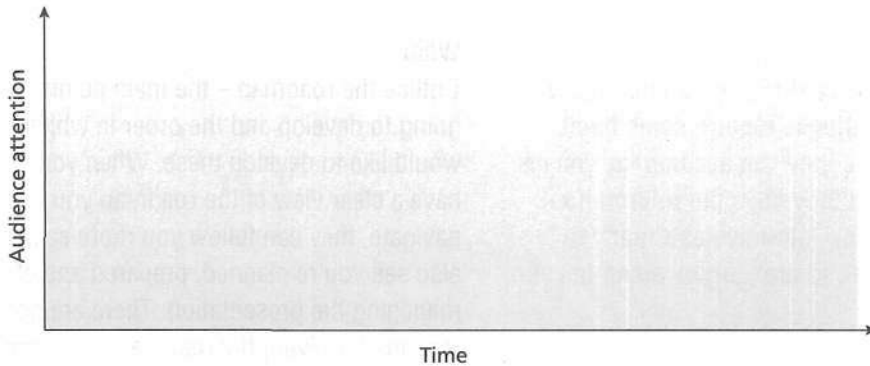


# 1 The start

## Attention curve

- A** Look at this graph. The vertical axis represents the attention of the audience and the horizontal axis shows time during an average presentation. How would you draw a curve in this graph?



- B** Now, look at the graph in the answer key on page 100. At which points in a presentation can the audience most easily remember what the presenter says?

## Who, why, what, how

- A** Look at the audience's questions (1–8) and match the numbers with the type of information.

Who is the presenter? .....

Why are we all here? .....

What is he going to talk about? .....

How is he going to organise the presentation? .....

① What's the reason he's doing the presentation today?

③ What direction is he going to take with this presentation?

④ What's he going to talk about exactly?

② What's his job title?

⑤ Should I take notes?

⑥ What's his experience in this field?

⑦ I'm thirsty! When's coffee?

⑧ How long will I be here?



**B** Now read the text and check your answers.

# The presentation **journey**

Giving a presentation is like taking your audience from start to finish on a journey. At the start, your audience require some basic information before they can accompany you on this journey. Once they have the information, they're on your side, attentive and ready to listen to every step of the journey along to your final message.

## **Who**

Introduce yourself. Clearly, the amount of information you give about yourself and your work and the level of formality you use, depends on the presentation you're giving. For example, for a presentation to a group of your colleagues, you probably don't need to give your name and background and you can use informal language. A presentation to a new client can require more detailed information about your background and experience and a more formal approach. Make sure that you're comfortable talking about your past and present experience in such cases.

## **Why**

Tell your audience your destination – the reason they're there to listen to you and the purpose of your presentation. If the audience don't know why they should listen, they won't have any reason to accompany you along your journey. The 'why' is linked to the conclusion, your final message – probably, the most important part of your presentation.

## **What**

Outline the roadmap – the main points that you're going to develop and the order in which you would like to develop these. When your audience have a clear view of the roadmap you want to navigate, they can follow you more easily and can also see you're planned, prepared and effectively managing the presentation. There are good reasons for giving the roadmaps, as research shows your audience listen better and remember better and more when they know the structure and shape of your presentation. The technique we use to give the roadmap is called 'sequencing'. This is a very simple technique as it just involves using language such as *one, two, three* or *firstly, secondly, thirdly*. Nevertheless, it is also highly effective as 'sequencing' or 'ordering', as it is sometimes called, is a principle of memory by which we recall information.

## **How**


Put yourself into your audience's shoes: address your audience's needs. Your audience won't listen to you as you go into the main part of your presentation if they have other concerns. They may be thinking: *How long do I have to sit here? Do I have to take notes? When can I ask questions? Is there any coffee here?* It can therefore be useful to answer such questions in your 'start' so that your audience are ready to listen.

