

Lesson 5: Quick Start Model: Three Buckets

When you hear a presenter say, “**I want my data and presentation to tell a story,**” they are referring to the construction of the message. You have seen presentations before that seem to flow logically and effortlessly for the presenter. By the end of the presentation, the audience feels like they have smoothly transitioned from one area to the next, with the closing wrapping up the entire message. Counting this lesson, you will receive four quick-start models. Practice each and implement into your next presentation.

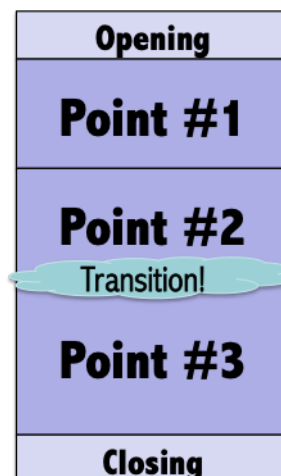
How many points should I make in a presentation?

Well, you can make as many as you want, you just may not have your audience with you when you finish. In addition, they may not remember all you have said either. In 1987 Jimmy Carter, then a candidate for the Presidency of The United States, addressed a large convention, seeking their support. He stated that he had twenty-one points to make. You could almost hear the audience groan. With so many points to make, his speech would feel like it could last forever. The audience may disengage with fatigue before you even begin.

So, how many points should you make? Time or content do not determine this answer. Your audience does. They tend to like three. Whenever possible place your content into three main points or buckets. This may be one of the simplest forms of constructing the message but it can also be one of the most effective.

Point 1 – Point 2 – Point 3

This format is very common among literary writers and essayists. It is a format that is also popular with speakers and presenters. It is based on the premise that as humans, we like to hear things in threes. One is not enough, two items always seems to beg the third, and four is too many to remember. Three just works.



MESSAGE BUILDER

We have three other Quick-Start Models we will review next, but we wanted to start with one of the most flexible and effective. Think about how you want to label or categorize the three buckets. To avoid the audience attention dip, we also recommend creating a contrast between point 2 and point 3. This will intrigue the audience and help you avoid that dip in audience attention.

This type of format is good for any presentation and even with answering questions or creating a spontaneous presentation!

