Activity: Structuring Your Presentation

The Problem/Solution Framework

If your goal is to present a problem and offer a solution:

1. **Share the problem(s**): "We don't have a policy that dictates a fair distribution of sales commission when clients cross geographical areas."
2. **Share the impacts of the problem(s):** "The impacts include competition rather than collaboration between members of the sales team; reduced morale of employees; distrust of leadership; unclear year-end performance-based bonuses."
3. **Offer one or more solutions:** "Salesperson *A* receives a higher percentage of the commission for cultivating the relationship and closing the sale; Salesperson *B* receives a lower percentage for 'owning' the geographical location of the client."
4. **Explain your reasoning for your recommendation(s):** "The solution needs to meet the overall needs of the company—to prioritize the acquisition of new clients—which is best done by supporting the salespeople responsible for client engagement, maintaining both salespeople's incentives, and setting a precedent for clear communication."
5. **Show how to implement your recommended solution(s):** "The sales force and leadership will work together to establish a formula for a fair distribution of commission to be used when clients cross geographical areas. Enlisting all players in the creation of the planning and writing of a clear policy, including the continued implementation moving forward, reinforces buy-in from all members of the team."
6. **Create a call to action:** "All employees continue to look at ways they each use the company's goal, increasing the client base, to guide their behavior and actions in their individual roles within the company."

Try your Problem/Solution Framework here:

The Chronological Framework

If your goal is to help your audience understand a series of events, such as when you will launch a product, the history of your company, a progress report, or a crisis response plan, you can organize your main points by choosing any three points in time using this framework:

- Twenty years ago
- Ten years ago
- Today

Or

- Today
- Five years from now
- In ten years

Or

- In Q1
- In Q2
- In this quarter

Example:

1. **Explain what happened at a specific point in time in the past.** "Last month, Monique and George sold software services to the XYZ Company. Monique cultivated the relationship and closed the sale, but XYZ Company is located in Shanghai (George's territory), not in India (Monique's territory)."

2. **Explain what is happening right now.** "Right now, Monique and George each believe they have earned the commission, and there is no clear, written policy in the company to guide the decision. This is currently creating a sense of competition rather than collaboration between members of the sales team, reducing the morale of employees, fostering a distrust of leadership, and yielding unclear year-end performance-based bonuses."

3. **Explain what will happen at a specific point in the future.** "Moving forward, the sales force and leadership will work together to establish a formula for a fair distribution of commission to be used when clients cross geographical areas. Enlisting all players in the creation of the planning and writing of a clear policy, including the continued implementation moving forward, reinforces buy-in from all members of the team. Furthermore, all employees will continue to look at ways they each use the company's goal, increasing the client base, to guide their behavior and actions in their individual roles within the company."

Try your Chronological Framework here:

The Geographic Framework

If you want to help your audience picture and understand different locations (geographically or spatially):

1. Explain what's happening globally
2. Explain what's happening nationally
3. Explain what's happening right here/locally

Or

1. Explain what's happening nationally
2. Explain what's happening in your region
3. Explain what's happening in your city

Or

1. Explain what happens in your factory
2. Explain what happens in your distribution plant
3. Explain what happens at corporate headquarters

Pick any three places or spaces that would comprise a compelling and informative presentation.

For example:

1. **Explain what's happening globally: "**In regions like Western Europe where marketing is regulated by the government, cigarette sales and rates of use are decreasing. Conversely, in areas where there is little regulation around the marketing of tobacco products, such as Asia and Africa, marketers are able to practice targeted advertising, which impacts the growing trend in sales and use."

2. **Explain what's happening nationally. "**In the United States, tobacco marketing remains heavily restricted. A downward trend in use for both adults and youth has been documented and directly correlates with increased regulation on marketing, including the prohibition of advertising on billboards, radio, and television. It can still be said that the largest predictor of tobacco use in the United States is socioeconomic status."

3. **Explain what's happening locally:** "Locally, tobacco education has been written into the state educational frameworks for pre-K–grade 12. Smoking is prohibited in restaurants and on school property and is frequently looked upon as a moral issue when parents discuss it with their children. It is a reality that children living in communities where the majority of the population is educated above the 12th grade, with a low percentage of working poor or disadvantaged, could grow up without ever seeing an adult smoking. By taking smoking out of the range of 'normal' behavior, people are less likely to start and therefore do not become lifelong consumers of tobacco."

