

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black dress, is seen from the side, gesturing towards a large group of people seated at round tables in a conference room. The audience is diverse in age and is looking towards the presenter. The room has a green carpet and a white wall with a door in the background.

**ALICIA
McKAY**

PRESENTATION PLANNER

Design and deliver engaging, impactful
speaking sessions for your audience



YOUR AUDIENCE DESERVES BETTER.

Most presentations are boring. They have too much content and too little engagement. That's not because speakers aren't well intentioned – simply a matter of having their focus in the wrong place.

If you're looking for a handy tool to plan an engaging, interactive workshop, masterclass, presentation or speaking gig, try this approach to your workshop.

Here's a few guiding principles to help you while you design your session:

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

Your audience already believe you deserve to be there, by virtue of the fact that you're the one speaking. Put your worries to the side and focus on where they're at, so you can best serve them.

VALIDATE, THEN ALLEVIATE

Your audience doesn't just need your subject matter expertise downloaded into their brains – they need you to see them, hear them and then show them a way forward.

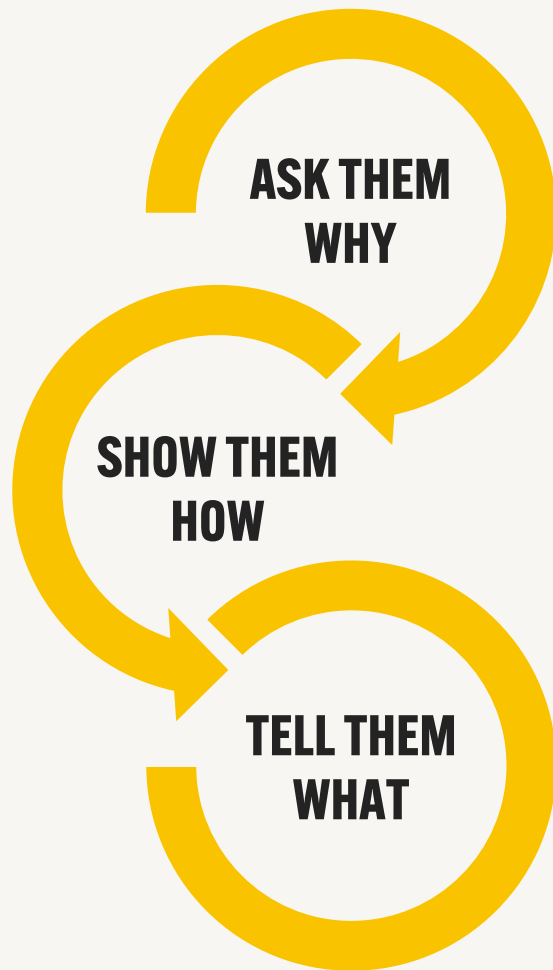
STRUCTURE, NOT SCRIPT

Nobody wants to watch you read bullet points off a slide or stick to a script. Focus on structuring your content in a logical, useful fashion and stick to basic talking points to enable the most engaging and natural speaking style.

HUMAN, NOT EXPERT

You might be chosen for your expertise, but your audience needs personality and human connection to make any sense of what you have to say. When you're confident, open and honest, people are able to absorb your message.

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CONNECT TO YOUR AUDIENCE

SONDER

n. the realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own—populated with their own ambitions, friends, routines, worries and inherited craziness—an epic story that continues invisibly around you like an anthill sprawling deep underground, with elaborate passageways to thousands of other lives that you’ll never know existed, in which you might appear only once, as an extra sipping coffee in the background, as a blur of traffic passing on the highway, as a lighted window at dusk.

The Dictionary Of Obscure Sorrows

PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES

Life and work are busy. People are arriving at your session inside a busy life, worrying about all of their own stresses.

They’re tired, overwhelmed and looking for some respite from their otherwise packed schedules – so offer them that.

Their brains are already full, as they now wonder...

- Do they have time to be here?
- When will they send that email?
- What’s coming next?
- Will they look stupid?
- Who else will be there?
- Is this going to mean more work to do?

