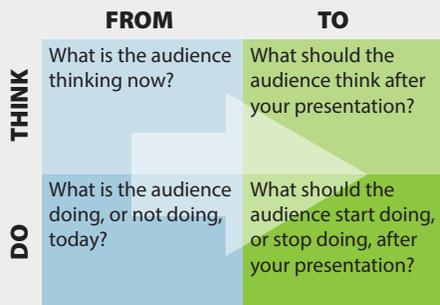


Four Considerations for Powerful Presentations

Until the robots get here, we need to work with other people to get results. And to make that work, we need ways to share ideas with each other. That idea-sharing trick is called communication, and here are four techniques to improve the quality of your communications, especially presentations.

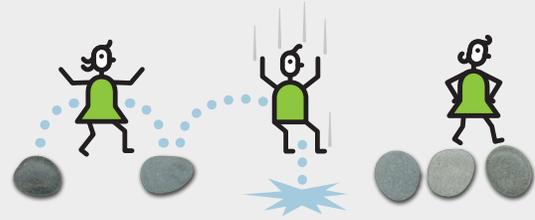
Be deliberate

The big goal of communication is to change how people think. Use a From- To matrix to figure out the specific changes that you are trying to create. If you find yourself doing a pure update, save everyone time and write a report.



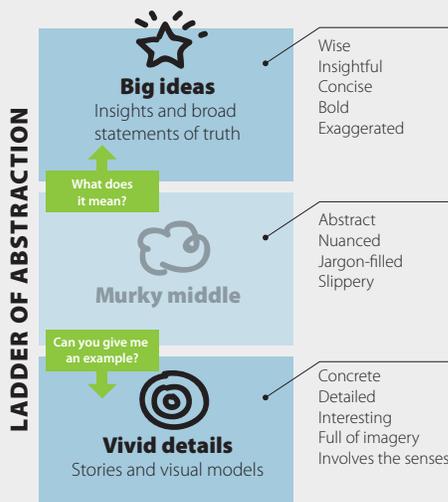
Plan your journey

We're moving the audience from point A to point B. When the presentation is done, we want the audience to know, believe, or do something different. The structure of the presentation must be a coherent parade of ideas to get them there. Like stepping stones across a stream, you must place the ideas close enough together for audiences to make the leap—but put them too close and you'll bore them.



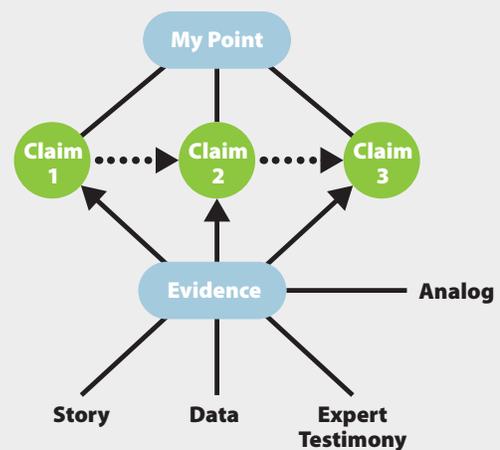
Move up and down the ladder of abstraction

The best communicators understand that an audience needs a mix of big ideas and specifics. You appear to be wide when you offer broad observations, insights, and big ideas. But you are clear when you support your ideas with vivid, concrete, and specific evidence. Move from the top to the bottom of the ladder. Avoid the murky middle where things are abstract, fussy, and opaque.



Support your ideas—but don't overdo it

Evidence is important to bolster your case, but audiences probably need less than you think. Few audiences want to hear all the evidence you've accumulated—especially mountains of data. Stories— anecdotes, examples, parables—can all add clarity and credibility while also sparking passion and inspiring people to act.



If you want to learn more about creating powerful presentations, get in touch at www.thoughtform.com or 412.488.8600.