

Know your Audience



Presentation Hero is produced by
La Fabbrica della Realtà
www.lafabbricadellarealta.com

preshero.co | @matteoc

Presentation Hero Academy presents: "Know your audience."

Lesson number 1 of the 10 lessons that comprise the **Presentation Basic Structure Module**. Let's start!

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Your presentation is clearly from you, there's no doubt about that, but it's for your audience.

Now, what do you know about your audience? Do you know them well enough?

And if you don't know them, how would you go about researching them?

There's two methodologies: the first one, if you have a small group, you can wear your Sherlock Holmes costume and start investigating.

How do you do that? Online obviously! You can go to their company website, you can go to Slideshare and find the company presentations, you can research the company blog, or even read articles in the press about the people in the companies that you are going to meet.

You can also go on social media, like on Twitter or LinkedIn, but don't be creepy, don't stalk people on Facebook or Instagram.

The second methodology involves larger groups. In this case you cannot research single individuals or companies. What you can do is develop "Personas."

So, imagine the type of individuals that are in the audience. Let's make an example: you go to a business conference and this business conference is attended by people in marketing and in sales, all right?

So, in this case you will have two personas: one representing marketing and one representing sales. Now, let's give them a name, let's make them a person in a way, let's give them a back story, why did they choose marketing or sales? What did they do before? What kind of aspirations do they have right now? Give them a personality because they will need to speak to you later.

So, imagine that you are one of those people. And this is not very easy because you have to change your perspective, from you looking at the

room to the room looking at you. You have to impersonate a member of your audience. In other words, you have to put yourself in their shoes but other people's shoes are not always so comfortable. So, let's learn a technique that will help us wear those shoes.

So, your audience has wants. They have the desire to get informed. They want to get inspired. They want maybe to evaluate you, or evaluate your idea, and they want to do this during your presentation.

Your audience also has life goals. They have overarching goals that are not related to your presentation, but they are always relevant in their lives. They want to become more skilled, they want to advance their career, they want to grow their business.

Your audience has stakes, they have made investments in the past and this investment is something that they always keep in mind. Maybe they have invested in their growth, personal or professional, and this is what's at stake in their lives.

And your audience has tactical reasons to be there. Maybe someone sent them and told them "attend this conference." Or they chose to be there, and maybe they paid a really high price tag to attend just that conference. Or they just happened to be there; they stumbled upon your presentation.

But you also have wants. You have something that you want to get by the end of the presentation. You have your own goals. Whether they are professional or personal, you have some stakes. You have investments you made in the past, and you have reasons to do your presentation.

Now, you should write them down, but you should write them down using the user's stories. So, try to write down all the wants of your audience, of every persona of your audience, as a story. So, write down "as an audience member I want" and then what the audience member would want; like in terms of goals "as an audience member my goals are," in terms of stakes "as an audience member my stakes are in," and finally in terms of reason "as an audience member I'm attending because."

And do this for each of the persons or each of the personas that is going to be in the room with you. Now, list your own wants, goals, stakes, and reasons and what you'll end up with is two lists. These two lists may be completely divergent. And you may have wants, goals, and stakes, and reasons that are completely unrelated; you have to reconcile those lists, and you have to follow some rules to reconcile those lists.

First of all, if your wants and goals diverge, that's a problem because you have to realign them. And if no goal matches, you have to give priority to your audience over your own goals and this could be counter-intuitive.

You have to create benefits in the areas that are at stake for you and your audience, and you have to keep an eye on the outcomes. What are your reasons to do your presentation? And what is the desired outcome?

Now to the hard stuff. Lay out your material and look at it with your audience's eyes. Listen to your words. Listen to your language with the ears of your audience. How does that language feel? Does it feel connected to the world of your audience? How do they see your visuals? Do they see the same thing you see in your pictures, in your portraits, in your icons? How do they relate to the overall style of your presentation?

Boom! If you have done all of this correctly there shouldn't be one single slide of your previously envisioned presentation left standing. You will have substituted them with slides directly relevant to your audience.

This process changes everything in the way you craft presentations, gives you a fantastic blank slate where you know exactly how to nail your goals and the goals of your audience, how to satisfy all the wants, and keep in mind all the stakes while knowing all the reasons.

To summarize. In this process:

- ▶ Change your perspective. It's crucial.
- ▶ Investigate your audience or create some personas.
- ▶ Understand the wants, goals, stakes, and reasons.
- ▶ Reconcile them with yours.
- ▶ And look at your material with their eyes.