

Audience Analysis

Analysing your audience allows you to choose the most relevant content. The two questions you should use to select your content are:

1. What do they already know?
2. What would they be interested in knowing?

The answers to these questions will be different for different audiences. This is what gives you the confidence that your presentation is based on material that is relevant and interesting to your audience.

Audience analysis can be done using any number of criteria; however, the most useful are:

Demographic

- Age
- Gender
- Income
- Education Level
- Profession/Expertise
- Status
- Culture
- Location

Behaviours

- Needs
- Wants
- Personality
- Values
- Interests

Of course, you won't know with some of these; but there will always be sufficient information available to get an idea about what content will interest them. For example, if your intended audience is delegates at the United Nations, you could predict their education level, status and interests.

Expectations

Knowing the audience's expectations gives you understanding of the context. Some issues you need to know:

- Is their attitude positive, negative or neutral to the topic on which you will speak?
- What level of formality is expected (in dress and your manner of speaking)?

Different Audience = Different Speech

The same topic given to different audiences will require different speeches. For example, if you were giving a speech about a proposed new school uniform to an audience of students you would focus on comfort and appearance; whereas, if you were speaking to parents, you would talk about cost, cleaning and durability.



Common Interests

All members of your audience will have their individual interests. They will also have interests in common and identifying these will greatly improve your ability to engage and influence them.

Analysing to Persuade

To create a presentation that will persuade an audience requires you to understand what motivates them. The audiences to whom you speak will have one or more of the following nine motivators. Your audience analysis should consist of identifying the relevant motivators and the specific ways your persuasive request relates to them.

Nine Motivators



1. Justice/Fairness

We all have a sense of what is fair and what is not. We expect that justice will prevail – and, of course, many times it doesn't. When our sense of fairness is violated, the response can range from resentment to rage. It is to be expected when we see ourselves as victims of unfairness, but also when we see it happening to others.

“We cannot stand for this. It’s just not right.”

“We must fight injustice or it will flourish.”

“You deserve a fair go!”



2. Safety/Security

These are our most basic of needs: to have shelter, be well fed and be able to live with our loved ones in safety. While they are generally taken for granted by most of us, they remain real concerns for the majority of people outside the developed world. Nevertheless, the need to feel secure and comfortable is ingrained in every human.

“You are not safe!”

“Your loved ones are in danger.”

“Your security has been compromised.”

3. Threat of Loss



People are more likely to be moved to action by the fear of losing something they already have than by the prospect of gaining something new. What possessions, relationships, freedoms or privileges are they at risk of losing?

“What would happen if you lost...?”

“It is so precious and you risk losing it.”

“Your rights are being threatened.”

4. Altruism



Put simply, people want the best for those that they love. Is there a way your request will positively affect those they love? Also, we all have, to varying degrees, an inbuilt desire to help others, especially in time of need. To tap into this, you may need to emphasise the need and their specific ability to assist.

“If you won’t do it for yourself, do it for your children.”

“There’s nothing in it for you except knowing you’ve helped someone in need.”

“Just imagine the smiles on the faces of...”

5. Mastery



This is the desire to learn more about and/or become better at some area that interests us. Humans demonstrate curiosity; some across a broad range of areas, some in only a few. But we all have it. Once individuals have discovered some area in which they want to become better, they will devote energy and commitment through their own motivation. This is why people will devote endless hours to practising an instrument or winning a contest.

“This will make you so much better at...”

“You’re easily the most skilled person in this area.”

“This will help you in your goal to...”

6. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)



Opportunities appear increasingly frequently in today’s world. But, they disappear quickly too. We all hate missing an opportunity that could have benefitted us. This frustration is so common, it has even spawned its own acronym – FOMO. People are so busy, with so many demands for their attention and time, that you are most likely to have success if you instil in them a sense of urgency. Encourage them to be the first to volunteer. Let them know if there are limited places available or a cut-off time.

“I’d hate you to miss out.”

“Be quick or you’ll be sorry.”

“It’s a great opportunity, but it won’t last.”

7. Ego



Never underestimate the desire to look good. Some of the most expensive products and procedures available are designed to improve your appearance – from fashion to cosmetic surgery. It is the motivator that people are least willing to admit to, so its use requires some subtlety. Think about to whom the audience members want to look good – and if you can incorporate a reference to them.

Two further manifestations of this are:

- a craving to be taken seriously. We all want to be heard and feel we are worthy of attention
- a desire to avoid embarrassment

“I’ve taken your advice and this is what I’m proposing...”

“The only one with the skills and talent to do this is you!”

“I’m sure you’d hate to have...happen. So embarrassing!”

