

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.**

cass

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, ...