

TMM Audio #2 Script

Defining the Audience Context to enhance the impact of a Key Statement

From the ICON9 Learn As You Go Audio series

Welcome to the second session in the TWO-MINUTE MESSAGE module of the ICON9 Learn As You Go audio series.

For this session, we'll follow the usual 3-step process where I'll start by suggesting an example, then lead you through one of your own. And we will build on the example that was introduced in the previous session.

That is, I am an Applications Engineer working for a company that sells leading-edge factory robots and I am preparing a pitch to give to a German automotive components company - an old, conservative, family-owned outfit.

My objectives are to:

- Get them to change perspective and see the strategic (longer-term) importance of working with us
- And, if possible, to get them to agree to a meaningful trial

The Key Statement I came up with was the following:

*Although we are proud of our technology – we almost take it for granted - **it's the strength of our industrial partnerships that matter most.** They guarantee that we will have solutions for you not only today, but for the foreseeable future also.*

Given this Key Statement, we can see that the Audience Context Statement has to get the audience thinking about partnerships, and not just about technology or short-term problems.

What I could do, perhaps, is start with a quick mention of the technology, before turning their attention to other matters. For example:

You are certainly aware of the massive advances in robotics technology in recent years – in AI, deep learning, advanced materials, mechanical control and so on. Each of these topics is extremely interesting in itself, but have you ever thought about the challenges of bringing them all together?

That's my Audience Context Statement. It leads naturally to the Key Statement: *Although we are proud of our technology ...* and so on, placing the emphasis on industrial partnerships.

Note that the Audience Context Statement does not mention my company or its technology. And it starts with the word “you”, the idea being to create a rapport with the audience, checking if we are all on the same page.

Notice also that the statement is quite short, and this makes it easier to remember, probably making it more effective.

Now for your example ...

What's the context - what kind of pitch are you preparing and why? Choose something simple!

<pause>

Who is the Audience - the person or group concerned? Just think about it, and write it down if you wish.

<pause>

What are your objectives for the encounter?

<pause>

Now, without elaborating an optimized Key Statement, what is the main point that you will make with your pitch?

<pause>

Given all these points, think of a very simple way to start your pitch – what is your Audience Context Statement?

<pause>

Of course, it is hard to get this right first time, and you shouldn't expect to. Just consider what you came up with and check a few things.

- Would your statement resonate with the Audience?
- Does it set the context of the talk?
- Does it avoid talking about you and your products?

<pause>

Well done!

I hope that this exercise has shown you how much progress you can make on some crucial aspects of a pitch while using little more than your own brainpower! Of course, there is still a lot of work to do, and supporting information will be essential, but mastering the points we just covered allows you to structure an excellent argument!

So do remember to use this “starting blindfold” approach the next time you have to plan a presentation. You have nothing to lose!

In the next session, we'll look at the Closing Statement.

See you then.