

2.2.2 Main part

Structuring a Theme

- For general presentations (especially of the selling type), the basic approach for a structure is the "Now - Then" comparison.
 - Start with "*Now*". What is the situation now, what is good about it, what is not so good, what are the problems.
 - Continue with describing "*Then*". What could be, what would be optimal, what kind of advantages are expected (especially for your audience).
 - Now present your *solutions*, or how we get from now to then. Show alternatives, give reasons for your choice between alternatives, discuss pros and cons (be especially open about the cons), end with the most important pro argument.
- This recipe can also be used (at least in parts) for scientific presentations where you present your *research results*. For scientific presentations where you just *explain* existing knowledge to your not yet enlightened audience, this scenario may not be very helpful.

Being Convincing

- Even in science, you have to be convincing if you want to be believed, or even more important, if you want to be remembered.
- Now facts are facts, but how convincing they are depends on how you present them. Be concrete, even dramatic (but don't overdo it with a scientific audience). Examples:
 - *True, but not very convincing:*
Quartz oscillators are very important for many electronic products.
 - *True, and attention getting:*
If the production of quartz oscillators would stop for some reason, the computer and communication industry would completely collapse within weeks.
 - *True, and (overly) dramatic:*
If quartz oscillators for some unknown reason were to suddenly stop functioning, millions of people would die within hours!
- Show hard facts. Answer obvious or suspected questions along the following lines *before* they are asked:
 - Who says so?
What right do you have..?
Who proves that this is true?
- We believe what we *see* much more than what we *hear*!
 - Illustrate your points; visualize!

The Ending

- **The Importance of a Good Ending**
- Ende gut, alles gut! (German saying: "All is well that ends well"). There are reasons for that:
 - The attention level always goes up before the ending (if only because people start to wake up).
 - You can once more formulate your message and hammer it home.
 - You can once more make clear (directly or indirectly) what the audience is supposed to do (give you a good grade, for example).
(..must say that that the topic was a big challenge, but I have learned a lot working on it and enjoyed it very much. I hope that in the next years students will also get an opportunity to go through this great experience....).
 - With a good ending you create (hopefully, once more) the impression that you are an expert in your field, a professional in whatever you do, and on top of it a good speaker!
- Don't just fade away because the time is up, or you run out of things to say, *plan your ending*!

How to Make a Good Ending

There are some time-proved endings (not all applicable to scientific talks):

- *Announcement:*

Let me finally summarize: ..

- *Conclusion:*

In conclusion, the main problem is..

The proposal for further action thus is...

To summarize the following results were obtained.

- *Closing a circle:*

Coming back to your opening statement: I have claimed that... and now I hope I convinced you

Taking up your entrance quote or [provocation](#): Here is an [example](#)

- *Moving to the discussion:*

I expect questions to this point and am perfectly willing to answer...

You should allow about **10 %** of your time for the end part of your presentation.