

5 Tips for Delivering Strong Openings & Closings:

Grab attention

Without an audience's attention, you cannot share a message or make an impact. Therefore, the primary goal of a successful presentation opening is to capture the audience's attention. This means drawing their attention away from distractions and helping the audience focus on the presentation.

A strong opening grabs their attention. A great presentation maintains it.

Build anticipation

To build anticipation is to create a strong desire to attend, making the audience want to continue listening in order to learn what you promise to deliver. Open the presentation by acknowledging the problem you will solve. Provide clues to where you are headed. Share the questions you will answer, the key points to be covered, or what they will learn.

Establish a foundation

Audiences are more willing to take in new information when it is connected to their prior knowledge and experiences. Remind the audience of what they know and communicate your knowledge of their needs and concerns about the topic. A strong opening establishes the structure, feel, and content of the presentation. Maintain these from start to finish.

Wrap it up well

The closing of a presentation is an opportunity to summarize your key points and remind the audience of what they learned. Repetition is a powerful memory tool. If a story was used in the opening, finish it.

If a problem was posed, solve it. By using a closing that flows from the opening and body of the presentation, the audience feels a sense of closure and completeness.

Send forth with purpose

The purpose of an informative presentation goes beyond gaining and maintaining attention, to learning and taking action to achieve the desired outcomes after the presentation ends. Inspire your audience to apply what they learned and put it into practice. Call your audience to action. A strong closing is both memorable and motivating.