



How to create a compelling presentation for your webinar or virtual event

Ever heard this classic advice about making a presentation?

- Tell them what you're going to tell them
- Tell them
- Tell them what you told them

It's a great philosophy – and courtesy of a great philosopher, Aristotle.

This might be fine for some presentations, but unless you're focused on what your audience wants to hear about, you could be on course to:

- Tell them how you're going to bore them
- Bore them
- Tell them how you bored them!

That might seem harsh, but unless you are delivering a one-way communication in very specific and exact terms – for example, reading out a legal judgement, you might want to adapt your approach. It's likely to be far more productive if you focus not just on what you want to say, but also:

- Who you are talking to
- Why they're there listening to you
- How your message will come across
- Your desire to influence what, as a result, your audience thinks or does

You want your content to endure - not content that people must endure and regret spending time with.

Yet sadly, without proper planning and preparation, your presentation may well suffer. From limited appeal. From poor attendance. From high drop-off rates.

Time is precious. But not just that of your audience. Yours too.

In this guide, we look at how you can create a compelling presentation for your next webinar or online presentation in a virtual event. Answer the following questions and you'll be set for success next webinar or virtual event..





1. Who's your target audience?

Be clear who you're going to address. If you're not, you may build the presentation you want, but not the one your audience needs.

- What are their pain points (that you can solve)?
- What do they need to know (that can solve that pain)?
- What should they do next (now that you've spoken to their need)?



2. How can you tailor your content to their needs?

- Are they seeking initial ground-level information?
- Are they ready to challenge their thinking?
- Do they know what pain point you can solve?
- Are they aware of best practice?
- Are they open to new ideas?

Consider what it is that your audience has in common. They may all have similar levels of existing knowledge or interest in what you're going to talk about. On the other hand, they may come to your presentation with quite differing levels of interest, expertise and engagement in the subject. Think about the most important needs you wish to address and the content you can present that will engage their interest in attending, and hold their attention while they are there.

3. What's your promise?

If you're looking to inform, persuade, influence - and in some way promote a change - then you need to be able to summarize your presentation in a single sentence. What's your premise? What's your promise? What will you deliver?

Will you...?

- Address a specific pain-point or problem
- Compare two different methods, strategies, or solutions
- Highlight best practices for a specific topic
- Introduce a new concept





4. Is your title compelling?

Your headline must:

- Catch the eye
- Answer that need you identified
- Make it clear why...

What works well:

List-titles:

- 11 common mistakes about... and how to avoid them
- 7 keys to success with...
- 5 best practices for...

Action-titles:

- Boost your...
- Create a winning way to...
- Stay ahead with...

How to - and why titles:

- How to optimize your...
- How to transform...
- Why now is the time to...

Many events and presentations promise to cover 'The future of...' a particular industry or niche. These broad 'cover-all' titles can also work well for all-day or multi-session events where there are many different topics being covered in separate presentations.



5. Is your presentation well-structured?

Like any good story, good presentations have a beginning, middle and end.

ACT 1

- Set the scene
- Establish the problem / issue
- Identify what's at stake
- Make it clear what you'll address

ACT 2

- Deliver your message
- Bring it to life using examples
- Develop your theme

ACT 3

- Summarize the content
- Tie it back to the initial promise

A good rule of thumb on where to spend your time:

- 20% Act 1
- 55% Act 2
- 25% Act 3

It's the classic movie screenplay structure.



6. Have you made an outline?

Proper planning and preparation prevent poor performance.

Unless the appeal of the event really is an improvised or unprepared performance, you shouldn't skip the planning stage. To help you plan:

- Create an empty presentation
- Add your titles and subtitles at intervals
- Then start drafting content 'within the walls'
- If your content doesn't fit - too much, or too little in the wrong places - then adjust as needed.

7. Are you well-organized?

- Think in bullet points
- The biggest bullets are your big ideas
- Within each big idea, break it down into other bullets
- Within those bullets, add supporting content to help tell your story





8. What supporting content can you use?

Once you have a solid outline, you can plan in additional elements that may add value.

- Guests – introduce other faces, voices and opinions
- Demos - so you can show and not just tell
- Video – pre-recorded segments may help you convey complex or lengthy ideas quickly or more dramatically

A woman with dark hair tied back is shown in profile, looking at a large, futuristic digital display. She is reaching out with her right hand, touching a circular chart on the screen. The display is filled with various data visualizations, including bar charts, line graphs, and a world map. The background is a dimly lit office or conference room with other people visible in the distance.

9. Is it interactive?

You might want to involve your audience too – doing so, can make things more engaging for them, and more useful for you.

