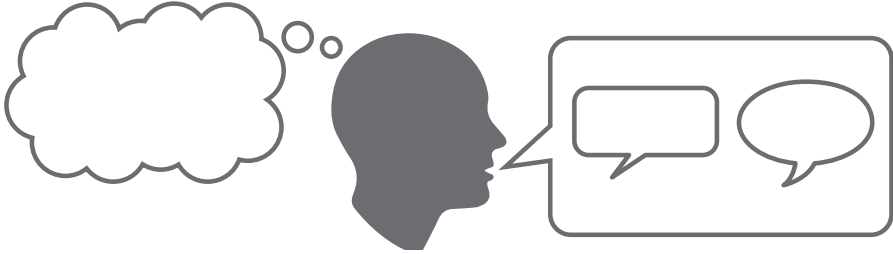


### CHAPTER 8 DRAFT BLUEPRINT: TALKING ABOUT TALKS

Let's talk through TALKS - and work through the story of each element with some key questions.



**TOPIC**

- What is the event or meeting you are speaking at?

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- Is it the right topic for the event?

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- Is enough time allotted for the topic scope?

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- Are you the right speaker?

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- If not, who might you recommend?

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- What aspect of the topic is of interest to the audience?

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- What should be the abstract for the presentation?

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- How can you engage folks with a meaningful title for it?

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.....

**AUDIENCE**

- Who is likely to be there? (Is it an audience of stakeholders? Technical peers? Marketing, sales, and business folks? Upper management? All of the above?)

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- Who needs to be there?

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- How should the presentation be geared toward the audience?
- How much background will be needed?

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- What do you think that they would want to know?

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- What would you want to know if you were in the audience?

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- Would you benefit from asking someone who has presented to this audience to understand any tips, tricks, or templates?

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- Who can you ask?

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.....

## LAYOUT

- Do you have the information needed for the suggested ABCDEFG layout?

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- Do you have too much material for the time allotted?

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- Which elements should you emphasize, and which ones get a cursory note?

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- Are there any speakers presenting before and/or after you on another aspect of the topic?

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- Who are they and what are their topics?

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- How do you adjust the presentation layout accordingly?

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**KEY POINTS**

- What do you want the audience to take away?

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- Have you assembled the evidence and can clearly highlight it in the allotted time?

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- Why is the data you are showing important?

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- How was the data generated?

.....

- What is the data being compared to?

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- What is the data telling you about the key point(s)?

.....

.....

**STORY**

- What are some ways to tie together all the information you are presenting?

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- What visual metaphors may make a point stick?

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- What compelling graphics or quotes can be used as vehicles to communicate?

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- What parallels can you draw to make a complicated point easy to understand?

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- What tagline can you create that makes it easy to understand the concept and make it more memorable?

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Inevitably, when you finish your talk, there will be aspects that you would like to improve. No one does perfectly the first time or every time. This checklist is a place to start, and you can continue to add to your list of what you know creates your best TALKS.

### WRAP UP AND REFLECTION

- How did I do? What do I think about how it went?

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- What improvement opportunities do I see?

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- Who can I get honest feedback from?

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- Based on this experience, what steps can I take to further improve my talks?

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Most presentations early in your career will typically be about informing others. But as you progress, it is highly likely that you will be required to influence others as well as inspire action.

Presentation skills will need to be augmented with advanced storytelling skills to accomplish these objectives.