

## Assess the Profile of Your Audience – Survey Template

### Assess the Profile of Your Audience

Project Managers often have to ‘present’ information about their project. Generally the purpose is either to inform, to convince or to make decisions. The key to success here is to understand the profile of your audience. Generally the best way to accomplish this task is to get answers to the following questions, either by conducting a pre-presentation survey, interviewing some key participants or getting input from your colleagues/superiors.

It helps to think of your audience as comprised of 3 categories:

- ‘learners’ – they want to be there and get as much from the session as possible
- ‘vacationers’ – they want to have fun and see it as a holiday from the day to day
- ‘prisoners’ – they resent being there either because they were forced to be there or don’t see any value in the presentation. Often these are the folks who generally need the information the most

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### Get Answers to These Questions

Here are the 6 questions you need answers before making your presentation:

1. How many are experts/novices in your topic? This will determine the amount of time spent convincing them about the benefits of your topic, defining terms and providing background.
2. Are they interested/disinterested in your topic? Is it a hot topic or something that people feel is not pertinent to the issue being addressed. This will determine how much time you have to spend building interest.
3. Are they learners, vacationers or prisoners? Are they eager to hear what you have to say or are they being forced to attend. Again this will dictate much of your content and context.
4. What is your position on the agenda? Are you the only speaker? Is it in the morning or afternoon? Are you the only thing between them and a fun activity? How energized or tired will they be? You will then have to decide how much energy and enthusiasm you have to inject into the presentation.
5. Is the presentation atmosphere casual or formal? Is the audience comprised of peers, subordinates, superiors or external stakeholders? That will determine your level of humor, ability to detour from your agenda, and general sense of formality or informality.
6. Are you seen as an expert or do you have to convince the audience that you know what you are talking about? If you are seen as an expert, don't spend a lot of time blowing your own horn. If the latter, trot out your education, certifications, awards, experience and other credentials.