

# Quick Reference on Presentations, Speeches and Making a Business “Case”

## The Basics

- ✓ Think and plan in 3’s
- ✓ Develop a core theme as a headline based on the background, hopes and fears of your audience
- ✓ Announce your 3-part plan (3 key words that define the flow of your presentation)
- ✓ Before breaking down the big chunks of your main plan into neat, logical, forward-flowing smaller chunks, outline your introduction and conclusion (“bookends”)
- ✓ For your conclusion, recap your plan and echo your theme-headline
- ✓ Use the old preacher’s wisdom — tell’em what you’re going to tell’em, then tell’em, then tell’em what you just told’em
- ✓ Preface your three-part talk with an introduction no longer than two sentences
  - ✓ State the theme (punchy and vivid)
  - ✓ Announce the plan
- ✓ Be direct, simple, brief, vigorous and lucid
- ✓ Familiar words (“come out” instead of “transpire”)
- ✓ Concrete words instead of abstract (“cup” instead of “dinnerware”)
- ✓ Single word (“often” instead of “in many cases”)
- ✓ Short word (“faced” instead of “envisaged”)
- ✓ Use pictures and stories to make it easier for listeners to follow
- ✓ Cut out adjectives and adverbs
- ✓ Use active, not passive verb
- ✓ Use fewer, not more words

Source: K. Spicer. **Think On Your Feet.** Toronto: Doubleday

A well-crafted introduction and conclusion delivers at least twenty-five percent of your impact.

If you want to get things done, to compel people to action, and to show your commitment to it, use plain-talking words with strong body language and marked changes in the pitch and timbre of your voice.



# Quick Reference on Presentations, Speeches and Making a Business “Case”

## Why A Three-Part Plan?

### 1. *To Display Analysis*

A two-part plan does not manage to create momentum. You need momentum, a built-in dynamic or motor, to move an audience from A to B to C. If you can't create this forward flow, you take your audience nowhere. You literally leave them unmoved.

### 2. *Lessen Risks*

If you go much beyond a three-part plan — say, to five or six or seven parts — chances are you and your audience will get lost.

### 3. *To Echo Traditional Logic Systems*

Many historic ways of arguing rest on threes.

*Syllogisms* — a dog is an animal, a donkey is an animal, therefore a dog is a donkey — dominated Western thought for over two thousand years following Aristotle.

*Dialectical* reasoning — thesis, antithesis, synthesis — came from the brain of nineteenth-century Germany philosopher Hegel.

### 4. *To Build on Cultural References*

Think of the Three Musketeers, three blind mice, three men in a tub, and hundreds of other folklore jingles and literary-religious examples. Threes are in our guts.

**The Elevator Speech: Know What Your Last Best Chart Is (when your time gets cut drastically).**

T. Hennebury & K. Powell

## “Fun” Non-Business Example

### *Intro:*

1. Theme-headline: “The seasons of Eros: Keeping up man’s interest.”
2. Plan: announce three stages — youth, middle age, old age.
  - I. Youth (Age 15 to 35)  
Interest in sex at peak — cold showers calm.
  - II. Middle Age (Age 35 to 60)  
Gradual waning of spirits demands resignation?
  - III. Old Age (Age 60 to 107)  
Cocktail of Geritol, gin, and ginseng slows slide to “game over.”

### *Conclusion:*

1. Recap: Youth, middle age, and old age form distinct times with special needs.
2. Echo (of theme-headline): As the Bible says: “To every thing there is a season. Alas, for man, the seasons of Eros are not cyclical.”

## Translation into Business

### *Intro:*

1. Theme-headline: the problem or opportunity.
2. Plan – the bright idea in three parts.

### *Main Presentation:*

Explanation of bright idea (e.g., past-present-future)

### *Conclusion:*

1. Recap
2. Recommendation(s)
3. Echo (of theme-headline)