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

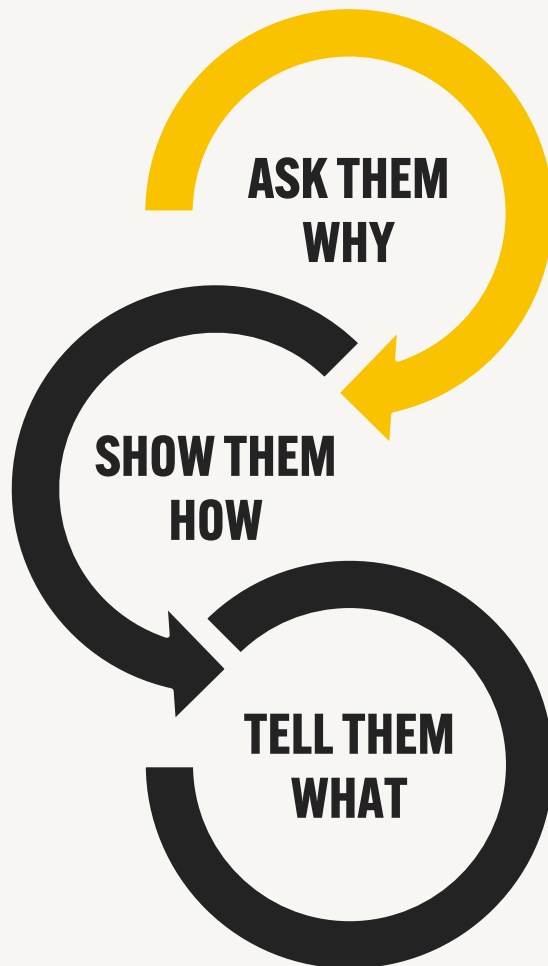
1. How are your audience feeling?
2. What are they currently struggling with?
3. What are they nervous about or afraid of?
4. What would be the most help for them right now?
5. What issues or fears can you address for them?
6. How do you want them to feel once they leave your session?
7. What do you want them to do afterwards?

WHERE ARE THEY AT NOW?

GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

STEP TWO

ASK THEM WHY



There is nothing engaging, interesting or useful about somebody explaining to you why you should care about something. Instead, ask them. Once they tell you why they care, they believe themselves – brains are funny like that.

THE CURSE OF KNOWLEDGE

When you already know a lot about something, you understand why it matters. That can make you blind to the knowledge gaps of others.

Don't assume that people know why they're here or why it matters. Even if people *do* already know, they probably need a reminder. Make sure to dedicate the first part of your session to the why.

Start every session with a conversation that connects to the daily reality of the people you're talking to. This primes them to absorb and enjoy the useful stuff you're ready to offer them.

"If they don't know why, they don't care how."

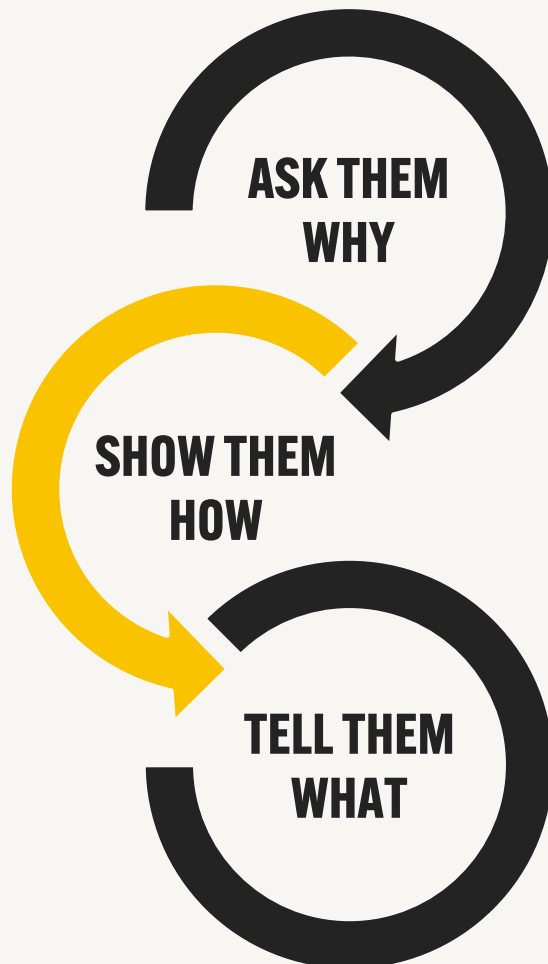
- SIMON SINEK

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why does this matter?
2. What will people get from the discussion?
3. How does this link to other things that are going on?
4. What questions can you ask to get people interested and engaged?

