Baker Center Public Policy Challenge Workshop
Drafting the Executive Summary and Presenting Your Case
September 30, 2014, 5:30-7:30
Baker Center, Toyota Auditorium

Outcomes: (1) Connect with your teammates and the other teams.
          (2) Learn how to invent and present winning ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Student Pre-Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Connect: Gather and survive the kick-off exercise</td>
<td>Dori</td>
<td>None required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Invent: Learn how to draft a winning executive summary. Consider the judges’ criteria:</td>
<td>Dori</td>
<td>1. Read at least two of the winning Executive Summaries (linked and in this packet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Can you define your problem? Can you define your solution?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. For your policy idea, bring one-sentence answers to each of the questions on the left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Why is your solution doable? What is the political feasibility? What is the financial feasibility? What is the societal feasibility?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What are the primary outcomes? How will your idea be implemented?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How will your idea be assessed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How will you engage stakeholders?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What will it take to have a persuasive and effective visual presentation? Written presentation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Practice: In your teams, practice standing and discussing your new answers to these questions given our discussion together and given your team members’ own answers</td>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>Same as the section, above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Learn: Learn the elements of effective presentations</td>
<td>Dr. Haas</td>
<td>1. Watch at least two of the winning presentations (linked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Read “A Brief Introduction to Effective Presentations” (in this packet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:50 p.m.</td>
<td>Practice: In your teams, practice standing and synthesizing the outlines you brought with you to incorporate the information from today’s discussion. Prepare for the next exercise</td>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>Same as the section, above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:05 p.m.</td>
<td>Practice: Team members volunteer to share their presentations with the whole group in exchange for feedback from Dr. Haas</td>
<td>Team Members &amp; Dr. Haas</td>
<td>Same as the section, above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:28 p.m.</td>
<td>Close and next steps</td>
<td>Dori</td>
<td>None required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Workshop Leaders' Biographies**

**Dr. John Haas.** John W. Haas teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in organizational communication, interpersonal communication, and research methods. His work has appeared in American Behavioral Scientist, Management Communication Quarterly, The Journal of Business Communication, The International Journal of Personal Construct Psychology, Southern States Communication Journal, and Journalism Quarterly. Dr. Haas has served as principal investigator or co-principal investigator on research grants from agencies such as the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Engineering Information Foundation. Dr. Haas has lectured at the University of Ulm in Germany concerning effective oral communication skills in health care delivery and worked with the Saxony (Germany) Association of Pharmacists on policies involving provider-recipient communication. His service to professional associations includes chairing divisions of both national and regional groups. Furthermore, Dr. Haas has served as the chair for the public hearings concerning the development of the Spallation Neutron Source (SNS) at the Argonne National Laboratory, the Brookhaven National Laboratory, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

**Dori Stiefel.** In almost twenty-five years as a consultant and entrepreneur, Dori has served senior Federal officials in a variety of agencies and offices, including the Executive Office of the President. She has also increased sales and profits for a variety of businesses and visibility and effectiveness for a variety of public and private organizations. Sample successes include transforming a publishing company from Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to solvency; supporting start-up companies to profitability; and developing award-winning Federal government programs. As a doctoral candidate in political science at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville, Tennessee), Dori is developing and applying a methodology for characterizing current and potential use of emerging technologies by Federal agencies. She has co-authored nine peer-reviewed articles on technology policy, environmental policy, and existential risks of human extinction for journals as varied as *Sustainability* and *Risk Analysis*. Dori holds a B.A. in mathematics with minors in business administration and political science from Mary Baldwin College (Program for the Exceptionally Gifted; Staunton, Virginia) and an M.S. in accounting from the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, Virginia).
Resources

Thinking

Writing Executive Summaries

Writing Policy Memos
Communicating Policy Ideas

Learning from Other Policy Challenges
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY EXAMPLES

The Executive Summary (1-2 pages) will eventually be given to judges at the Semi-Finals and Final Round of the competition. Your document should quickly summarize: the problem, your idea, and the benefits of your solution. The format can be a bullet-point list or it can contain more graphics. For your first draft, focus on content rather than design; make sure to include the basics of your project and the summary of your solution. For the revised drafts, focus more on the design and the function of this piece of paper as a takeaway for the judges.

