

THE 4-STEP OPENING FORMULA

How to Hook Your Audience in the First 60 Seconds

1 | THE HOOK (Startle or Surprise)

Grab attention immediately. Skip the "hello" and launch straight with:



A Compelling Story

Drop them right into the middle of a high-stakes scene.



A Shocking Statistic

Use data that visualizes the magnitude of the problem.



A Thought-Provoking QI

Force minds to actively search for an answer.



A Relevant Quote

Set the emotional or intellectual tone using an expert's words.

2 | THE WIIFM (What's In It For Me?)

Answer the question every audience member is secretly asking. Clearly articulate the exact value, skills, or practical insights they will walk away with if they give you their time.

3 | ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY

Share your qualifications, research, or personal connection to the topic in one or two sentences. Reassure the room that you are a knowledgeable, trustworthy guide for this journey.

4 | REVEAL THE ROADMAP

Provide a quick psychological safety net. Briefly preview the main points or general structure of your speech so the audience knows exactly what to expect next.



COMMON PITFALLS TO AVOID

- ✗ Starting with Housekeeping (Fire exits, agenda notes, early thanks)
- ✗ Reading from a Script (Kills eye contact, authority, and connection)
- ✗ Starting with an Apology ("I'm nervous," "I didn't have much time")