

# INSIGHTS FROM THE PRESENTATION LAB

## KEY MESSAGE HEADLINE

Of the many presentation story structures available, there is one that cuts through the noise more efficiently than any other – the Key Message Headline structure.

The simplicity of this structure belies its impact and ability to make the most complex of subjects more digestible and engaging for audiences of all types. It is for this reason that the Key Message Headline model is used in fields as diverse as journalism, technical presentations and education.

The Key Message Headline model is built around 3 key 'chunks' of content:

### ? WHAT

Define what 'new state' you want to communicate with your audience, be that a change, an idea or vision.

**Example:** We are relocating our Head Office to Ireland

### ? HOW

Explain how this 'new state' is going to come about. What measures need to be in place to deliver your change?

**Example:** We are providing support with moving costs and schooling

### ? WHY

The reason for the 'new state'. In short, the benefits associated with your message. Where possible, make these benefits audience centric (although this is not a prerequisite!)

**Example:** The move will provide a better work-life balance for our team

## THE SEVEN SLIDE STRUCTURE

1

TITLE

This is your first opportunity to position your audience for action.

**Tip:** Make your title as action orientated as possible. Show direction and make it positive rather than a traditional 'vanilla' presentation title

2

OVERVIEW

This is your traditional 'Tell them what you're going to tell them' slide. Importantly, ensure that this is broken down into three headline sections – your 'What', 'How' & 'Why'

**Tip:** This is an important scene setter so take time to make sure it's as powerful and engaging as possible. While you won't be diving into any great detail at this stage, feel free to spend time talking through the high level – there is no benefit in rushing though!

3

WHAT

Use this slide to clearly define your 'new state'.

**Tip:** Build the elements of your 'What' in priority order (from most to least important). This will ensure your key messages are communicated even if you are tight for time.

## THE SEVEN SLIDE STRUCTURE CONT...

4

HOW

Break down the elements of your 'How' message here. Typically this is an area where you can use visuals to help tell the story (process, timeline, financial data)

**Tip:** Build the elements of your 'How' in priority order (from most to least important). This will ensure your key messages are communicated even if you are tight for time.

5

WHY

This is a key slide – the value of your 'new state' message rests on this truly engaging your audience. Make this as audience centric as possible...but remember credibility is everything!

**Tip:** Build the elements of your 'Why' in priority order (from most to least important). This will ensure your key messages are communicated even if you are tight for time.

6

OP ED

This is your opportunity to add some personal 'colour' to the presentation. Op Ed is shorthand for Opinion Editorial so, just as the press does, offer your thoughts on the topic

**Tip:** Don't stress too much about visuals for this part of the presentation. This should come 'from the heart' so deliver it as such. Also invite questions at this point.

7

SUMMARY

This is chance to summarise your key message while highlighting the key elements that should resonate with your audience (typically 'How' and 'Why' messaging. Remember to conclude with a Call to Action

**Tip:** If possible, make this slide as visual as possible. This is the content discussed by your audience after the presentation so make it as powerful and memorable as possible.

## WHAT TO DO NOW

Any great presentation starts on paper.

Take time to focus on your message and 'chunk down' your content, keeping in the information that supports your message and filtering out anything that doesn't. Then (and only then) think about opening up PowerPoint and developing visuals.

For more information, inspiration and worked examples, grab a copy of [The Presentation Lab](#) or go online to [book a session at the Eyeful Labs](#)

CONTACT  
DETAILS

+44 (0)1455 8263390

[info@eyefulpresentations.com](mailto:info@eyefulpresentations.com)

[www.eyefulpresentations.co.uk](http://www.eyefulpresentations.co.uk)

@eyefulpres