See five great examples below!
CLOSING SCHOOLS, OPENING OPPORTUNITIES

The creation of The School Redevelopment Authority will revitalize communities across Philadelphia that are the victims of closing schools and shifting demographics.

The goal of the SRDA is to acquire and develop the former school buildings. After performing light modifications and low-cost improvements, the SRDA will divide and lease the buildings to a mix of tenants—both non-profit and for-profit—to create a balanced, income producing portfolio.

Our innovation is in the market-based approach to asset management. Working under the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, and in collaboration with neighbors, community leaders and potential investors, the SRDA decides on a theme for the redevelopment of each building:

**HEALTH AND FAMILIES**
The schools will house community clinics, counseling centers and low-cost healthcare facilities improving the health and wellness of communities.

**BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY**
A home for business incubators, entrepreneurship hubs, small workshare office space and neighborhood internet and computer centers, bringing economic vibrancy and opportunity to Philadelphia neighborhoods.

**ART AND INDUSTRY**
Transformed into artist studios, workshop spaces, small-scale manufacturing and fabrication facilities, the school buildings will house up-and-coming artists and micro-industries.

**NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURE**
A place for community gardens, grocery stores, weekend farmer’s markets, and local food entrepreneurs, these programs will address the expansive ‘food desert’ throughout low-income neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

**COMMUNITY CARE AND EDUCATION**
Allows school buildings to be used for a mix of educational and recreational purposes, such as athletic facilities, day care centers, nursery schools, charter schools and adult education classrooms.
In the past decade, the Latino population of Philadelphia has increased by 46% to 181,292 people, or 12.3% of the city’s overall population. The majority (68.3%) of school-aged Latinos are enrolled in the city’s public schools. Their performance, however, is dismal, with only 43% of Latinos graduating high school in four years. Given that the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) has made layoffs in the past year, endured a very public management crisis, and faces an additional $629 million in cuts this year, there is a clear need for innovative approaches to enhance student performance without further burdening the district.

A significant body of research links parents’ involvement in their children’s educations to student success in the classroom. Philadelphia’s Latino population faces significant barriers to this involvement, including a language barrier, low parental literacy rates, and lack of computer literacy/access among parents, to name a few.1

Facing many of the same challenges, the Denver school system launched “La Educa” in 2009. La Educa is a radio program that airs three times per week on a Spanish language station. It informs parents of what is taking place in the district, the rights and responsibilities of students and parents, and features a call in session that allows parents to direct content. The initiative was based on the idea of meeting Latino parents where they are. Many work in service industry occupations where they have access to radio throughout the day. In its first year, La Educa had 54,200 listeners. Today, the show averages approximately 100 callers per month.

The Denver program is run out of the Denver Public School District’s Office of Multicultural Affairs. We propose to launch a similar initiative in Philadelphia, but with a different model. As noted above, SDP is not in a position to take on new programming. There is, however, a very active network of Latino advocacy organizations that can be leveraged to develop a partnership between Spanish language radio, community development organizations, and SDP to make this initiative a success.

The Denver Public School District has offered its support and guidance in the development of this initiative. We have begun conversations with Latino community organizations including Juntos and Congreso de Latinos Unidos. The Spanish language radio station El Voz has agreed to partner on the initiative, including production of the show, provision of the on-air talent, and air time. Members of the School Reform Commission have agreed to meet with our team to brainstorm the model, partners, marketing, and funding. Additionally, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Office of Multicultural Affairs has offered advertising support, and SDP’s Multilingual Family Support Office has pledged programming assistance.

At this stage, we envision a Spanish language radio program for parents that will keep them informed of what is happening in the school district, and provide them with the knowledge and resources necessary to participate more fully in their children’s educations. We will also explore the possibility of podcasts. Both the radio program and potential podcasts would be implemented at no cost to the city or SDP.

