

part of the issue. I'll wrap it up and conclude with some ideas I have about what this means to us and what we should do. Then we'll open to questions and answers. I've brought some exhibits to demonstrate B and C and will leave copies of them with you."

People need to know what to expect in order to get interested. To follow you, they need to understand and picture the organization of your material. Telling them your outline helps them do that. It grounds them by telling what will be predictable, giving them landmarks to look for. It also builds up some anticipation about what they'll learn, and gives them an incentive to pace themselves to stay with you till the end.

Content: Present Your Basic Idea

Now it's time to get right to the heart of the matter: Tell them what your message is about. Here is your "Long Shot," creating the context your audience needs in order to listen to your presentation. Tell the whole idea first so whatever further explanation comes next can be hung from the framework you create right at the beginning. This is the time to give only the general picture; no details yet.

Example: Suppose you need or want to introduce a new way of doing something. Knowing your audience of one or many and anticipating their possibly negative response, you could start by capturing the essence of the problem and why you suggest change:

"Today we'll deal with a difficult subject—something that makes people anxious, even angry sometimes. We'll talk about change. Many people see change as a threat. I see it as a challenge; an opportunity to make things better, to grow, to open new possibilities." Or:

"Our X system isn't keeping up with the times. So we need to take a hard look at it. I plan to show you why it's becoming obsolete and what we can do about it."

Begin to Break It into Segments

Next, break the idea into its component parts and generally describe what they are. Now you're moving down into smaller segments of the whole idea. This is your "Medium Shot": the capital A, B, C topic headings. This makes for an easier explanation from you and easier digestion for your audience as the logical progression and order of your presentation emerges in bite-sized pieces.

"Let's start with A. Here's the basic problem. There are three reasons why it fails us."