**Structure in Presentations – Reading Material**

**Overview:**

Presentations need to be very straightforward and logical. This reading material is designed to introduce you to an ideal structure for a presentation

**Objectives:**

This reading material is designed to help you:

* Develop an appropriate structure for your presentation

**Before the presentation:**

* Do you know the audience?
* Do you know what they want?
* Do you have any goals?

Ensure that you have clear answers to the above.

**Choices for Structuring**

* Top-down
* Bottom-up
* Intrinsic structure

**Top-down - Deductive approach**

Step 1: Introduce the big picture

Step 2: Break it into parts

Step 3: Prioritize/sequence the parts

Step 4: Add facts, figures, examples

**Bottom-up Inductive Approach**

Step 1: Introduce the parts

Step 2: Prioritize/sequence the parts

Step 3: Add facts, figures, examples

Step 4: Assemble parts into big picture

**Intrinsic Structure**

Chronological Order- Time lines

Sequential Order- Process or procedures

Compare and contrast- Similarities and differences

**Summary**

Optimal structure depends on:

Audience(s)

Objective(s)

Topic

Time

**Top-down - Deductive approach**

You’ve got 10 seconds; make your point with a deductive presentation

The deductive organization method begins with a recommendation and follows with information to support that recommendation. Facts, statistics and examples of success or failure can be used to support a recommendation. Deductive organization works well when the target audience is knowledgeable on the topic being presented or when a selection process, such as choosing from a small selection of possibilities, people, projects and location, is undertaken.

**Make your big point first**

Have you seen Ken Robinson’s 2006 TED talk? Probably, it’s been viewed over 20 million times on the TED site alone. Here’s a quote from just a few minutes in…

My contention is that creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status. (Applause) Thank you. That was it, by the way. Thank you very much. (Laughter) So, 15 minutes left. Well, I was born … no. (Laughter)

It’s a brilliant web presentation (and ironically it was given before TED published all the talks online). Just lay everything out there, then follow with evidence. Now, here’s the crazy thing.

When you’re not on a stage, you don’t have 3 minutes to make your big point and lock in your audience. In all likelihood, you have ten seconds.

Formatting your deductive presentation

Here’s a basic structure that’s worked really well

* Your main point is like the headline in the newspaper. Start with a little story or example and briefly sum up all your sub points.
* One by one you’ll speak about the sub points, giving each its own header. How many sub points is up to you, remember the rule of three from concise cogent communication
* Give supporting facts for the sub points
* Use transition statements as links
* Ensure you give facts and figures

**Bottom-up Inductive Approach**

**Inductive**

The inductive method of organization orders information by complexity and places facts before conclusions and recommendations. Facts are presented as an investigation of the parts and pieces of a problem or issue. Conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the investigation of the facts. The inductive organization method is useful when rumors or previously drawn conclusions have caused confusion in the minds of a target audience.

For an inductive (bottom up) presentation you lay out all the evidence, then eventually sum it up and deliver the conclusion.

This is an especially important technique if you want to [persuade](http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/style-and-usage/steps-for-writing-a-persuasive-speech.html) someone to do something or to agree with your point, like for debate team arguments.

Using the inductive technique is a fabulous way to persuade a crowd to take your side on a particular issue.

Example – J.F Kennedy’s Speech – Landing a man on Moon

**Intrinsic Structure**

The four point plan is used for:

* Chronological Order- Time lines
* Sequential Order- Process or procedures
* Compare and contrast- Similarities and differences

The Four Point Plan

**INTRODUCTION** (Background and Basics)

* Why are you Speaking?
* Set the Context

**DETAILS** (Facts and Figures)

* Give information/instructions.
* Provide all relevant details.
* Use Transitions to separate Ideas
* Ensure logical flow.

**RESPONSE or ACTION**

* Action/s the listener should take
* Actions you will take

**CLOSE** (A simple one-liner)• Sometimes all that is needed is a simple one-line closing sentence.