Revenue Wise
AudienceFIRST Presentations

Developing a Signature Talk

This guidebook contains excerpts from the AudienceFIRST Program materials that will help you develop targeted and insightful presentations.

REVENUE WISE

THE SMART WAY TO GROW

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“Targeted Insights” Presentations

There is a large opportunity to deliver what we call “targeted insights” to clients. These are presentations that are customized to the participants’ industry, company size, financial strength, business challenges and specific legal problems.

Obviously, if you present to an individual client or prospect, you can truly customize your presentation to their exact needs. If you’re presenting to a more general audience, make sure all the elements of your talk are truly targeted and provide the client with the necessary insights they need to understand and navigate the issues.

The Signature Talk method — outlined below — provides an excellent way to develop these types of presentations.

Present Your Way to Success

A Signature Talk is a specific type of presentation you can deliver over and over to attract new prospective clients, convert prospects to clients and deepen your relationship with existing clients.

This type of talk also strengthens your reputation (personal brand) as a **Recognized Expert** and showcases your unique strengths. That’s what makes it “signature.”

It’s also one of the best prospecting tools available. You can use it to generate new prospects from public talks, convert prospects to clients and grow existing clients.

The main benefit of this type of presentation is that once you develop it, you rarely need to change it except to make modifications to appeal to a specific audience. For the most part, attorneys are "teacher-presenters." That is, they are expected to both teach useful content and give a compelling presentation that connects with the audience. This means audiences will be drawing conclusions about your competence as an attorney based on your competence as a teacher-presenter.

By following the AudienceFIRST Presentation method, you will develop better presentations in less time. You will secure more new contacts, convert more prospects to clients and grow your reputation as a Recognized Expert.

Signature Talk Checklist

- Based on your Recognized Expert Position
- Delivered to your target audience
- Topic really matters to your audience
- Has a reasonably "long shelf life"
- Showcases your unique skills and gifts
- Contains a relevant Biz Dev "Hook"

A Note About these Materials

We extracted specific content from several different AudienceFIRST Program modules to give you an overview of how to use a Signature Talk to deliver "targeted insights."

The full program consists of step-by-step instructions on how to develop and deliver a compelling and engaging presentation that will help you move your participants to the next stage of the sales cycle.

Included in the full program are ten instructional guides, all the necessary forms, a firm-branded slide template and Word templates for a Scored Worksheet and a handout.

We typically deliver this material in either a one-on-one coaching format, where we work individually with the attorney to help him or her complete their talk. Or we deliver the program in a group setting — via webinar — to multiple attorneys.

I hope you find the materials helpful. Feel free to contact me if you need any additional help.

David

David Adams
415.302.3900
David@revenuewise.com

Presentation Development Map

These are the stages you will complete as you develop your presentation and generate new clients from your efforts.

Common Presentation Goals

As you develop your presentation, keep these overall goals in mind:

Audience Goals

- **To learn something valuable.** Everyone is coming to your presentation to learn something valuable. Ensure that you deliver something the audience wants or needs and finds to be valuable.
- **To use what they learn.** Most audience members expect to be able to apply what you taught them when they get back to their office.
- **To enjoy themselves.** They want to enjoy the time they spend with you. They don't want to sit through a boring, humorless, dry presentation.

Your Goals

- **To generate new prospects and clients.** You need to ensure that your presentations help you generate new prospects and clients.
- **To build your reputation**. Building your reputation as a Recognized Expert is essential for the long-term success of your practice.
- **To cultivate relationships with participants.** Making a personal connection with your audience is required if you are going to generate new relationships and deepen existing ones.

Never forget, to achieve your goals, you must
put the <u>Audience First</u> and ensure they achieve their goals.

Know Your Audience

Introduction

Have you ever attended a presentation where, as soon as the presenter began speaking, you realized he or she did not understand you, your industry or your issues?

And by extension, the topic he or she had selected was only vaguely relevant to you? If so, you know the importance of knowing who you're speaking to and selecting the right topic.

This is a connected two-step process: knowing your audience allows you to select the most compelling topic.