---


**Executive Summary**

**re:Mind** is an appointment reminder service targeting individuals discharged from inpatient mental health hospitalizations. **re:Mind** calls for the creation and adoption of a cheap, simple, and research-supported intervention that addresses the #1 reason patients miss their initial appointment—forgetting. By facilitating successful establishment of outpatient care, **re:Mind** has the potential to save the City millions of dollars in wasted time and preventable hospitalizations, while preserving the mental health of thousands of our fellow Philadelphians.

**OUTCOMES**
- **Short term:** improve initial outpatient mental health appointment attendance rates.
- **Intermediate term:** decrease rates of re-hospitalization, shorten wait time for initial appointments, reduce lost revenue and health care costs associated with no-show and readmissions.
- **Long term:** improve lifetime outcomes for mental health consumers, create a "pathway to policy" for future policy initiatives.

**THE PROBLEM**

**WHAT’S WRONG?**
In Philadelphia, hospitals discharge upwards of 11,000 patients every year from inpatient acute psychiatric care. i As part of a movement towards recovery-oriented treatment, the standard practice is to ensure continued care by scheduling an appointment in advance of discharge connecting patients to an outpatient provider. ii However, on average only 42% of those initial appointments are kept. iii Research indicates that the most common single reason cited for non-attendance at mental health follow-up appointments is forgetting the appointment. iv-v

**SO WHAT?**
Serious mental illnesses generally require long-term treatment to maintain recovery. vi Patients who miss their initial outpatient appointment are less likely to adhere to their medications and treatment plans vii and up to 50% of patients who miss appointments drop out of scheduled care viii. Newly discharged patients who do not attend follow-ups have been reported to have a two-to three-fold increase in the rate of readmission compared with those who remain in contact with services. ix-x Patients who miss their initial follow-up appointment have a 1 in 4 chance of being re-hospitalized in 12 months (vs. 1 in 10 if they keep the appointment). xi In Philadelphia, the cost of re-hospitalization for patients who missed their follow-up appointments is roughly $9,429,000 annually. xii

Dropping out of treatment has devastating consequences for many stakeholders:
- **Patients and Communities**- without continued care, mentally ill individuals face an increased risk of unemployment, homelessness, and becoming a threat to themselves or others. 24% of suicides by the mentally ill occur within a month of discharge from hospital. xiii
- **Outpatient Providers**- missed appointments mean lost revenue, lowered ability to attract qualified mental health employees, and longer wait times until the next available appointment.
- **Medicaid**- as the largest payer of mental health services in the US, xv waste in mental health services translates to a waste of public funds.
- **Other Patients**- missed appointments create longer wait times to the next available appointment, which in turn decreases the likelihood the appointment will be kept xv
THE re:Mind SOLUTION

THE DESIGN
Using software licensed from www.appointmentreminder.org, the re:Mind service will exist as a website, www.reMindPhilly.org, available to hospital discharge planners. With a simple, user-friendly interface, it will take users a maximum of five minutes to enter necessary contact and appointment information. The website will then automatically generate two reminder phone call attempts, two text messages, and an email in advance of the patient’s appointment.

THE RESEARCH
The service is based on findings that reminders reduce no-shows by 28-36% among psychiatric patients.\textsuperscript{xvi, xvii} Text messaging offers a rapid, cost-effective, and desirable means to deliver reminders.\textsuperscript{xviii, xix} Research suggests patients may find text messaging less intrusive than phone calls.\textsuperscript{xx} In a pilot study involving 1,256 patients in 4 British psychiatric outpatient clinics, text reminders reduced did-not-attend status by 25-28\% compared to the year prior to the intervention.\textsuperscript{xxi} Only 0.1\% of patients opted out. The authors of this study estimate that text message reminders could have an annual cost savings of $245 million USD in England.

THE IMPLEMENTATION
Implementation of re:Mind tackles the systemic barriers to improving patient care by targeting two of its biggest stakeholders: hospital social service departments, who will be charged with using the service, and Community Behavioral Health (CBH), the not-for-profit organization contracted by the Department of Behavioral Health to provide behavioral health coverage for the City’s 420,000 Medicaid recipients. CBH will be charged with long-term project management.

