

Whether it's volunteering for an organization once a year, serving as a group member or leader for an organization, or working one-on-one in various odd jobs, you are developing and using valuable skills for new and different professional opportunities. Taking the time to document and reflect on what you've learned, and how those skills are applicable in various settings, can help you articulate your value to a potential school, employer or collaborator.

The Rhetorical Triangle

How you present yourself (as the speaker), the language, communication format, and what you choose to highlight (the message) will change, depending on who you are addressing (the audience).

In order to figure out how to best connect with different people and organizations, you perform audience analysis by researching all you can about them via trusted and corroborated, fact-based rather than opinion-based, sources.

How do you present yourself? Do you want to be seen first as a researcher, an athlete, a writer, etc.?

SPEAKER

AUDIENCE

Who are you trying to connect to, and what is important to them?

MESSAGE

What are the most important pieces of information that you will highlight—and in what form, tone, and style?

Use the prompts below to help you identify and discuss how the experiences you have in one arena might be applicable in another. After answering these prompts you will begin to construct specific language, tone, style and format based on which is most appropriate for your audience. As your audience changes, reevaluate your message and how you present yourself.

<p>What did I do? <i>These could be your clubs, organizations, major accomplishments, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Be as specific as possible about exact tasks performed and contributions to projects.</i></p>	<p>What were the specific skills I used or developed for this? <i>What did you learn from doing that task, or completing that project?</i></p> <p><i>Maybe this is an industry-specific tool, or maybe this is a broader tool about communicating with and working with others.</i></p>	<p>Why does my audience care about these skills? <i>As your audience changes, so will the responses in this box.</i></p> <p><i>If today you don't have a specific audience, practice this exercise with different potential audiences that you can imagine.</i></p>
<p>Example: TEDxLSU Team Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I organized, loaded and unloaded supplies for the March 3 event • I helped people figure out where to go by providing signs and 1-1 support • I answered questions about the speakers and activities. • I helped supervisors identify and resolve issues with attendees. • I attended a day-long training about the organization, the speakers, the schedule for the event day, and how to talk about it with attendees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was able to jump into a complicated community project that took months to prepare and I quickly, successfully connected with 100 new teammates • I learned how to quickly absorb and then use major talking points for an international brand • I learned about the importance of timing and structure for the logistics behind putting on a 1000+ person event • I realized I am very good at talking to strangers and making them feel welcome, even if I couldn't always answer all their questions • I learned how to move quickly in a fast-paced event that has a lot of moving parts. 	<p>Today's Audience: LSU Ambassadors Program (applying to be an Ambassador)</p> <p>My TEDxLSU work shows them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can be successful speaking with and guiding different groups of people (like parents, potential students, etc.) • I understand that there are specific rules and protocols for logistics of moving people from one place to another on a major campus • I understand the importance of and can successfully learn and communicate the major talking points of the University.

My audience:		
My audience is looking for/cares about:		
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