Knowing your audience's problems, wants, needs, fears, industry trends and competitive landscape helps you in many ways:

- You are more likely to select a topic they want to hear.
- You can more easily interject relevant stories and facts.
- You can respond better to ad hoc questions.
- You will connect better with your audience.
- You will make a better impression.
- You will feel more confident.
- You will be in better position to help them solve their problems.

It's All about Them

The audience is the star of the show. Not you. You are presenting to them for one reason: to help them learn something new or take some action that will benefit them.

It is best to have an attitude of humility and act as the mentor/guide who is there to serve the audience. So, be humble, be grateful, be of service.

The day of the arrogant expert presenting to the less-informed is long gone.

Conduct Audience Research

The depth of your research is driven by: how well you know the audience, their issues and their industry; how important the presentation and audience are to your reputation and practice; and how well the audience knows the subject.

If you are speaking to an audience you know well, work for and have spoken to before, you may only need to conduct some basic research on this particular audience.

On the other hand, if you are not very familiar with this audience and know little about their issues, companies and industry dynamics, you will have to invest more time or risk appearing to be uninformed.

Minimum Information to Gather

No matter how well you think you know your audience, always answer these basic questions:

Who will be attending my presentation?

- Are they attorneys or non-attorneys?
- If they are attorneys, are they in-house or outside counsel? Do they practice in the field I will be presenting on?
- If they are non-attorneys, are they participating as representatives of a business (e.g., HR directors) or as individuals (e.g., executives coming to an estate planning event).
- Are they executives or non-executives? What are the main titles of the participants? What industry are they in? How large are their companies?

Are they potential purchasers of my services?

- Are they decision-makers, evaluators or influencers?

What is their level of know-how?

- How well do they know the subject? How sophisticated are they?
- What is the typical Meyers-Briggs (MBTI) type of someone in this audience?

What are their main problems?

- What are their main business problems?
- What are their main legal problems?
- What are their main personal problems (at work)?

Select the Right Topic

Introduction

Obviously, picking the right topic for a given audience is one of the most important decisions you will make.

As an attorney, you will often be constrained in what you can present. For instance, if you are doing updates on changes in the law, your topic is already defined.

Conferences have themes, and often you will have to speak within the boundaries of an event. That being said, you can still employ some creativity when selecting your topic. And when it comes to presenting, you can deliver potentially dry material in a more exciting way.

On the other hand, if you are presenting to potential purchasers of your services and have the freedom to pick your topic, you can make full use of the suggestions and tools below.

Guidelines for Selecting a Topic

Here are some guidelines for selecting the topic of your next presentation:

- The process begins with knowing your audience. Specifically, what problems do they have that you can solve or shed light on through a presentation?
- Select something your audience wants to hear. Many presenters incorrectly assume that because they are interested in a topic, their audience will be, too. Take the time to understand what they want to hear.
- Select a topic you know well, something you could speak on extemporaneously if you had to. This will boost your confidence and allow you to devote more attention to making the talk more engaging.
- Select a topic you're passionate about, something you think is cool. Enthusiasm for your subject will come through in your presentation.
- Select a topic based on problems that your services solve. Make it easy for the audience to see themselves hiring you to solve the problems you are talking about.
- Select a topic that reinforces your brand as a **Recognized Expert** in your chosen field.
- Select a topic that is provocative, cutting-edge and unexpected.
- Select a topic that is aligned with your audience's level of expertise. Don't talk down to them or bury them with complexity. But if you have to choose, it's better to talk above their level of expertise than to tell them what they already know.
- Select a topic you can comfortably cover in the time allotted.
- Select a topic that will pique attendees' interest when they read it in the event agenda.
- One of the best ways to find compelling topics is to ask those who will be attending. If you cannot find out who will be attending, find five to ten people who fit the same profile as the attendees and ask them what they would most want to hear about.

Presentation Structure

Introduction

When crafting your presentation, you must make two key decisions at the beginning of the development process:

Presentation Type. Learn the difference between an “instructional” (how-to) or “insightful” (what to do) presentation.

Organizational Format. Learn how to use the Problem, Implications, Solution, Benefit (PISB) format.

Selecting Your Presentation Type

Your presentations will fall somewhere along this continuum.

When you are giving an **instructional presentation**, you will have your professor hat on, often teaching audience members a new skill or giving them an in-depth update on the law. The audience expects to learn *how* to do something and then take it back to the office and apply the new learning.

When you are giving an **insightful presentation**, you are using your experience and insight to help the audience see and solve problems, identify and capitalize on opportunities, learn about new trends and developments or do something more effectively. In this type of presentation, you are telling audience members *what* the issue or challenge is and not necessarily teaching them how to resolve it themselves.

Selecting Your Organizational Format

Many of the best-known presentation books and training programs focus on helping presenters deliver keynotes and talks in a corporate setting. Corporate talks are often aimed at trying to *persuade* audiences to take some action or to *report* on some new development.

On the other hand, attorney presentations tend to focus on educating or informing their audiences, either through CLE classes or by offering insights on a particular topic.

This means that only certain organizational formats are effective for attorney presentations.

We feel this format is most effective: **Problem, Implications, Solution, Benefit (PISB)**

Problem, Implications, Solution, Benefit (PISB)

This is a classic and effective way to organize your entire presentation. Audiences always want to have their most significant problems solved. Further, this is a great format to use with one overall story or with several smaller stories. In this description, we use one overall story.

1. **State the problem you will solve**. Let audience members know they face a big bad problem or problems. You can present up to a total of three-to-five problems.

2. **Reveal the implications of not solving the problem.** What unpleasant fate will befall audience members if they don't resolve this problem? Make it bad. Describe all the ramifications. Amp it up. Get them to identify and care.

3. **Explain your solution.** Explain how your presentation will help them solve this problem and avoid the unhappy implications of not addressing the problem.

4. **Express the benefits of solving the problem**. Tell them how great it will be! Let them know what good things will come their way if they follow your advice.

Develop Compelling Slides

Overview

Remember, slides don't present—you do. Few things annoy an audience and say "unprofessional" as much as bad slides. Your slides are meant to visually support the points you make. They are not a report, a teleprompter or a handout. Put detailed material in a separate handout.

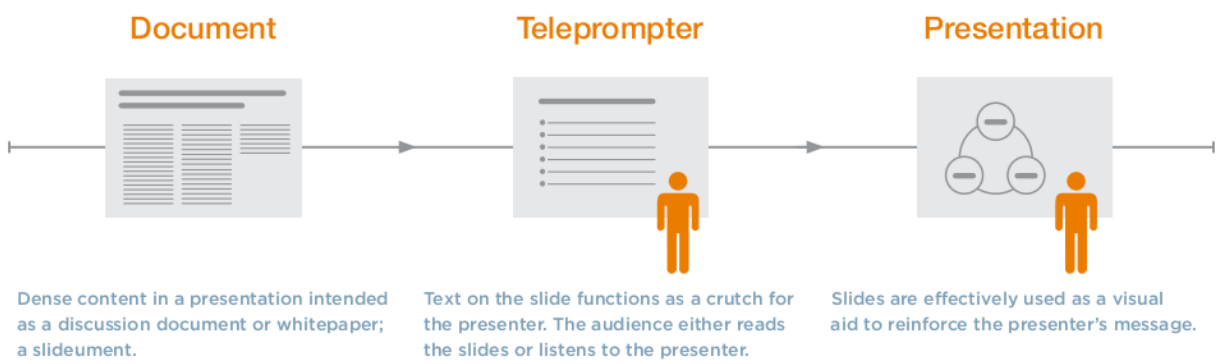
Interesting and fast-moving slides help the audience to stay engaged, particularly during webinars. Dense, text-heavy and technical slides will distract and alienate audience members rather than inform them.

The material in this section incorporates the design principles of several leading experts and our own experience in helping hundreds of attorneys develop and deliver effective presentations.

