

Defining objectives for your talk

Defining your objectives for your talk will help you design it to be effective. A really good structure for writing objectives is:

'By the end of my talk the audience will'

To guide you through the process of crafting your objectives, note the answers to these questions:

- Who are your audience?
- What is your aim in presenting to them? – Inform? Persuade? Inspire? Entertain? Demonstrate? Something else?
- What do you want them to know?
- What do they want to know?
- What do they already know?
- What may they not know?
- What's in it for them?

So let's imagine you are going to make a short presentation to your department about your research.

You want them to know about what you are doing, why, and what's new and innovative about your particular work. So you want to inform them about yourself and your work, and maybe also persuade and entertain them.

You can make assumptions about their knowledge of your subject, but might need to think about the extent of their specialist knowledge in your particular field. What therefore might you need to explain?

They want to be interested, engaged, and to enjoy your talk.

So your objectives might be crafted as 'By the end of my talk, the audience will...

- Understand the context of my work
- Be aware of where / how my work is extending existing knowledge
- Know how my work might connect with theirs.

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