



**Helping individuals and companies
break out of their comfort zones
to become more successful**

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What's Your Point?

How many times have you sat through a presentation, only to walk out wondering "what was the point of that?!" Whether it was a one-minute presentation or one hour, if the audience doesn't know what the point was, then the presentation was not successful. Here are some things you can do to ensure this doesn't happen to you:

- Have a message. What is the one thing that you want your audience to walk away with from your presentation? That one thing is your message, also known as your theme, your purpose and your point. Realistically, that's all the audience can digest and remember from a presentation, especially considering the sheer amount of data and information that is thrown at them on a daily basis from all sources.
- Describe your message in one sentence. It could contain a call to action such as "company x has solid financials, a good product and a sound business plan, so we should invest in it." Or it could be informative such as "you can overcome your fear of public speaking." If you can't say it in one sentence, then you haven't focused enough yet.
- If something doesn't relate to your message, cut it out. When you are preparing your presentation, look at every example, detail and story you'd like to include and be ruthless about cutting out what doesn't relate to your message. You want to make it easy for your audience to focus rather than forcing them to sift through all the extra information to uncover your message. If you have extra details, keep them in your notes so you can use them if someone asks you a question. You can also include them in your handouts (like an appendix in a book), but don't clutter your presentation (or worse, your slides) with them.
- Be explicit about your message. State what your message is in your introduction to help your audience focus on your message as you're going through the body of your presentation. And repeat your message in your conclusion so it's the last thing they hear, which will help them remember it.

Sometimes it's not clear to you what your message is. In that case, set aside extra time to prepare. Look through your material and keep organizing and reorganizing it until you see one clear theme or message emerge. You're not ready to deliver your presentation until you have identified it -if it's not clear to you what the message is, it won't be clear to your audience.

Having a clear message will keep you focused and organized as you are preparing and delivering your presentation. Your clarity and focus will, in turn, ensure that your audience understands what you are trying to communicate. No one will walk out of the room after your presentation asking "what was the point of that?!"

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