



Breaking Your Introduction into 3 Parts

Engaging Your Audience

Any good presenter will invest time in preparing their introduction because they understand the value a strong introduction plays in getting your audience to buy into your message and be open to your presentation. In fact, I believe that how you introduce yourself and your content is the most important component of your entire presentation. With that in mind, to help you in crafting a winning introduction, I recommend breaking your intro into 3 parts:

Part 1: The Welcome

The “Welcome” is where you make the first 2 sales being likeability and credibility. For a review of the sales check out “3 Sales to Make Before They Buy You: Keys to a Strong Introduction”. This is an opportunity to bring the audience together and begin your presentation by sharing a little bit about who you are and why are you here. Here are a few ideas to consider for your own welcome.

ICE BREAKERS

One useful way to establish both likeability and credibility and build a good rapport with your audience can be to open with an ice breaker, something that gets the audience laughing or thinking. The purpose is to humanize yourself in front of the audience. A couple ideas to do this are:

1. Open by making a joke at your own expense. I find it amusing to make fun of myself in front of the audience and realize that it can loosen up the attendees.
2. Share a slide/photo of you outside of the work environment. Personalize yourself more.
3. Ask a gauging question that helps you better understand who your audience is.

TELL US A STORY

Another great way, and in most cases the best way, is to share a story with the audience. There are several ways to relate a story, but each one should ideally be tied to the point of the presentation.

1. Gong Story – Opening up about how you came to Gong and why you are excited to be a part of the Tableau family is a great way to endear yourself to your audience.

2. Lesson Learned Story – Your story can be about almost anything, but it **MUST** relate to the purpose of your presentation. It is a great way to set up Part 2 of your intro by addressing the reason you are even speaking in the first place.

GET SOMEONE TO INTRODUCE YOU

One of the best ways to establish credibility is to have someone the audience already respects and trusts to build you up by introducing you. That way you don't have to "brag" about yourself. If you are fortunate to have someone to introduce you, I encourage you to use the *Speaker Introduction Template*. This template allows you to determine the specific background information that you would like the audience to know about you. Additionally, it helps the person introducing you by giving them talking points.

Part 2: The SSOFA System

Once you have established the proper amount of trust and credibility from your "Welcome" it will be necessary to give your audience a clear idea of what they can expect to learn and the intended goals of the session / presentation. For this, the SSOFA System will be extremely valuable.

I address these points (out loud) to the audience, in the following order:

- What is the problem you are trying to **SOLVE**?
- What is the **SUBJECT**?
- What is the session **OVERVIEW**?
- What do you want your audience to **FEEL**?
- What **ACTIONS** would you like them to take?

Answering these 5 questions will address the audience's question of "What's in it for me?" and make the third sale that the message is worth listening to. For a refresher and more details, please see article; SSOFA System – 5 Questions to Ask about Your Presentation.

Part 3: Audience Engagement (aka Coaching)

Once you have your garnered the attention of your audience by properly clarifying your message and intentions, it is incumbent on you to then explain how the audience should be engaged in the session throughout. In other words, how should we focus our attention and energy? The following are some good instructor tips that you can share with your audience:

Be clear about how you want them to ask questions

If we don't take a moment early on to share with our audience what the procedures for asking questions, then they will be more inclined to ask at the wrong moments. By giving them clear

directions on how and when to ask questions they will no longer be thinking about whether it makes sense to ask which will detract from their ability to fully engage with your presentation and the content.

It is useful to understand that we, as an audience, can remember the beginning and end of information well. Therefore, it is valuable to invest your energy and time on practicing your introduction and close. When you inform them how they should be participating you help them get more out of all the stuff in between. You, in fact, are helping them to narrow their focus on what they should be learning.

Ultimately, by letting your audience know what they should be thinking about or considering during your session it increases the likelihood of them walking away with an actionable set of items from your presentation. Reminder: The things you want them to be aware of during the session should tie somehow to your goal for their training.

www.aceyourpresentation.com

david@aceyourpresentation.com