

Organizing Your Presentations



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All great documents — a persuasive memo, an illuminating worksheet, a cogent email message — have one thing in common: excellent organization. Content and formatting are important, to be sure, but their effectiveness is diminished or even nullified if the document has a slipshod or poorly thought-out organization. On the other hand, even a document with only so-so content and negligible formatting can get its point across if it's organized coherently and sensibly.

Telling the Story

Presentations come in nearly as many forms as there are life situations. In the business world, there are sales presentations, informational and motivational presentations, interviews, briefings, status reports, and training sessions. If you've prepared presentations before, you've probably heard the following three sentences before. Though simplistic, they offer great advice.

- Tell your audience what you're going to tell them.
- Tell them.
- Then tell them what you told them.

Adhering to this format will keep you on track as you prepare your presentation. It will make your audience comfortable and secure because they'll know where you're headed. And it'll help keep you focused as you make your presentation.