8. Belonging



Humans are social beings, and we all want to be part of the group; or, at least, we don't want to be the one left out. This might involve tapping into their obligations or responsibilities as part of a society, cultural group, family or community. The need to belong is fundamental – programmed into us as part of our basic survival techniques. Sometimes this belonging is 'herd-based' (smaller group of people linked by friendship or a common interest) and sometimes it is 'tribal' (larger groups, for example football clubs, political parties).

“We need you with us.”

“You belong with ...”

“You have to be part of this.”



9. Competitiveness

People are competitive – some more so than others. You can tap into this competitive drive for your purposes. Most groups have someone they see as their rivals – even if it's a friendly rivalry (for example, inter-school and inter-departmental). Use if appropriate and you can find a relevant link to your request.

“You're not going to let them beat you, are you?”

“I've always seen you as the leader in this area.”

“Imagine the look on their faces when they find out you've gotten there first.”

Motivators in Famous Speeches

Steve Jobs, Stanford University, 2005

<p>No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.</p>	<p>FOMO Threat of Loss Ego Threat of Loss</p>
<p>Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.</p>	<p>FOMO Mastery</p>

Hilary Clinton, UN, New York, 2010

<p>Let us recommit ourselves, as individuals, as nations, as the United Nations, to build upon the progress of the past and achieve once and for all that principle that we all believe in, or we would not be here today.</p>	<p>Safety/Security</p>
<p>The rights and opportunities of all women and girls deserve our attention and our support because as they make progress, then the progress that should be the birthright of future generations will be more likely, and the 21st century will fulfil the promise that we hold out today. So let's go forth and be reenergised in the work that lies ahead.</p>	<p>Justice/Fairness Belonging, Altruism</p>

Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 1940

The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us.	Safety/Security
Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war.	Threat of Loss
If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands.	Altruism Justice/Fairness
But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink by the lights of perverted science.	Threat of Loss
Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.'	Belonging

Key Statement

Once you have identified which motivator you will use, create one sentence – your ‘Key Statement’ that will form the core of your speech. The lack of this is the primary cause of rambling, unfocused, forgettable presentations.

Support Material

Once you have decided on the Motivator you will use and how you will articulate this in your Key Statement, your next step is to look at the support material for your persuasive request. As with the Motivator, you choose this material with this specific audience in mind, so you are still in ‘audience analysis’ mode. The difference is that you will use one Motivator but probably a number of different types of support material.

1. Authority

People are more likely to be influenced by a statement if it comes from someone they perceive as an authority.



- Identify someone the audience perceives as authoritative and find a quote from them that supports your argument.
- Refer to some research from a recognised authority.
- If relevant, use your own authority based on experience.

2. Commitment and Consistency

Once people have made a commitment, they tend to want to keep their word. Most want to be seen as consistent and reliable rather than the opposite.

Have they previously made a commitment to a principle related to your key statement? For example, “You said that you wanted to help those less fortunate. Well, here’s how you can do it.”

3. Liking, Similarity

If I like you, I am more likely to be persuaded by you. If I see you as being similar to me, I'm more inclined to like you. You should remind your audience of your points in common. For example:

- Similar experiences
- Common feelings
- Shared concerns

4. Social Proof/Consensus

People are more likely to be persuaded if they see others like them – or people they aspire to be like – already doing it. This is the principle that celebrity endorsement is based on: 'Cool' people do it, so if you do the same, you'll be 'cool' too.

- Utilise statistics to demonstrate trends.
- Use examples from those the audience admire.

5. Appeal to Logic



If you ask someone to do something, their first question is likely to be, "Why?" Make it clear and straightforward: "You may be asking yourself, "Why is this important?" Well, let me tell you why..."

- Use data that they can't argue with
- Clearly sequence cause ("This happens because...") and effect ("This leads to...")

6. Appeal to Emotion

While logic makes them think, it's emotion that makes them act. So, while they need the appeal to logic to be convinced, without an emotional appeal they probably won't do anything about it. Invoke their emotions with:

- stories and word pictures.
- metaphorical language and emotionally-charged words.
- rhetorical questions: "how would you feel if..."; "How good would it feel..."

7. Labelling/Compliments



Labelling is giving someone a positive description of themselves. This might be innovative, smart, caring, trustworthy, loyal. When people receive a positive label, they feel the urge to live up to that label. A sincere compliment is one of the most worthy gifts you can give someone. Examples:

- "Congratulations on the award you won recently. You are obviously a high-achieving group who will want to..."
- "I can tell you're all smart, so you'll see why this is so important."
- "You seem like really nice caring people, so I know you'll want to do something about..."