Why does this matter?

SHOW THEM HOW



You might be speaking on a topic that is widely known and understood. That doesn't mean people know how to make sense of the information that's out there.

Your number one job as a speaker or presenter is to make sense of the world for the people who attend, in a meaningful and memorable way.

First, validate – Recognise people's experiences in a way that makes them feel less alone or flawed. Use relevant examples where possible.

Second, alleviate – Provide a clear explanation of the key principles, characteristics or considerations that contribute to that experience. Stick to three categories whenever possible, our brain tops out after that.

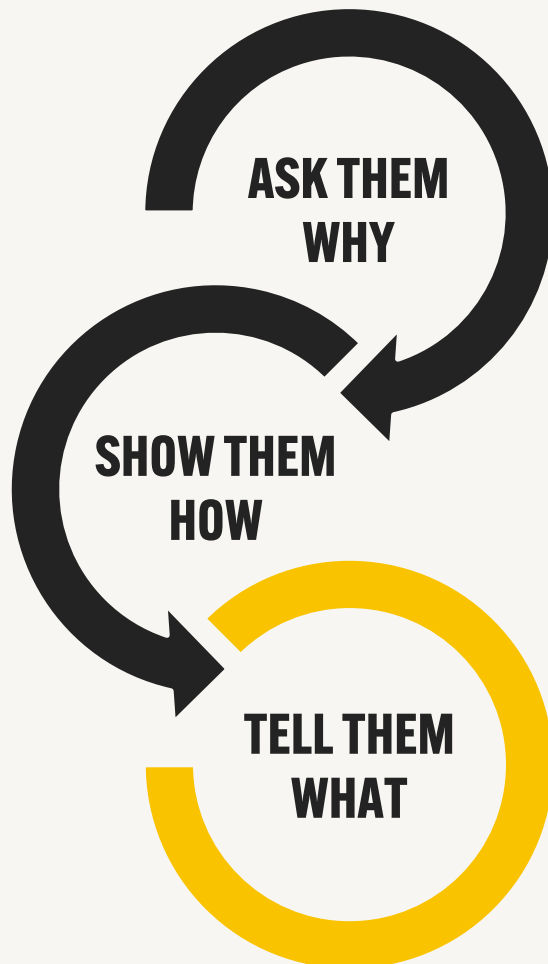
Then you can go on to explaining a path forward, based on the three points that you've made.

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

1. What are the most important principles of this topic?
2. How can you organize your information in a way that's easy to understand and remember?
3. Can you use a memory device like alliteration, acronym, rhyme or a tagline?
4. How could you illustrate this visually?
5. Can you think of an analogy, metaphor or other way to connect to your audience?

What are the three key points, ingredients or principles of your topic?

TELL THEM WHAT



OK, NOW WHAT?!

If you've succeeded in taking people on a compelling and engaging journey through your why, and what, they're ready to hear about what they can do.

Nay, they're *gagging* to hear about what they can do! They're connected to the importance of your topic, understand how it works, and motivated to take action.

Sure, you could have led with this, but the chances they would listen, understand or care were nil. That's why we take our structure so seriously.

It's time for you to really shine now: show them the way forward.

Think carefully about how you can boil your topic down to some short, easy tips or tools that they can keep with them long after your session has ended.

WAYS TO SERVE

1. Provide a tool, tip or solution for each of the key ingredients you covered in the 'how'
2. Make the advice or instructions as simple as possible
3. Prioritise tasks or ideas that can be implemented immediately – preferable in the session
4. Create resources, worksheets or handouts
5. Provide links to additional resources on your topic.