FUNDING
\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Budget}
\begin{itemize}
\item $8,500 for the creation of the website
\item $250 monthly to license the reminder software ($3,000 annually)
\item $500 annually for website updating, repairs, and hosting fees
\item $7,500 for 1 temporary staffer to supervise project development and stage an education campaign targeting Philadelphia’s 23 inpatient psychiatric care facilities
\item TOTALS: $19,000 startup costs, $3500 annual maintenance
\end{itemize}
\item \textit{Initial startup costs:} re:Mind will lobby for the creation of a "Special Initiative" through the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS).
\item \textit{Long-term maintenance:} re:Mind system maintenance and data mining will become the responsibility of existing employees within CBH’s Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) department.
\end{itemize}

ADOPTION
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Carrot:} re:Mind will launch an education campaign targeting hospital social service departments, using the research to appeal their sense of altruism, efficacy, and efficiency.
\item \textit{Stick:} re:Mind will engage CBH in incorporating re:Mind into their utilization manual, making the use of re:Mind a mandatory element in receiving reimbursement for discharge planning.
\end{itemize}

PROJECTED SAVINGS
\begin{itemize}
\item If re:Mind helps just two patients continue with treatment, it has already recouped its costs.
\item If Philadelphia reduces no-shows at a rate similar to the British pilot study that serves as its model, there would be an estimated annual savings of $2,360,000.\textsuperscript{xxii}
\end{itemize}


Mitchell & Selmes, 2007


Mitchell & Selmes, 2007


McLean & Perera, 2012

Sims et al, 2012

If similar results were demonstrated in Philadelphia, 898 additional people would now make it to their first appointment, reducing their chance of returning to the hospital within 6 months from 1 in 4 to 1 in 10, leading to an estimated $8,484,000 in savings based on the average length of a hospital stay and the average per diem rate of Philadelphia area hospitals, as outlined in footnote xii.
Faith in Farmers Winter Market Initiative

In recent years several programs have emerged to deal with food deserts and the lack of healthy affordable foods in lower income communities around the city. Organizations like the Philadelphia Food Trust and Farm to City have established different programs and created weekly farmers’ markets in traditionally underserved neighborhoods. However, what happens when winter hits and the markets retire for the season?

Our proposal, the Faith in Farmers Winter Market Initiative, provides low-income neighborhoods access to freshly grown foods within the centerpiece of their community – the local church, synagogue, temple or mosque. After or between weekend services, local farmers will set up indoor markets within the religious facility. Community members, both within and from outside the congregation, can then purchase produce, meats and dairy as they would at a spring or summer market. Participating vendors will have to be equipped with EBT (electronic benefit transfer) devices to accept SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and WIC (Women, Infants and Children Program) cards. Fortunately, vendors currently participating in Philadelphia farmers’ markets already have EBT devices, most through the state-administered Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program.

Program Benefits

While establishing a new market of any kind bears risk, connecting religious institutions with local farmers to address a public health problem offers several advantages:

1. Fresh food access for low-income Philadelphians is broadened with minimal involvement of the city government
2. Local farmers are provided new markets during typically slow winter months
3. The concentration of residents at weekend services ensures a reliable consumer base for participating farmers
4. Farmers’ markets are effective in community building and disseminating nutrition education
5. The program would require minimal start-up funding and the mutually beneficial partnership between farmers and the host organization should sustain the enterprise

Proven Success

Similar programs have thrived in major cities like Chicago and Washington D.C. as well as small towns like Dubuque, Iowa. Many successful programs have begun with small handfuls of vendors but grew quickly as residents became accustomed to the availability of freshly grown foods. Both in Chicago and D.C., winter farmers’ markets hosted by churches now boast 8 to 30 vendors per market; meanwhile, new markets are being created each year to satisfy demand. Most importantly, research has suggested that farmer’s markets produce results in lower-income communities. A recent study of farmer’s markets in an underserved Los Angeles neighborhood boasted positive feedback from residents:

- 75% came to market to do more than shop.
- 55% felt the market increased their connection to the community.
- 99% believed the market improved the health of the community.
Such ancillary benefits to the community only strengthen the argument for creating a winter program in Philadelphia. The success of the program depends on piquing the interest of local farmers and host organizations while helping coordinate between the two – requirements that are not only realistic but possible in the short-term.

