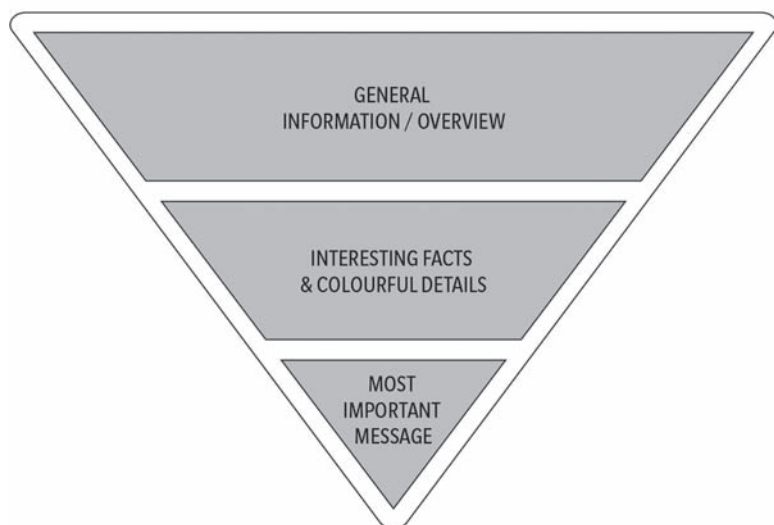
Most people when they structure presentations do so using what is called deductive reasoning. We saw this structure in action in Chapter 1 in the Space Shuttle *Columbia* story. *Deductive* reasoning moves from a general introduction to a more specific conclusion. Simply put, this means **building up to your strongest point instead of leading with it**.

The main reason this is a chosen approach is presenters want to establish themselves and their credibility before they give conclusions. Traditional Slide Focused Presenting heavily influences this approach.

Deductive reasoning means:

1. Beginning with a general overview, background or intro to the presenter and company
2. Going into detail about the topic, covering all possible areas
3. Finally, at the end, showing an executive summary or final slide that reveals the key message

▲ THE WRONG WAY UP



Just to be clear this is a very legitimate approach to structuring a presentation but there is a massive vulnerability to using it you need to be aware of.

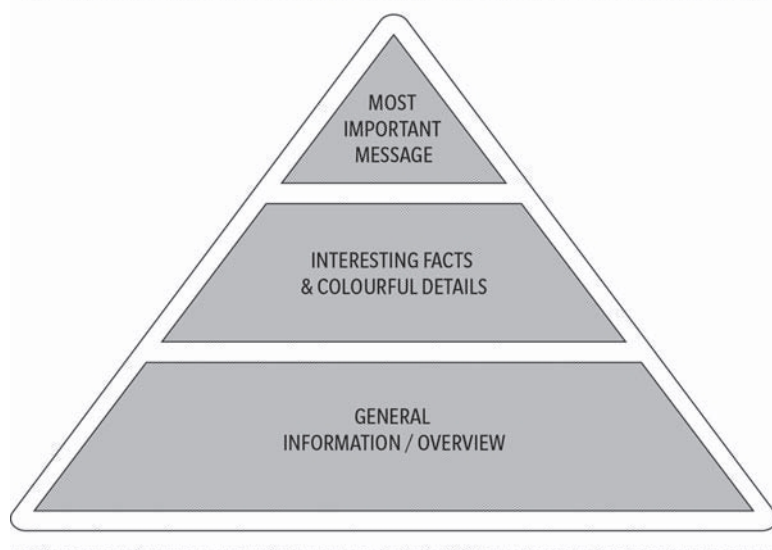
This model of communication, building up to your strongest point instead of leading with it, **assumes the audience will listen throughout the build-up till you get to the key message.** In this structure you do not give a reason to listen, a hook, you simply dive into the information and hope the audience will still be there at the end when you get to the key message or point.

If you are using this presentation structure, I do understand why but you must ask yourself if your audience is going to wait until the end to get what they need. Would you wait that long? This approach may be fine for a book or a written document because people are choosing to read it at their leisure or dip in and out at certain points, but for a presentation this is a very uncertain approach.

Now here is the good news: you can transform this presentation structure in **one easy step.**

All you have to do is turn the triangle the right way up.

▲ THE RIGHT WAY UP



Presenting the right way up

As we have already learned you must start with your most relevant, engaging and striking point for the audience. You must be confident in yourself and your communication and lead with your strongest point for the audience.

You then spend the rest of the presentation building your story and credibility around that opening point. This is what is called *inductive* reasoning. Inductive reasoning moves from a specific opening statement to the more general yet relevant material to substantiate it.

Why is this the right structure?

- It gives the audience a reason to listen because you are telling them the benefit or addressing the pain factor straight away.
- It allows for repetition. You can keep linking back to the hook, reminding the audience why your content or new point is relevant to them.
- It holds people's attention. When you state your key point at the beginning of your presentation, you can then weave it throughout the presentation, showing how each point you cover relates to and supports it. Rule 5 next explains exactly how to do that.

5. Use the word YOU

The right start is vital to a successful presentation but the best start alone is not enough to guarantee presentation victory.

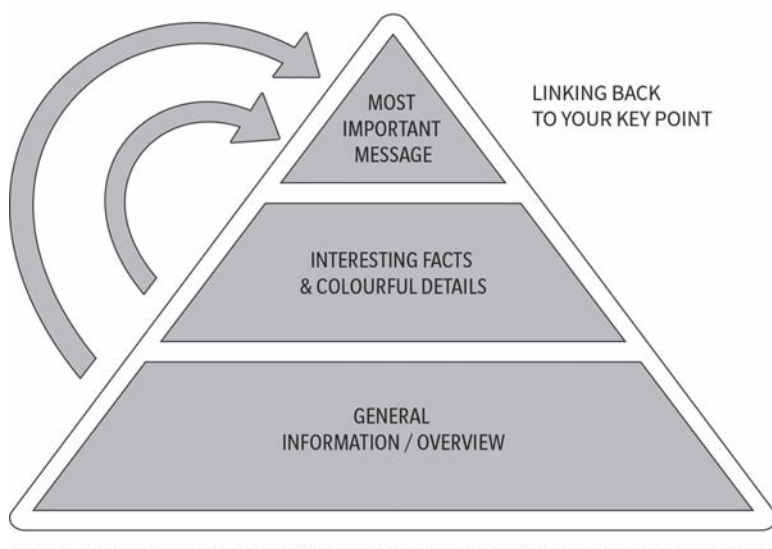
Once you have the right presentation structure you will be leading with your strongest point and hooking the audience in the first 45 seconds by giving them a reason to listen. But then, as you continue through the rest of your presentation you have to keep the audience captivated and engaged. **You must keep the connection you have formed with the audience from the start of your presentation to the end.**

Stay connected to your audience

The best way to keep your audience engaged as you deliver your full presentation is to intentionally, actively and continually link your relevant facts

and data back to the audience's needs and make sure the audience knows **why every point you make is relevant to them.**

LINK IT BACK



During your presentation you need to talk to your audience about *them*, *their reality* and how your company or concept will be of value.

The secret to great presenting is to talk to your audience about them even when you are talking about you ... think about it for second.

And how exactly do you do that?

By using one simple word.

The word **YOU**.

Here comes the science

Researchers at Yale have identified the 12 most powerful words in the human language proven to attract attention and stir emotion. At the top of the list is the word **you**!