- Polls – give you quick snapshots of audience viewpoints, which you can share with attendees
- Q&A – let you hear from your audience, gain feedback and give answers
- Surveys – can capture information to help you prep for this presentation – or the next one

10. Will it look and sound great?

Your presentation should :

- Look professional
- Sound appealing

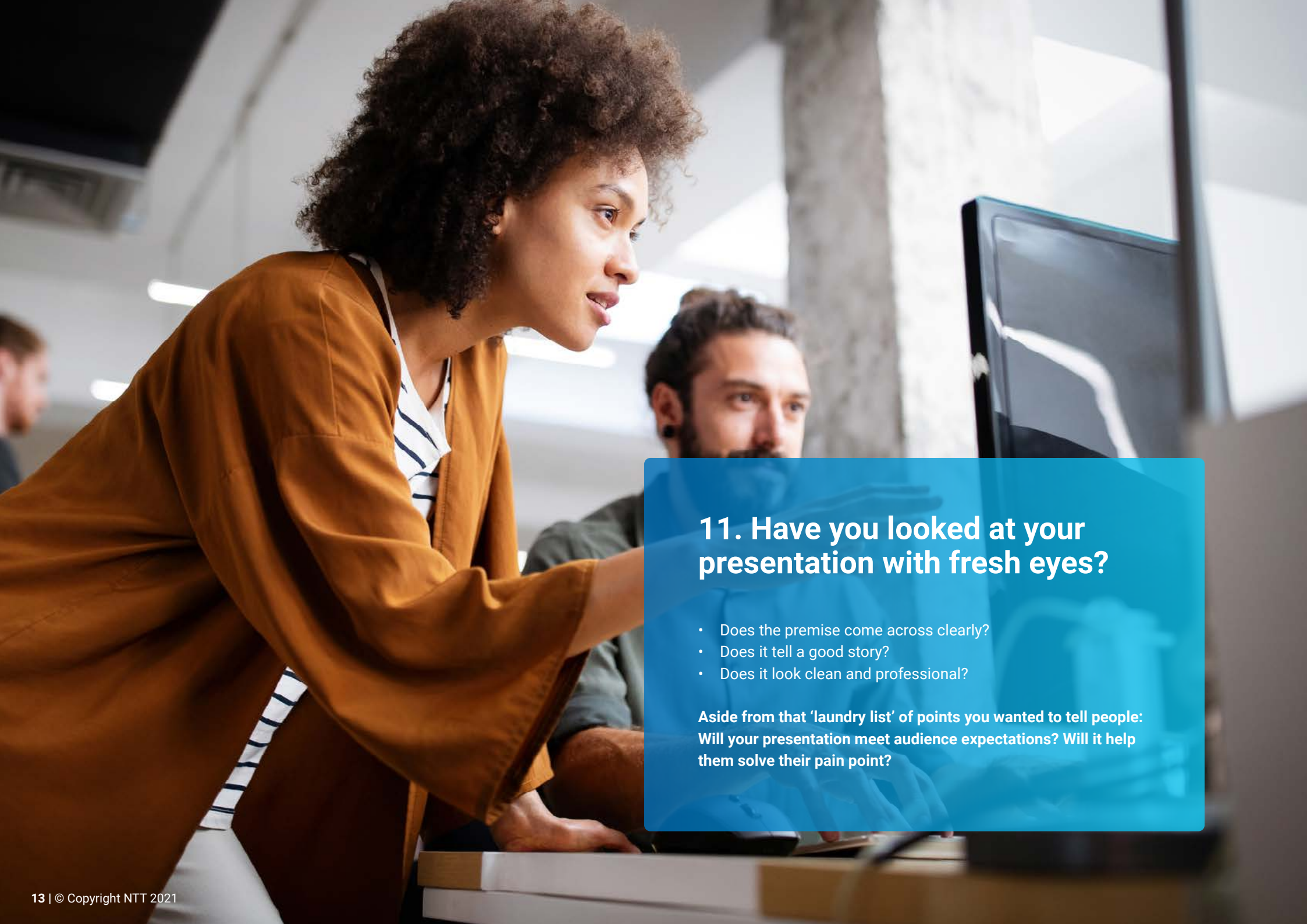
How it looks:

- Keep your slides clutter free
- Don't fill slides with the exact text you plan to read
- One image and a simple sentence or few bullet points are all you need per slide
- Choose images that feel natural and appropriate
- Avoid clichéd stock photos and outdated clip art
- Get the resolution right – too low can result in grainy images
- Choose colours and fonts in keeping with your branding

How it sounds:

- Write as you'd speak – make it sound natural
- Don't read your slides word for word – use them to support what you say.
- Talk to your audience as if it were just one person – ('you', not 'you all' or 'everyone')
- Use active verbs not passive ones ('We succeeded', not 'success was achieved')
- Well-chosen facts will help you build your case
- Use of abstract nouns can help you convey emotions – truth, pride, happiness, regrets





11. Have you looked at your presentation with fresh eyes?

- Does the premise come across clearly?
- Does it tell a good story?
- Does it look clean and professional?

Aside from that 'laundry list' of points you wanted to tell people: Will your presentation meet audience expectations? Will it help them solve their pain point?



12. Have you tested it on someone?

Never present for the first time to your live audience. If you'll be delivering your presentation using unfamiliar technology, practice with that too.

Always set aside time with a colleague to deliver a rehearsal. Even if they don't fully understand the content, or can't tell you where it's not quite right, you'll feel it.

Would you come away from the presentation thinking you'd learned something useful?

If so, congratulations! You've just created a compelling presentation for your upcoming webinar or virtual event.