TELL THEM WHAT

HOW - POINT 1

HOW - POINT 2

HOW - POINT 3

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WHAT YOU CAN DO

STEP FIVE

STRUCTURE! (DON'T SCRIPT)

MATERIALS

It's time to bring all your planning together!
Your best work will be done with a selection of:

- Large paper or whiteboard
- Post-It notes, colour-coded if possible
- Coloured pens and markers

GUIDELINES

- Use one story, one question and one exercise for every key point
- Do not have more than three key points, which logically fit under the banner of your main purpose
- Encourage interaction – chatbox and breakout rooms for online, discussion and calling out in person

TIME

- Add an estimated time to each of your sections

FLOW

- Check that each of your sections logically flow from one to the other.

KEY

Consider using a key to organise your workshop planner, i.e.

S Story

? Question

X Interaction or Exercise





















★ Slide or Visual Aid

→ Diagram or Model

✓ Worksheet or Resource

SESSION TITLE

AUDIENCE-FOCUSED PURPOSE

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| INTRO 5% | | | | |
| WHY - 25% Why should they care about this? |  |  |  |  |
| HOW - 40% What are the three key ingredients? |  |  |  |  |
| |  |  |  |  |
| |  |  |  |  |
| WHAT 25% What can they do now? |  |  |  |  |
| CLOSE 5% | | | | |

SLIDE GUIDELINES

MAX # OF SLIDES

- One per story
- One per point
- One per tool/
exercise

MAX # OF WORDS

- Ten per slide

MAX # OF SLIDES BY TIME

- One for every 5 mins

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

1. How can you make your point with pictures?
2. Can you draw a simple or memorable diagram or model to explain your point?
3. Can you use videos, quotes or other visual aids that aren't bullet points?
4. Is this slide worth taking a picture of, or copying down? If not, delete it.
5. Can you live draw or explain your point without the use of a slide?
6. Does each slide add something to the experience? If not, delete.

| | | | | |
|------|--|--|--|--|
| WHY | | | | |
| HOW | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| WHAT | | | | |

FINAL TIPS AND TRICKS

KEEP YOUR NOTES HANDY

You've probably made a big mess getting all of this ready. Don't type it all out into the Powerpoint notes section – make a neat and tidy visual planner that you can keep on your desk or next to your laptop.

STRIP IT DOWN

You have almost certainly planned to much. Remove 30% of your content and increase the estimated time for each section.

BUILD IN FLEX

Know your critical path and be prepared to deviate as you need. Make sure your agenda would be complete if you had to skip an entire section. It's not important that you finish, but it is important that the audience feels finished. They don't know what you planned.

CALL TO ACTION

Make sure your audience knows what to do with the information you've provided. Leave them with an inciting question, task, challenge or resource they can use.

RELAX

You've been asked to do this presentation because you have something important to offer the world. Nobody expects perfection. You know what you're talking about.

HAVE FUN!

Time spent with others should be a lifting experience – we should feel better after being together, not worse. Make sure there's space in your presentation for humour, lightness and authenticity so that people leave feeling better than they came in.

ALICIA MCKAY ⚡



ABOUT ALICIA MCKAY

Alicia McKay is Australasia's leading expert in strategy and change. She is an experienced MC, keynote speaker and workshop facilitator, and is in hot demand for topics including strategic thinking, change leadership, social justice and gender and class inclusion.

She is a prolific writer, trusted media commentator and top-selling author of two not-boring business books – *You Don't Need An MBA: Leadership Lessons that Cut Through the Crap* and *From Strategy to Action: A Guide to Getting Shit Done in the Public Sector*.

If you're looking to spice up your next event or conference with sharp insights on change and leadership, join thousands of delighted audience members and request Alicia as a guest speaker.

2022/3 speaking fees start at

- **\$7,000+ GST for conference keynotes**
- **\$3,000+ GST for online guest appearances**
- **\$10,000 + GST for full day workshops or MC duties**

Alicia also speaks at charity events and supports causes she is passionate about with pro-bono appearances.

Watch Alicia speak or enquire about bookings at www.aliciamckay.co.nz/speaking

