Determining the Goals and Objectives of Your Presentation - Advice from a Top 10 Presenter

Determining the goals and objectives of your presentation before diving in to start planning is essential. Goals, learning outcomes, and objectives will steer the presentation and ensure the audience is taking away the information you meant to share with them.

One of the 2013 Top 10 Presenters of *Managing Parenthood - A Panel Discussion about Student Affairs Professionals' Experiences Balancing Full time Careers and Families within Student Affairs,* Stacey Mwilambwe has this advice about setting your presentation goals and objectives:

"When setting goals and objectives for a presentation I try to visualize what the target audience would want to know and learn. I think about the questions the topic may provoke and then figure in the "**So What?** Question." This short exercise helps me to narrow in on my objectives and goals. When determining how to draft my goals I try my best to be succinct and write them as learning outcomes. I find that 1-4 outcomes usually covers what can be accomplished in a session. Overall, I strive for my audience to leave the session feeling curious to learn more, and satisfied their time was valued while gaining skills to add to their professional tool box."

Stacy Mwilambwe is the Associate Director of University Housing Services at Illinois State University. She received a Top 10 Program award in 2013 for the program "Managing Parenthood - A Panel Discussion about Student Affairs Professionals' Experiences Balancing Full time Careers and Families within Student Affairs". That she co-presented with Tina Horvath of Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Jody Stone of Eastern Illinois University

Goals, Learning Outcomes and Objectives

The first step in drafting your goals and objectives is understanding the differences between them.

<u>Goals</u>- are loosely defined, broad, general statements about what you want participants to learn. For example, a learning outcome may be: Participants will learn about student staff recruitment.

<u>Learning Outcomes and Objectives</u> - are **specific, measurable, short-term, observable** results. They define who, what, how, and to what extent. Continuing with the above example:
- Mid-level professionals will be able to list 3 strategies to increase their applications for student staff positions
- Mid-level professionals will examine their current use of social media tools in their student staff recruitment process

In the goals, we stated we wanted participants to learn… but how do you measure learning? Bloom's Taxonomy breaks learning into six different stages:
- Remembering (knowledge)
- Understanding (Comprehension)
- Applying (Application)
- Analyzing (Analysis)
- Evaluating (Evaluation)
- Creating (Synthesis)

You will need to determine what kind of learning you want participant to take away from your presentation. Do you just want them to remember and comprehend what you shared, or do you want them to analyze how your information fits with processes at their own institution, or are you going a step further and putting out a call to action, aiming for participants to synthesize and use your information to create a program, campaign, or movement on their own campus? Not all learning has to fall in the same category, maybe some information you only want participants to remember as a reference, and other information you want them to evaluate.

Once you've determined to what extent you want participant s to learn something, you can use the flow chart above to find verbs that will define your means of learning for your learning outcomes and objectives, as well as methods you can use in your presentation to achieve that objective, and ultimately the overall goal.

Going back to our examples, we want participants to remember strategies from our presentation, so from the knowledge portion of the wheel, we chose for them to <u>list</u> three that they learned about. When our objective was for participants to analyze their social media use, we used <u>examine</u> and may choose the method of <u>survey</u> from the analysis portion of the wheel to ask how many participants use social media, and what kinds, so that they reflect on their own institution's usage.