

Stating Your Purpose 1

It is essential to state the purpose of your presentation near the beginning. To do this clearly and effectively you need a few simple presentation verbs: **take a look at, report on, give an overview of etc.**

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TASK

Below you will find a number of ways of stating the purpose of your presentation. Complete them using the words given. Combining the sentences with the number 1 will give you a complete introduction. Then do the same with those numbered 2 etc. The cassette provides a good model for you. Use it to check your answers after you have done the exercise.

OK, let's get started. Good morning, everyone. Thanks for coming. I'm (your name).

This morning I'm going to be:

showing talking taking reporting telling

1. to you about the videophone project.
2. you about the collapse of the housing market in the early 90s.
3. you how to deal with late payers.
4. a look at the recent boom in virtual reality software companies.
5. on the results of the market study we carried out in Austria.

... so, I'll begin by:

making outlining bringing giving filling

1. you in on the background to the project.
2. a few observations about the events leading up to that collapse.
3. company policy on bad debt.
4. you an overview of the history of VR.
5. you up-to-date on the latest findings of the study.

... and then I'll go on to:

put discuss make highlight talk

1. what I see as the main advantages of the new system.
2. the situation into some kind of perspective.
3. you through our basic debt management procedure.
4. detailed recommendations regarding our own R&D.
5. in more depth the implications of the data in the files in front of you.

Highlight all the verb phrases above, eg. *talking to you about, making a few observations about*. Notice it is not the verb alone, but the whole phrase you need to learn.

Stating Your Purpose 2

When you give a presentation in English, clarity is very important, particularly if there are non-native speakers in your audience. It often helps if you state your purpose at each stage of your talk as well as at the beginning.

TASK

Cross out the verbs which do not fit in the following presentation extracts. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. First of all, I'd like to ~~preview~~ / ~~overview~~ / **outline** the main points of my talk.
2. Perhaps I should start off by **pointing** / **stressing** / **reminding** that this is just a preliminary report. Nothing has been finalized as yet.
3. But later on I will, in fact, be **putting forward** / **putting out** / **putting over** several detailed proposals.
4. One thing I'll be **dealing with** / **referring** / **regarding** is the issue of a minimum wage.
5. And I'll also be **asking** / **raising** / **putting** the question of privatization.
6. So, what we're really **driving at** / **aiming at** / **looking at** are likely developments in the structure of the company over the next five to ten years.
7. If we could just **draw** / **focus** / **attract** our attention on the short-term objectives to begin with.
8. The eighteen-month plan, which by now you should've all had time to look at, **outlines** / **reviews** / **sets out** in detail our main recommendations.
9. Basically, what we're **suggesting** / **asking** / **reviewing** is a complete reorganization of staff and plant.
10. I'd now like to **turn** / **draw** / **focus** my attention to some of the difficulties we're likely to face.
11. I'm sure there's no need to **draw out** / **spell out** / **think out** what the main problem is going to be.
12. But we do need to seriously **ask** / **answer** / **address** the question of how we are going to overcome it.
13. The basic message I'm trying to **get through** / **get across** / **get to** here is simple. We can't rely on government support for much longer.
14. Disappointing end-of-year figures **underline** / **undermine** / **underestimate** the seriousness of the situation.
15. And the main conclusion we've **thought** / **got to** / **come to** is that massive corporate restructuring will be necessary before any privatization can go through.

CASS TASK 3

Once you know the nine basic signposts, you can build them into the points you make to give direction and coherence to your presentation.

Complete the following signpost phrases and sentences using the notes to help you. Say them first. Then write them down. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. Moving on / question / the US market,
Moving on to the question of the US market,
2. Expand / the figures / last year,
.....
3. I'd like / recap / the main points.
.....
4. Let's go back / question / clinical research methods.
.....
5. Digress / a moment, let's consider / alternatives.
.....
6. Going back / a moment / the situation last year,
.....
7. Let's turn now / our targets / the next five years.
.....
8. I'd like / turn now / our projections / year 2005.
.....
9. Go back / the main reason / our collaboration / the Germans,
.....
10. I'd like / expand / that / little, before we move on.
.....
11. Let's go back / a moment / what we were discussing earlier.
.....
12. Let me expand / some / the main points / our proposal.
.....
13. Elaborate / that / little / those of you / aren't familiar / Russian business practices,
.....
14. If I could just move on / some / the problems we face / Central / Latin America,
.....
15. I'd like / conclude / I may / repeating what I said / the beginning / this presentation.
.....

Present the signpost sentences above until you feel comfortable saying them.

Neat, short signposts are more effective than long explanations of the structure of your presentation. Remember, the simplest way to signpost the end of one stage of your presentation and the beginning of the next is to say:

OK. So, ...