8. Imagination

Tapping into their imagination with strong images and sensory language gives you access to one of the most powerful areas of the brain. Noel Tichy (Management Professor, University of Michigan) said: “If you want them to venture into new places, take them there first in their imagination.” Sell the vision by painting pictures in their minds and reinforce this by involving the senses. Examples:



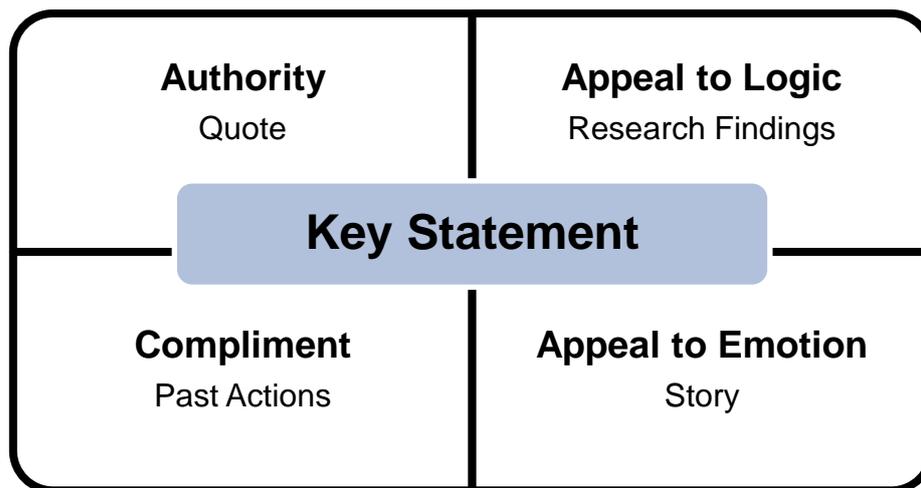
- “Imagine setting out on a beautiful day in your new yacht. Feel the wind on your face, smell the salt air.”
- “Just picture a world where...”

The Two-Way Test

Your support material must be an instant fit for your audience. You can confidently use material if it passes this two-way test:

1. It must be relevant to this audience
2. It must be directly relatable to your key statement by this audience.

EXAMPLE 1



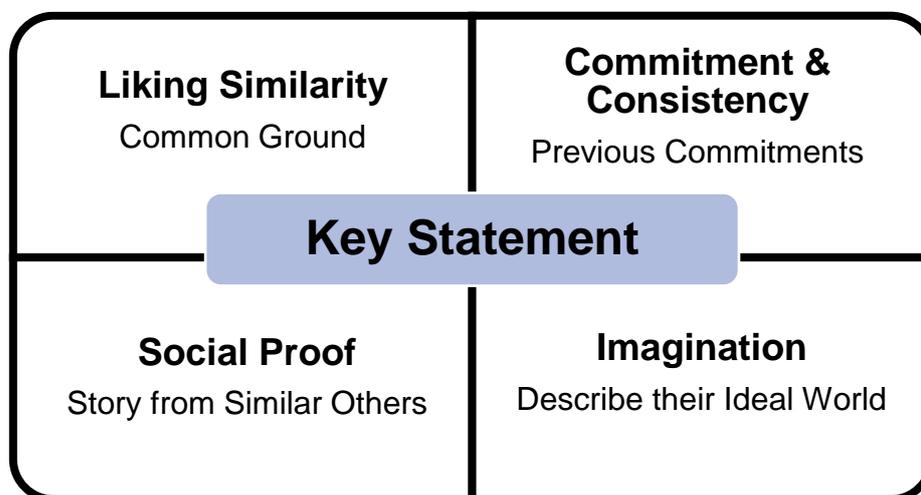
In this example, the speaker is able to identify:

- a quote from an authority the audience will recognise,
- some past actions the speaker can compliment them about,
- some research findings that the audience will be interested in and
- a story that they can all relate to

EXAMPLE 2

In this example, the speaker is able to identify:

- some common ground they have with audience members,
- a previous commitment that they have made,
- an example from someone they will see as similar to them and
- a description of a 'desired future' that they all aspire to.



Linking them Together

Constructing a presentation this way allows you flexibility – especially if you are delivering the same presentation to different audiences. Often, you can powerfully customise a presentation simply by changing some support material.

Motivators	Key Statement	Possible Support Material
Safety/Security	“What’s in it for you is a feeling of safety you can’t get anywhere else.”	Appeal to logic Appeal to emotion Imagination
FOMO	“This way, you can be sure you’re not missing out.”	Authority Liking/similarity Humour
Altruism	“And you will get the satisfaction of knowing you helped...”	Reciprocity Commitment & consistency Appeal to emotion
Mastery	“And, best of all, it will help you get better at...”	Appeal to emotion Labelling/compliments Social proof/consensus
Justice/Fairness	“What a great feeling to know you’ve done the right thing and brought a little more fairness into the world.”	Reciprocity Appeal to logic Appeal to emotion Commitment & consistency