**Scope and Operation**

Currently, there are five winter markets coordinated by Philadelphia’s Farm to Table organization, three of which are within the Philadelphia metropolitan area. These markets are located in Rittenhouse Square, Suburban Station and Chestnut Hill. Our initial goal would be to add at least two new markets in lower-income areas, as defined by the Census Bureau’s 2011 median annual household income in Philadelphia. These would be small markets, with at least two vendors at each location. Our group would spearhead the project, but aim to work with organizations like the Food Trust in a consulting capacity. It is unlikely that much staffing would be required, as vendors already pay staff to sell at markets and most religious organizations can find members to volunteer for community functions. Initial funding would be used to pay for promotion and any unforeseen incidental expenses. We believe that if work were to begin this spring, the program could launch the new winter markets by January of 2014.

**Immediate Plan of Action**

Given the limited financial resources required to push forward with the program, we may immediately begin work on the following:

1. Contact the ten local farmers currently participating in Philadelphia-area markets to gauge interest in additional business opportunities during the winter
2. Contact the Mayor’s Office on Faith Based Initiatives for clarity on how public services may be delivered through a relationship with the religious community.
3. Target 2-3 potential host religious organizations in two lower-income areas.
4. Discuss potential costs and feasibility concerns with the Philadelphia Food Trust and Farm to City
5. Evaluate potential funding sources, such as the The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative (FFFI) and the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI), both administered through The Reinvestment Fund.
Smart Justice: Probation and Parole Kiosks for Philadelphia

Key Terms

Probation: Probation is an alternative to incarceration in which the offender is permitted to serve the entire sentence in the community.

Parole: Parole is an alternative to continued incarceration in which the offender is permitted to serve the remainder of the sentence in the community.

Low Risk Offender: Any offender deemed, by a widely used set of assessments, highly unlikely to commit a violent crime within the next two years. By definition, these are the least worrisome offenders supervised by Philadelphia Adult Probation and Parole (APPD). There are roughly 12,000 low risk probationer and parolees in Philadelphia at any given time. Low risk offenders are also those most likely to succeed and often require less assistance.

Kiosk: A device similar in appearance to an airport check-in kiosk (see picture and handout) on which probationers sign in using their fingerprint, answer all the standard questions that Probation or Parole Officers (PO’s) ask during in-person meetings, indicate issues or a desire to contact their PO, and receive personalized messages from their PO’s.

The Current State of Probation and Parole

Low risk offenders on probation or parole must travel from their neighborhoods to APPD’s location in Center City (see the handout), where they often wait for hours for what is no more than a fifteen-minute appointment. This system is inconvenient for the probationer or parolee, and it is also extraordinarily time consuming for the PO’s, who typically manage approximately 350-400 individual cases at any given time. Under the current system, PO’s must spend a majority of their time rushing through these meetings, with little time left for probationers and parolees who need extra help.
Our Solution

Based on a solution already enacted by New York City and Washington, D.C., we propose a kiosk system for low risk probationers and parolees. Kiosks would be placed within the neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of probationers and parolees, allowing them to check in with the APPD more easily, and freeing up Probation Officers to spend a greater amount of time with high-risk individuals who are more likely to recidivate or their low risk charges that need or seek more guidance.

Objectives

1. To increase compliance with probation and parole for low risk offenders. Offenders will no longer need to travel to Center City to meet with their PO’s. Instead, there will be an easily reached kiosk within their neighborhood, and thus they will be more likely to report regularly.

2. To increase the likelihood that low risk offenders will achieve legal means of employment and a healthy lifestyle. Kiosks will enable those who truly need additional support to connect with their PO’s (who will have more time due to the lighter meeting schedule) and allow those who have acquired jobs to work with minimal interference.

3. To increase resources for high risk offenders by freeing up PO’s. PO’s will have a greater impact on recidivism rates if they can focus on high risk offenders and low risk offenders who need or want extra help.