Try your Geographic Framework here:

The Cause-and-Effect Framework

If your goal is to help your audience understand why something happened or is happening, or the effects of an action that was taken**:**

Decide whether you are going to share a *Single Cause with Many Effects*, a *Single Effect with Many Causes, or Multiple Causes and Effects*

Single Cause with Many Effects

1. Explain the cause in detail
2. Explain primary effect and impact
3. Explain secondary effect and impact
4. Explain additional contributing effect and impact

Single Effect with Many Causes

1. Explain the effect in detail
2. Explain primary cause and impact
3. Explain secondary cause and impact
4. Explain additional contributing cause and impact

Multiple Causes and Effects

1. Explain cause 1, cause 2, and cause 3
2. Explain effect 1, effect 2, and effect 3

Or

1. Explain cause 1, effect 1
2. Explain cause 2, effect 2
3. Explain cause 3, effect 3

Example (Single cause with many effects):

1. **Explain the cause in detail: "**An unprecedented situation arose with the sales team that the current sales territory and commission structure does not address."

2. **Explain the primary effect and impact.** "Two different salespeople believe they deserve 100% of the commission, leading to conflict on the sales team."

3. **Explain secondary effect and impact. "**The need to re-evaluate the sales territory and commission structure has led to a larger team of people coming together to collaborate and create a new policy."

4. **Explain additional contributing effect and impact. "**The sales team, up until recently, consisted of one salesperson, so there was never conflict over the commission, nor was there competition or concern about incentivizing the sales team. This conflict has further polarized employees in other areas of the business as people have made choices to take sides in the conflict."

Try your Cause and Effect Framework here:

The Middle-Ground Framework

If your goal is to help your audience find a moderate viewpoint, the middle ground, a win-win, or a compromise between two polarizing opinions or perspectives, or if your goal is to help a dissatisfied audience find temporary satisfaction:

1. **Acknowledge the audience's current perspective (no matter how polarizing it is) and explain the value of it.** This could also be the *current state.* "Currently, this small family business meets only the minimum maternity leave required by law: eight weeks of unpaid leave. Women in the company have asked for twelve weeks of paid leave. Men in the company have remained silent. Women generally do not return to work after a maternity leave."

2. **Acknowledge the opposing point of view and explain how some people might have come to believe it to be true.** This could also be the *ideal state.* "Ideally, all employees would support a leave policy that encourages women and men to balance their personal lives with their employment. Ideally, all employees would have adequate job protection in the event of pregnancy or adoption, and their benefits would match those offered to staff in larger businesses as a way of retaining employees post leave."

3. **Explain how the middle ground can offer a benefit to both sides, even if temporarily.** "Leadership in the company will come together with all employees to hear what is most valuable to them and make adjustments to their policy that both honor the time and/or compensation requested and the employers' own need for continuity of operations."

4. **Offer specifics regarding how the members of this audience can think about or take advantage of the middle ground as it relates to their current point of view.** "Businesses will see that when they support good employees to stay in their roles, increased costs towards those benefits will be an investment in building the entire organization and will not actually be perceived as financial losses."

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Try your Middle Ground Framework here:

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The Rule-of-Three Framework

If your goal is to bring together a range of ideas on a single topic in a structured, logical way that relaxes and respects the audience:

1. **Explain your first main point, with supporting evidence.** *"Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is a better predictor of success than IQ. In their book, Emotional Intelligence 2.0, authors Travis Bradbury and Jean Greaves, note that studies across industry lines show that EQ predicts job performance 2 to 1 over any other skill."*
2. **Explain your second main point, with supporting evidence.** *Unlike IQ, Emotional Intelligence can be improved. How? As Daniel Goleman, author of the best-selling book Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ, wrote, "[F]irst you have to be motivated – ask yourself if you really care. Then you need a well-structured learning situation where, for instance, you have a clear picture of what you want to improve, and can practice specific behaviors that will help you enhance the targeted competence."*
3. **Explain your third main point, with supporting evidence.** With the rapid growth of technology in the workplace – especially artificial intelligence – emotional intelligence is more important than ever. In their Harvard Business Review article, <u>The Rise of AI Makes Emotional Intelligence More Important</u>, authors Megan Beck and Barry Libert note: *"Those that want to stay relevant in their professions will need to focus on skills and capabilities that artificial intelligence has trouble replicating — understanding, motivating, and interacting with human beings."*

Try your Rule of Three Framework here: