



Effective Communication in the Workplace

Handout 8

Tips for Script Writing

Consider the following when writing your script.

<p>Written vs Spoken language</p>	<p>Keep the use of language simple</p> <p>Written language are more informal</p> <p>Keep it understandable and let the use of words make the statements you would like it to</p> <p>Spoken language do not use the third person – but he first eg. The user will..., vs You will...</p> <p>Do not use words that sounds oddly formal, stilted or literary</p> <p>Keep the sentences short!</p>
<p>Word order</p>	<p>When reading you can go at your own pace, you can go back and pause to consider. When listening to a presentation this is not possible. Therefore, information should not only be delivered clearly, but also in the best order for assimilation e.g. “Socrates, Dickson, Henry V, King Leo and John Beckham all had beards” vs Socrates had a beard, so had</p>
<p>Signposting</p>	<p>For the same reason as above, one should avoid listing many events without giving proper time for assimilation. E.g. John Craft climbed the Himalayas, rowed the Atlantic, crossed the Saharan Dessert, run from Paris to Hamburg and shot the Niagara Falls on canoe – all in one year.</p> <p>Allow space between the activities for it to be assimilated.</p>
<p>Plant your facts</p>	<p>The rhetorical question could be put to good use to “dig a hole to plant a fact into”. It’s easier to remember a fact if you wanted to know it – than just being presented with it. E.g. “That flat rock is probably where Honnibal spend his third night, because Livy says they made about five miles on the third day and John said they camped on a high flat rock” vs “Now we can work out where Honibal spend his third night. Levi said they made about five miles and John indicated that they camped on a high flat rock... by now your audience are ready to put it together.</p>

<p>Avoid abstract nouns</p>	<p>Because your audience does not have the opportunity to stop and go back to a sentence, one should keep the language simple. Use concrete nouns rather than abstract nouns. Abstract nouns might be impressive in writing, but could be an obstacle to understanding in spoken language, e.g. “we will give special attention to the provision of adequate sound reception facilities” vs “we will make sure that you can hear it properly”</p>
<p>Use of examples and analogy</p>	<p>A well-chosen parallel / example form within the audience’s experience is often worth more than visual aids or lengthy explanations.</p>
<p>Different levels of knowledge</p>	<p>When you write an article for a journal, readers will read it at the pace at which they can assimilate it – some fast, some slow and attentively and some just glance through it. This poses a challenge to the presenter – if you suspect that most of your audience will be knowledgeable about what you have to say, you would still have to provide basics for the part that is not informed and vice versa</p> <p>In doing so never over-estimate your audiences’ knowledge and never under-estimate their intelligence.</p> <p>Drop background/ basic facts casually and inoffensively, rather than lining it up formally, e.g. “Nelson Mandela was the first president of South Africa post-apartheid. Prior to that he was held captive on Robbin Island for 27 years on treason charges. He managed to lead the post-apartheid South Africa through a period of transformation. At the same time, he managed to re-establishing our international trade opportunities.” Vs “What a remarkable man Mr Mandela is. After having been held captive for 27 years, he managed to, as president of South Africa, lead the country through transformation whilst re-establishing the international trade links. “</p>