Your 'start' should include these points but at the same time not be too long. Ninety seconds is a good guideline as there's evidence that you begin to lose listeners after this amount of time. Your audience tend to listen to your every word and form an impression of you in these ninety seconds. An accurate 'start' helps to create a good impression and you should aim to be grammatically accurate at this stage.

**C** Read through these phrases. Write 'who', 'why', 'what' or 'how' next to each phrase.

Check any vocabulary you don't know.

- 1 On behalf of Mr Keane, may I welcome you to Jackson Inc. My name's Jo Black and I'm responsible for ...
- 2 My purpose today is to ...
- 3 I'm going to develop three main points. First, ... Second, ... Third, ...
- 4 Let me introduce myself. I am ... I am a ...
- 5 I'll pass round copies of my slides so you can make notes as I go through the presentation.
- 6 Before I continue, let me tell you something about myself.
- 7 Today I would like to give you a general overview of ...
- 8 I've divided my presentation into three main points. I would like to begin with ...
- 9 So, I'll be addressing three main points and the first one is going to be ... The second point will be ... And finally the last point is ...
- 10 I'm going to outline three proposals. Firstly, I'll ... Then, I'd like to ... and finally ...
- 11 Today, I'm going to bring you up to date with ...
- 12 The presentation should last about five minutes.
- 13 We'll take a short coffee break at about 10.30.
- 14 My objective today is to ...
- 15 Morning everyone. Thanks for coming. My name is Luca and I'm in charge of ...
- 16 If you have any questions, I'd be grateful if you could leave them until the end.
- 17 I'm happy to take any questions after that.
- 18 For those who don't know me, my name is Carlos López and I'm the managing director.
- 19 We can take two or three questions at the end of each point.
- 20 You don't need to take notes as we'll be handing out presentation booklets.
- 21 I would like to start with ... And then ... Lastly ...
- 22 Today, I'm going to tell you ...
- 23 What I am going to do today is review ...
- 24 Please feel free to interrupt me at any time if you have a question.
- 25 The reason we are here today is to ...
- 26 Morning everyone. I'm ... I'm a ... at ...

**D**  1.01, 1.02 Watch César and Zhan's 'starts' to their Step 1 presentations and tick the phrases they used.

**Find Your Voice**

Don't learn all these phrases now. Highlight one or two from each category that you really like or think are useful for you. Learn them by using them in your presentation practice – prepare the 'start' of a presentation that is typical of your work situation, using the phrases you wish to learn. When you're ready, stand up and present your 'start'.

## Grammar

**A** 1.03, 1.04 Watch Dan and Svitlana's 'starts' to their Step 1 presentations. Complete the phrases they used to give the 'whats' of their presentations.

**Dan**

- 1 Firstly, I ..... some general info ...
- 2 Then, I ..... to the economy ...
- 3 ... and then I ..... go into details ...

**Svitlana**

- 4 Today I ..... tell you why ...
- 5 I ..... by telling you what ...
- 6 I ..... to giving you a few examples.

- 1 What forms do they use?
- 2 Why do you think it's a good idea to use a variety of forms?

**'will'**

Form
<i>will / shall + infinitive (without to)</i> <i>Firstly, I'll go through the background to the project.</i> <i>I will finish by outlining the changes we made to the original schedule.</i>

- *Shall* is much less common than *will* in British English and hardly ever used in American English.
- *Will* is a modal auxiliary verb and doesn't add -s in the third person singular.
- We usually use the contracted form in speaking:  
*Firstly I'll look at ...*

**'be going to'**

Form
<i>be going to + infinitive</i> <i>Today I'm going to tell you why I chose this topic and how you will benefit from my research.</i> <i>I'm going to tell you a little bit about my research.</i>

**Note**

It is advisable not to overuse one form at the start of a presentation. We can use both *will* and *be going to* to give the 'why' and / or 'what' of a presentation. *Will* is used here to give future information and *be going to* is used to indicate a plan. Note that we don't normally use *will* to talk about future events which are already decided or planned.

- *Going to* can be pronounced as *gonna* in informal speech. This is much more common in American English. In British English, it can sound informal.