Useful Expressions 1

You can cut down the amount of thinking you have to do in a presentation by learning in advance some of the most common expressions you might need. Simple verbs like *make*, *do*, *give* and *take* are the basis of many of these.

cass PRESENTATION

Complete the following extracts from a presentation using the appropriate forms of *make*, *do*, *give* and *take*. Then use the frames to record the important word partnerships.

PART 1

First of all, I'd like to (a) this opportunity to welcome you all to our new plant here in Alfortville. In a few moments you'll be (b) on a tour of the main laboratories, which will (c) you a general overview of the research we're currently (d) and you'll be able to see some of the many improvements we've (e) to the IT unit. In each department you visit this morning there will be people on hand to answer any questions you may have and to help you (f) the most of your day with us.

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | TRANSLATION |
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| | |

PART 2

Perhaps I could just (a) a few minutes to (b) you the background to the work we're (c) in the search for an AIDS vaccine, because this is an area where we're finally starting to (d) real progress. As you know, it (e) time to get a drug through pre-clinical trials, and it's far too early to say whether we've (f) the major breakthrough we've all been hoping for. But what we have done is (g) an important step towards finding a preventive solution to AIDS.

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | TRANSLATION |
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PART 3

I'd like to (a) a distinction here between what I call innovative and imitative research. Of course, it's the innovative companies who consistently (b) the lead in pharmaceutical research and (c) the biggest contribution to the development of new medicines. But let's not forget that improving existing drugs can (d) a difference, too. For one thing, it can make a prohibitively expensive drug affordable. It's easy to think that research is all about (e) initiatives, and (f) an impact on the world of science. But when research is your business, you can often (g) more damage to company profits by (h) a chance on something new and (i) a mess of it than by settling for (j) a good product better.

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | TRANSLATION |
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PART 4

There's an important point that needs (a) here. While it's true that in terms of European over-the-counter sales we're (b) headway, in the Far East illegal copies of our drugs have (c) a real bite out of OTC profits. To (d) you some idea of the extent of the losses, you have only to (e) a comparison between projected and actual sales. We may have (f) a good job of protecting our patents in the West, but what action can you (g) against countries where the law virtually permits pharmaceutical piracy? Three years ago a survey was (h) and, as you might expect, China came out as the worst offender. Now, I don't want to (i) you the impression that the situation is hopeless, but I could (j) you hundreds of examples of Chinese copies of our bestselling drugs turning up all over the Far East. Believe me, we've really (k) our homework on this one, and China poses a serious commercial threat.

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | TRANSLATION |
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Useful Expressions 2

English is full of useful fixed expressions which native speakers use all the time, almost without thinking. The ability to use some of these will make your talk sound more confident and idiomatic.

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Complete the following extracts from a presentation using the appropriate forms of *go*, *take*, and *get*. In each extract the same verb will fill all the spaces, but different forms – *go*, *going*, *gone* – might be needed.

PART 1

OK, let's (a) down to business.

Three months ago we were well ahead of schedule on the Buenos Aires contract. Six weeks ago we'd fallen behind. Now it's (b) ridiculous! Work has virtually come to a complete halt. True, one of our suppliers let us down at the last minute. But, frankly, that's (c) nothing to do with it.

No, I'm afraid, there's no (d) away from it – we've (e) real problems here. So, let's stop wasting time. We need to (f) to the bottom of this as quickly as possible. After all, we (g) ourselves into this mess, so we ought to be able to (h) ourselves out of it

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | | TRANSLATION |
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| get | | |

PART 2

So much for Argentina. We knew we were (a) a risk when we went over there and now it looks as though we'll just have to (b) the consequences.

Fortunately, I can report good progress in Sao Paulo. It has (c) a great deal of hard work,

but it looks as though things are finally starting to (d) shape.

To be honest, we knew there was an undersupplied market in Brazil and we were quick to (e) advantage of the situation. It'll be a year or more before we see the real benefits, but we're in no hurry. These things (f) time. And you can (g) it from me, the medium-term prospects look very good indeed. You can expect things to really start (h) off within two years

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | | TRANSLATION |
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| take | | |

PART 3

Finally, Santiago. Well, everything was (a) fine until last quarter. But, as you know, that's when things started to (b) wrong. And, to be honest, since then things have just (c) from bad to worse.

Obviously, we've done everything we can to put things right. That (d) without saying. But there's still a long way to (e) It could take six months to get things running properly again.

Anyway, there's no (f) back now. And if we can get our act together, we might just manage it. So, I say, let's (g) for it! What have we got to lose?

| WORD PARTNERSHIP | | TRANSLATION |
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| go | | |