Main Principles

Slides Are Used to Enhance Your Points

Nancy Duarte, in her excellent book *Slide:ology*, uses this image to display the three ways people use slides. Her view, and ours, is that slides are meant to visually enhance and reinforce the points you want to make, not to be used as your teleprompter or handout. The audience cannot listen to you and read your slides at the same time. Slides are meant to be glanced at, not read. Your audience should not need more than three seconds to grasp a slide's meaning.



Think Like a Designer (Tap into Your Inner Steve Jobs)

Few of us are trained as designers or graphic artists, but most of us know when we are looking at poorly designed slides. Steve Jobs was a master of design, particularly when it came to presentation slides. He came up with the Apple slide aesthetic: clean, uncluttered, lots of white space, great graphics, excellent use of type and an emphasis on making things simple.

You can adopt these same principles when you design your slides. Don't use the same old PowerPoint templates and rush into putting a ton of text on each slide. Take a minute and think about your audience members. Do you really want to subject them to the very things you hate in other people's slides? When you get ready to develop your slides, ask yourself, "Would Steve design a slide like this?"

Note: If you can still find it, watch the first ten minutes of Steve Jobs' introduction of the iPhone. Notice how clean, simple and effective his slides are.

Develop Handout

As we have mentioned before, your slides are not your handout.

If you want to give your audience any in-depth information, like case law, citations, procedures or complex explanations, you need a separate handout.

The quality and production value of your handout is determined by how important the audience is and whether you want them to use the handout after the presentation.

Follow these steps to develop your handout:

1. Determine the purpose of your handout.

2. Structure and write your handout.

3. Professionally format the handout.

Determine the Purpose of Your Handout

Before you start writing, determine the purpose of your handout. This will save you a lot of time.

Important Note: If you can, write the handout so you can use it in other business development efforts. For instance, can you write something you can give to prospective clients or post on the firm website or LinkedIn? You want to get as much biz dev value as you can from these documents. This is called "repurposing" your content.

Handouts can serve one or more the following uses:

- Presentation Supplement. Rather than cramming your slides full of text, put the supporting material in a handout. Having a presentation supplement gives you the freedom to give the audience everything you want to give them without putting an undue burden on your slides.

- Learning Aid. If you are delivering a presentation designed to teach your audience some new skill or legal update, give them a reference document they can use during and after the presentation.

- Quick Reference Guide. If your material lends itself to one, give your audience a quick reference guide.

Closing Thoughts

Having coached over 400 attorneys and trained an additional 2000, I can safely say that a well-done Signature Talk, delivered to the right audience, is one of the most effective business development tools.

Clients and prospects are starved for a highly specialized information that is tailored to their particular needs and challenges.

I hope you end up investing the time in developing a presentation that solves some of your clients' essential legal needs and gives you the opportunity to display that you care and are being of maximum service.

Good luck,

David

David Adams Bio

David Adams is a seasoned coach, author and speaker. He has more than 20 years of experience helping attorneys and firm leaders improve their business development and leadership skills. David is an expert at helping lawyers and practice groups develop the attitudes, behaviors and capabilities necessary for success.

He helps attorneys achieve the ideal combination of professional success and personal fulfillment.

David has worked with hundreds of lawyers and dozens of practice group leaders at such firms as Davis Polk; Morgan Lewis; Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe; Polsinelli; Locke Lord; Fenwick & West; Latham & Watkins; Littler Mendelson; Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton; Holland & Hart; Keker, Van Nest & Peters; and Farella Braun + Martel.

As a coach, consultant and trainer, David is focused on producing measurable results and helping lawyers overcome the internal and external obstacles to success in business development. Many firms have adopted the Revenue Wise approach to business development.

David works with practice groups to refocus their efforts, reposition them in the marketplace, formulate effective plans, promote teamwork among leaders and members, and create systems of accountability that help them achieve their objectives.

David also works with firm management and leaders to develop effective growth strategies and plans, implement cross-selling programs, develop the next generation of leaders, help the management committee work more effectively together and facilitate effective retreats and meetings.

David Adams
415.302.3900
David@revenuewise.com

Revenue Wise, Inc.
1000 Fourth Street, Suite 595
San Rafael, CA 94901
www.revenuewise.com