**The Rhetorical Situation**

* **Text:** Written and visual components of the presentation
* **A diagram of a writer and audience

  Description automatically generatedWriter:** The creator of the text; also known as the author
* **Purpose:** The writer’s motivation for the text; what the writer wants to accomplish with the text
* **Audience:** Who the author is addressing or trying to influence; the group you intend to reach with your text
* **Genre:** A category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content
* **Subject:** The topic or issue that the writer is discussing
* **Exigency:** The immediate need or demand
* **Context:** The setting: the moment in time, the place/space, the social and political climate, the culture

**Writing the Script**

1. **Introduction**
   * Provide your name, affiliation, the title of your work
   * Engage the audience: begin with a question, surprising statement or fact, tell a story
   * Explain your topic in nuanced and clear language
   * Identify your argument and/or position
   * Provide an overview of the organization of the body of your presentation and the main points your presentation will make
2. **Main Body**
   * Consider the audience: it’s not about how much you can say, but how effectively you can communicate a few ideas for your audience to understand and engage with
   * Depending on time, focus on a maximum of three to five major points
   * Present your main supporting details and examine your research
   * Clear and concise language to explain how you came to the conclusions
   * Use analogies or stories to help examine and explain difficult/complex information
   * Build repetition and remind the audience of your main argument/points
3. **Conclusion**
   * Summarize the points you made and your main argument
   * Call for action: what do you want your audience to do with this information?
   * Refer to future action or research possible on this topic
4. **Accessibility**
   * Speak clearly, slowly, and maintain volume
   * Providing a script can be helpful to those who are hard of hearing
   * Spell out acronyms and define discipline specific jargon, terms, or idioms
   * Give your audience brief pauses to process the information you share

**Visual Aids**

**Getting Started**

Use these guiding questions to help you identify what information you should include in your visual aids:

* What is the most important/interesting/astounding finding from my research project?
* How can I visually share my research with conference attendees? Should I use charts, graphs, photos, images?
* What kind of information can I convey during my talk that will complement my poster?

**Designing a Poster**

* The average viewer will be about 10 feet away, so use a large, bold, sans serif font.
* Images should be simply designed and utilize high contrasting color combinations. Focus on 1 idea per visual.
* Balance text with images: on average, posters contain 300-800 words. Images and text should take up equal amounts of space.
* Consider making a statement in your section headings. For example, instead of “Results,” write a statement that captures your findings.

**Designing a Slideshow**

* Provide Alt Text for images and captions for videos.
* Balance the use of text and image on each slide while focusing on a singular image with text that relates directly to that image.
* Include headings on each slide and be aware of line breaks in subtitles:

A black text on a white background

Description automatically generated

* Use a clear sans serif font. Font sizes should be: 30 - 48 point for titles, 24 - 28 for text.
* Use high contrasting colors.
* Offer a QR code or paper copy for access.

**General Tips for Public Speaking**

* Try standing in the superhero pose before you present: straighten your spine, hold your head up high with your chin out, put your shoulders back, hands on your hips, and take a few deep breaths.
* Slow down speech from your normal conversational speed and provide pauses to allow the audience to consider your points.
* Try to avoid fillers like “ah,” “ugh,” “um,” and “okay.”
* Sweep the room with your gaze and/or make eye contact with your audience to show them you are engaged.
* Keep in mind: humor can help you make connections with the audience, but not everyone shares the same humor.
* Practice helps! Here at the Writing Center, we can reserve a private room for you to practice in with a writing assistant.
* Be proud of your work!