



Vary the style of your presentations to reach a wider audience

The challenge

When we give a presentation, we naturally tend to express ourselves in the way we feel will be most clear and convincing. However, this one-sided approach neglects the fact that many people don't listen and understand things in the same way we do. To convey messages effectively, we must therefore learn to move beyond our natural style and try to vary our arguments so that they integrate the diverse reasoning and listening styles of the audience.

Different listening styles

Unless you are very familiar with your audience, and thus have a precise understanding of how to target your approach, you are advised to combine various types of messages to address different mindsets effectively.

Focused on the present

Some people feel more concerned if they understand the immediate impact of the presented ideas.
→ Cite facts or real examples, show how to implement your ideas, how to manage the corresponding risks.



Focused on the future

Others will not be interested in the topic unless they can project the potential impact of the expressed ideas.
→ Underline the ultimate goal of the ideas you are presenting, speak about the importance of their long-term potential or consequences.

Trust their emotions

Some people rely mostly on their emotions to form opinions. They tend to grant trust based on their intuition.
→ Emphasize what is exciting about the projects you are presenting, use illustrative stories and metaphors.



Trust their rational logic

Others feel comfortable only if they can understand how you arrived at the conclusion you are presenting.
→ Emphasize the logic of your arguments, ensure that they are consistent, use uncontested supporting facts.

Interested in root causes

Some people need to understand the deep reasons for a situation before they are willing to seek a solution.
→ Take the time to explain how you found the solutions being considered, present your line of reasoning.



Interested in solutions

Others prefer to focus on solutions and the way to resolve problems.
→ Rapidly move from presenting the issue to proposing solutions – even if you must later return to the details of the issue – otherwise, you may lose your audience's attention.

Sensitive to relationships

Some people tend to grant their trust to people with whom they can establish a relationship.
→ Introduce yourself, show why you share the concerns of your audience, cite examples from their daily experience.



Sensitive to expertise

Others more readily trust those they recognize as competent.
→ Show that you are familiar with the subject, cite your experience, cite some facts or examples that show your expertise.

Visual

Some people need to see to understand what is being presented.
→ Display clear visual aids and charts, employ visual metaphors, use gestures to punctuate your messages.



Auditory

Others understand better what they hear.
→ Speak clearly, don't hesitate to repeat yourself, use auditory metaphors, read a few passages from your visual aids.