

- *Coffee breaks*

Find out about when there'll be a coffee break and how near to that you'll speak. Remember to give coffee breaks if yours is a lengthy presentation. Everyone needs a stretch and a bathroom visit, no matter how good you are . . .

*Setting*

Where is your presentation to be held? Hotel room? Large? Long? A raised dais? Air-conditioned or not? Lighting? Acoustics and amplifiers? How hard *are* the chairs? Being prepared for the physical realities of your presentation site and knowing in advance what problems of sight and sound your audience (and therefore you) will have to deal with is also important and helpful.

*What Has Gone Before*

Find out what kinds of programs they have already lived through to understand what effect that would have and how your presentation will be greeted. Long program? Many speeches? Intense subject? This consideration is true whether you're addressing a large, unknown crowd at a convention or just the folks from the office at a weekly meeting. People have only so much attention span and so much tolerance for getting talked at. You need to build in a change of pace and new life to keep them.

So—here's your group portrait; your audience profile. Knowing this helps you customize your speech for them, specifically. Now, what will you say?

## DESIGNING YOUR PRESENTATION

### Positioning the Speech

What level will you talk at? What approach will you take? It's time for the old Fore-Thought Chart. (Just for review, check the steps in Chapter 3.) Since you know your audience well enough now to make generalizations about them, begin to strategize, making sure that your half of the chart is filled in, too.