4. To keep better records of probationer and parolee information through digitization.

5. To create a more efficient and cost-effective probation and parole system in Philadelphia.

6. To increase the use of probation and parole as an alternative to jail and prison sentences. Like many prisons and jails throughout the U.S., Pennsylvania’s prisons and jails are overcrowded. Use of intermediate sanctions in place of incarceration is vital to fixing this problem. If our program is successful, Philadelphia decisionmakers can be more confident that probation and parole are viable alternatives to incarceration.

7. To increase the use of probation and parole nationally through a more successful system in Philadelphia, and to increase the use of kiosks, which would greatly benefit areas even more spread out than Philadelphia, such a large rural counties.
A Brief Introduction to Effective Presentations

A question that is frequently asked by college students involves how to plan for and deliver a presentation. You may be asking yourself, what am I supposed to do about (take your pick of topics!) since that may not be covered as a regular part of the course. For many, the concern is that there has not been enough content covered about how to prepare and deliver a speech in order to perform well and receive a good grade. The goal with this brief overview is to provide you with key information that will allow you to prepare and deliver an effective presentation. We will expand our discussion of each of the topics during our workshop.

Selecting the Topic

Your assignment may require you to select a topic for the presentation. For many, this is the single most difficult part of preparing for a presentation. Speech teachers frequently hear comments such as, “I don’t know what to talk about.” Consider the following when selecting a topic:

- What do you know a good bit about?
- What do you feel strongly about?
- What are the topics of public conversation?
- What catches your imagine?
Simply put, select a topic that you know about, feel strongly about, or that captures your imagine. It will be more difficult to prepare and deliver a sound speech if you know little about the topic or if you have no interest in the subject matter.

**Establishing Goals**

Once you have selected a topic (or a topic is assigned), begin by identifying your goals. While broad goals may be rather easily identified (e.g., to persuade or to inform), it is important that you construct specific objectives. Specific objectives provide clear direction when preparing for the presentation and provide a better yardstick by which to measure the success of the presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VAGUE</th>
<th>SPECIFIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I want people to learn more about me&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I want to inform the audience of the three traits I possess that have shaped my life.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing a clear objective increases the probability that you will achieve your goal.

A final point on constructing objectives: make your goals realistic. The purpose statement should be attainable. Thus, depending on the setting (limited time, etc.), a realistic objective may be, "I want to inform the audience about the two traits that I possess that have shaped my life.”

**Gathering Information**

After you have identified your goals, you need to begin gathering the information needed to attain the objectives. When selecting this information, you must consider your audience. Different audiences will require different kinds of information. Thus, you need to consider all of the following when gathering this information:

- Who will be in the audience?
- What is their level of knowledge concerning this topic?
- What, if any, attitudes do they hold toward this topic?
- What will the setting be like (the physical layout of the room, time of day, etc.)?
- How will audience members define this occasion?
- What are the possible objections audience members may have about my objectives, my treatment of the topic, etc.?

The information you gather should be driven by these concerns. By considering these issues, you will be able to adapt your message to the understandings, needs, and concerns of audience members.
Outlining the Information

There are several basic organizational patterns. The patterns used in presentations most often include a cause-effect pattern and a problem-solution pattern. A cause-effect pattern shows that certain events have happened or will happen as a result of certain circumstances. Thus, the body of the presentation is organized around two major points: the cause(s) and the effect(s). The problem-solution pattern is usually used when the speaker is proposing some kind of change. When you use this pattern, describe the problem and reveal how your solution will solve the problem. In a situation where several solutions are possible but you advocate a particular one, make sure you indicate how the other solutions are not as adequate as the one you propose.

When considering which of the major points to emphasize (for example, cause or effect), consider how the audience is likely to react. Focus more of the presentation on the point the audience is least likely to understand or agree with rather than on points of agreement. To achieve your objectives, you must overcome the misunderstandings and/or objections of audience members.

Introductions, Conclusions, & Transitions

**Introductions.** Introductions serve several functions: to capture the listeners' attention, to preview the body of the presentation, to set the proper tone for the topic and setting, and to give the audience a reason for listening. You may use several different types of openings. For example, you may begin by asking a question ("Would you continue to spend money on technology that can't meet our current needs, much less our future needs?"), providing a key piece of factual/statistical information (provided this information is significant to the audience, it will give them a reason for listening), or making a startling statement ("If current trends continue, TV commercials will replace physicians as the primary source of information about health-related technology.")

