

Assignment 6.3: Your turn

Develop a four-minute communication for your project assignment solution in a format that is appropriate for the context to which it relates.

- 1) First, **define the audience who will receive the communication and your objective in delivering the communication to them.** For example, you might decide that you need to pitch to your team leader with the objective of securing time, people and other resources to implement and test a pilot run of your solution. Ask yourself, who are you talking to and why?

My audience receiving this specific type of communication may be the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team. This is so that the pitch is directed to the highest 'powers' who have control over the scheduling of every group's production (as there are usually multiple Christmas productions at our school) whilst liaising with parents/carers. Communications would typically be about securing more time, staffing or essential resources that cannot be directly sourced within our team. Usually with performance-making, it always feels that problems relate to timing whilst worrying about finishing everything by the date of the final production. Simultaneously, managing both adults and children can be unpredictable so relaying certain issues about scheduling and maintenance to Senior Leadership means that those in charge are aware and can help structure certain things so that the overall process runs smoother. This could lean into authority bias but it does decrease the pressure of an immense project upon teachers and front-line staff.

- 2) Second, **define the format that is most suitable.** For example, it could be a live spoken pitch on a video call; a short, written document; a slide deck presentation or something else (or some combination). Ask yourself, what are the strengths or weaknesses of this format given your objectives?

The format that may be most suitable could be a live spoken pitch in a scheduled meeting so that important issues are raised immediately and are communicated directly to those who need to hear/act upon it. However, a written document could also be beneficial as people can easily forget verbal details, yet having it in writing, via email or other means, shows a visual representation of what is required. Within a Christmas production, there are a lot of entities and processes at play so written information has many advantages; it's a centralised and accessible information point which could be further edited (through Google Docs, etc); people are less likely to forget details when it is in writing; it can be accessed at any time rather than having to fit it into a meeting. On the other hand, spoken pitches could be more emotive and persuasive as it's face-to-face so the urgency of certain issues may be conveyed more effectively.

- 3) Third, **develop your outline and argument.** For example, you could use SCQA, MECE or something else. Consider whether your solution should be presented at the outset or only revealed at the end. Ask yourself, what are you asking of the audience, and how?

By using **SCQA**, I could structure my presentation through the use of: situation, complication, question and answer.

Situation: what the audience value – showcasing a memorable piece of work that can be looked back on with pride and happiness through the act of performance

Complication: what threatens that value – timing, resources and staffing, how to keep on top of it plus maintaining behaviour management and rehearsal fatigue

Question – could we get more staff or more rehearsal time, without affecting moving the final date?

Solution – having more staff and rehearsals would help polish the Christmas production

I think it may be beneficial to present the solution at the end to build up empathy when relaying information so that the problem feels more emotive = more potential for it to be considered.

- 4) Fourth, draft and iterate your communication. Consider recording yourself and then reviewing the recording. Or consider having someone else read your report out loud so you can hear how it sounds. Consider who would make a good friendly critic to provide feedback. Ask yourself, can you prototype and test your communication?

Hi [Headteacher's name]! Just wanted to update you on how the rehearsals are going...things are going pretty well and it looks like it'll come across amazing once the parents and carers come to see all the hard work pay off! My only concern is timing – I was just wondering if it would be possible to perhaps not attend a certain assembly or just move [subject/event/etc] around so that we get even more rehearsal time so that practice makes perfect for the final event. Do you think that could be possible? Maybe we could borrow [certain staff member] so that we have even more hands-on-deck to help with management of 40+ children? Let me know if this is possible, as those two factors could really help boost the quality of our play so that our lovely parents/carers are really proud of their children and hopefully think our school is great and talented!

I could prototype this pitch through a recording or general practise with another person – I find it hard to hear myself on recordings but the benefits of such a medium means that I can stop, rewind and playback certain things I said that I could replicate in real life. Practising with another person before the real stakeholder mirrors the actual scenario I'm placed in, in addition to receiving valid criticism from someone I trust. This could be better as it's something I need practise on so testing my communication with another means more practise = better for the actual pitch.