

CHEAT SHEET

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How To Prepare A Speech In 15 Minutes

Your boss bellows as you pass his office. "You...whatever your name is. The whole sales team just came down with the flu. You have to make the pitch to the client. Two o'clock in the Nirvana conference room."

You look at the watch on your now-glistening wrist...1:40...You have 20 minutes.

Welcome to the Speech Pressure Cooker.

If you find yourself in such a situation, don't despair. Assuming you have sufficient knowledge and don't have to conduct research, here's a quick fix tool for scenarios like this. Just follow these helpful steps:

Analyze your audience (2-4 minutes). Who are they and what do they need and want to hear?

Decide on your central idea (5 minutes). What one thing do you want them to take away from this presentation – your critical message? Make it concrete and memorable.

Chose one organizing format from the list below and use it to put your speech together (6-8 minutes). These are ready-made to serve your purpose efficiently and effectively.

- **Position-evidence/show it in action.** State your position then back it up with evidence. Give examples of that evidence, i.e., show it working. Then restate your position. Voila!
- **Chronological.** Tell your story in a past-present-(and perhaps) future form. This simple structure can make things crystal clear and be highly effective with certain messages. Clear and concise!
- **Problem-solution.** This structure both informs and gives the impression of considered analysis. It follows a natural progression then provides a solution. Elegant!
- **Tell a story.** The easiest way to hook your audience. Stories not only get the listeners on board fast, they also fast-charge your expressiveness and ability to persuade. Because you're emotionally involved, your audience will be too. You'll touch the minds and hearts of your listeners, and your message will come alive. Irresistible!

1:58...1:59...Welcome to Nirvana.

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