**Conclusions.** Conclusions serve several functions -- summarize the presentation, point to the future, and emphasize what, if any, action needs to be taken.

**Transitions.** Transitions between sections of the presentation promote clarity by making explicit relationships between major points, keep listeners interested, and emphasize major ideas.

Constructing Visual Aids

Visual aids are particularly useful when making technical presentations. The following guidelines will help you to construct effective visual aids.

- Keep the visual aid as simple as possible
- Use contrasting colors (e.g., black & white; red & white, etc.)
- Balance the information in the visual (the right side of the visual should not contain
significantly more information than the left side)
• Make sure the visual aid is large enough to be seen by all audience members
• Your visuals will communicate a great deal about you. If you wish to be taken as a professional, make sure your visual aids are prepared professionally.

Delivery

An extemporaneous form of delivery is the most effective. This form of delivery requires that the speaker NOT read from a manuscript or have memorized the speech. With an extemporaneous form of delivery, the speaker is sufficiently prepared and knowledgeable of the topic so that only limited assistance from notes is needed to make the presentation. Using this form of presentation allows the speaker to maintain eye contact with the audience in order to assess how the message is being received. Thus, the speaker is able to adapt to the audience during the presentation.

Effective delivery is characterized by naturalness and a conversational quality. Delivery which does not call attention to itself (unusual hand gestures, etc.) is natural. This allows the audience to focus on the message. Delivery that conveys a sense of interaction between the speaker and the audience may be described as having a conversational quality. Few people enjoy lectures. Most individuals prefer to be involved in a conversation. Thus, it is important to react to what the audience is telling you nonverbally.

Specific elements of effective delivery include:

• Direct eye contact
• Effective use of voice (volume, rate of speaking, pitch, articulation, and use of pauses)
• Good posture
• Effective hand gestures
• Effective facial expressions (i.e., consistent with the verbal message)
• Appropriate dress

Use of Visuals

• Visual aids should only be visible when in use.
• Do not talk to the visual aid; direct your attention toward the audience.
• If several visuals are used, number them by order of use.
• Become familiar with any equipment needed for the use of the visuals prior to the presentation.
• If using handouts:
  o Pass out the information at the end of the presentation if possible; and
  o If it is necessary to pass out the information during the presentation, allow audience members time to become familiar with it before proceeding.
• Prepare for the possibility that the visual aid can't be used (equipment failure, etc.).
The ability to speak confidently and convincingly in public is increasingly tied to career development. Communication skills consistently rank among the top qualities that employers seek. Effective communication skills are linked to important individual outcomes such as upward mobility, positive performance evaluations and job level. Moreover, few experiences will provide a person with a greater sense of empowerment than truly connecting with an audience. Unfortunately, for many people delivering a speech is as much fun as a trip to the dentist. Hopefully, the following tips may make this experience more pleasant:

**Tip One**

Identify your objective(s) for the presentation. It is surprising how often speakers have only a fuzzy idea of what they are seeking to accomplish. Construct clear, measurable objectives for the presentation so that you can assess the extent to which you succeeded.

**Tip Two**

The single most important thing that you can do to deliver an effective presentation is to prepare. Nothing substitutes for preparation. Prepared speakers know their material, have anticipated how the audience might respond, and experience less nervousness.

**Tip Three**

Make use of an extemporaneous style of delivery. This style of delivery requires that the speaker be prepared, make limited use of notes, and maintain eye contact with the audience. With an extemporaneous style of delivery the speaker prepares an outline that will serve to keep him or her on track and avoid the problems associated with memorizing or reading from a manuscript.

**Tip Four**

Adapt your message to the audience. People are persuaded or informed on the basis of what they value, believe, and understand -- not on the basis of what the speaker values, believes or understands. This does not mean that you change your goal for the presentation. Rather, adjust your message for each audience so that you are more likely to achieve your goal(s).

**Tip Five**

Limit your use of visual aids. Far too often visual aids are used as a substitute for the speaker. It is the speaker, not the visual aids, that determines whether the goals for the speech are achieved.