



# Know your audience!

**It is about the audience, NOT about you!**

You must **TELL** the story, and, **LEAD** your audience to the desired outcome!

As a rule, there are three different audience types you need to understand: Analytical, Accepting, and Assertive.

**Analytical** listeners want to understand all the steps in your story before they make a final decision on whether they accept your outcome. If you're addressing an analytical audience, don't leave anything out. They want to see each step of your story, clearly and concisely. They want to see what you considered, but found NOT important! If you leave something out, they may not trust you, or your story. Presentations from an analyst to a manager, or, a sales pitch are usually given to an analytical audience. In many cases, your audience may not be the final decision-maker. You need to give them the ammunition they need to take your story to the next level, and, the confidence that they have ALL they need for their follow up.

**Agreeable / Accepting** listeners typically trust whatever you say. They just need the information (the "story"). This listener may be the C-level executive that the manager, from the previous paragraph, is presenting to. That manager has all the information needed, but, might be trusted by the C-level executive, enough, that only the most pertinent parts of the story need to be presented. This audience type wants to get to the final pitch, as soon as possible.

Warning#1: Do NOT bore this audience type – if they tune-out, your presentation is lost!

Warning#2: Even though you are presenting just the pertinent facts, make sure you keep all those things that would be considered not important, available, just in case your audience has a little "analytic audience" tendency!

**Assertive** audiences want the end game, **RIGHT NOW!** They want you to slap the results of your story on the table, **BAM!** And stop wasting their time! Assertive audiences are not interested in emotional crap. Instead, focus on educating quickly and concisely. Typically, you skip the "steps" along the way, and, get to the story ending, immediately. This might be an investor, or, someone from the media, listening to the CEO of a company.

Right now, some of you are thinking: "What about the **Antagonistic** audience?". Treat them as an Analytic audience. Address any issue they might have as one you DID consider, but dismissed – making certain you have good reasons for that dismissal!

KNOW your audience. People debate whether you tell your audience what they WANT to hear, or, what they NEED to hear. That debate will go on, forever. BUT, NEVER tell them what they will NOT accept!

As a presenter (storyteller) think of your audiences this way.

As a business analyst, you have 30 minutes to present to your manager.

That manager gets 15 minutes to present the SAME STORY to the CEO.

That CEO gets 5 minutes to present the SAME STORY as part of an interview to some media outlet.

Design your full story, with ALL audiences in mind!

Chuck Hooper is recently retired from the business intelligence consulting world and is now concentrating on speaking, coaching and writing. He brings over 5 decades of business experience with him. His experience includes the analysis, design, implementation, training, and support of business intelligence and decision support system environments in a variety of engagements for many big-name clients. Chuck speaks on presentation skills and visual analytics.

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