



“Magic Formula” for Presentations & Speeches

Provided by the Iowa FFA Association and the National FFA Organization

The “Magic Formula” is a process for developing and reviewing presentations or speeches. Obviously, a thirty-minute presentation is quite different from a five-minute speech, but the basic strategies for effective communication are the same. Great speakers, great teachers, and great presenters all utilize these components.

GET THE INFO

From beginning to end, how will you show that you prepared for each person in attendance?

From the presentation coordinator, find out:

- Time, date, place, setting
- Length
- Age and number of participants
- Audience expectations



SHOW YOU CARE

Have you demonstrated that you have “put yourself in your audience’s shoes”?

Think about and list:

- Interests of audience
- Things important to audience
- How audience will feel coming in
- Concerns and fears of audience
- Self-perception of audience



ACTION

What action will your audience take as a result of your presentation?

Think about and list:

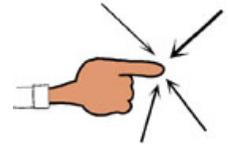
- The knowledge and skill the audience needs to be understand the presentation
- The emotional impact the audience needs to experience
- What is the appropriate topic?
- What key messages, ideas, or arguments do you want to share?
- How many objectives? (typically 10-20 minutes per objective)
- The overall goal of the presentation
- The main objective(s) of the presentation
- Are the goal and objective(s) reasonable given the audience and situation available?

POINT

WHAT does the audience need to know to accomplish the objective(s) of this presentation?

For each objective list:

- The important content, ideas, steps, definitions, etc. needed by the audience
- The “meat” of the presentation



Ask yourself: Does the point meet the goal and objective(s) in the Action Step?

Ask yourself: Is the amount of material in your Point too much or too little considering the audience and situation of your presentation?

SUPPORT

HOW is the best way for your audience to understand and learn information in your Point?

Thinking about material in your Point, brainstorm the following Support strategies:

- Related personal stories
- Activities
- Statistics
- Parables, sayings, etc.
- Teaching strategies



Narrow down or modify Support strategies based on:

- Time, and setting (Get the Info)
- Audience needs/abilities (Show You Care)
- Expected effectiveness of Support strategies

List Support strategies in sequential order

Ask yourself: How do I transition from the previous objective?

Ask yourself: How do I transition between Support strategies?

APPLICATION

How will the audience show they can apply what they've learned – now and in the future?

For each objective, think of:

- An activity or action for the audience to apply what they have just learned

Consider:

- Time and resources available (Get the Info)
- Audience needs/interests (Show You Care)



REVIEW AND CLOSE

How will you help the audience summarize what they've learned, and leave in a useful state-of-mind?

For the end of your presentation, think of how you:

- Review the point(s)
- Challenge the audience to use what they've learned
- Tie your presentation all together
- Close with power and impact



Determine and state your actions and activities for Close and Review

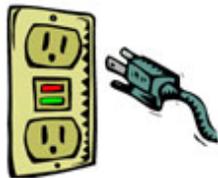
Guiding Question:

CONNECTION

How will you insure that the audience is prepared, engaged and ready to learn from the start?

For the end of your presentation, think of how you:

- Get the audience's attention immediately
- Draw upon what the audience already knows and understands
- Show relevance of your presentation
- Set the environment for the audience to be in the right state of mind
- Set up a "theme" to carry throughout the presentation



Determine and state your Connection activities and/or actions.

PREVIEW

How will you create audience awareness and anticipation for the presentation?

For the beginning of your presentation, think of how you:

- Share the "road map" for the presentation (Where are you going?)
- Build interest to sustain interest through the presentation



Determine and state your Preview activities and/or actions.

Summary:

How can you use this formula?

1. Use the components to help you research information and write your presentation.
2. When finished, review the presentation by analyzing each component. (Have you addressed each component?)

Why should you use this formula?

1. It will improve your ability to involve and connect with the audience.
2. It will help you organize, explain and support the key objective(s).
3. It will help create and present an effective presentation that builds the understanding and support of the audience.

Do I have to use the formula in the order it is listed?

This formula does not show a specific order in which the speech must be developed, however it does identify key components and considerations for presentation development.