

Speaking about difficult topics

Suggestions for speaking about difficult topics

Be prepared and well versed.

- Understand every aspect of your topic in order to answer any questions that may be raised
- In thoroughly understanding your topic, you will be able to adjust the presentation as needed for audience engagement
- Consider what portions of the presentation might be the most difficult for listeners, and be prepared to explain yourself in a better way if needed. Analogies and anecdotes are good techniques to approach difficult topics

Think about the overall outcome or desired result for your presentation.

- What do you want your audience to walk away knowing?
- You can support your position with facts (researched information, visuals, etc.)
- Take time to debunk common myths surrounding the topic
- Always be working towards your overall outcome desired

Know your audience

- You might be able to recall certain conversations, or statements made by audience members in the past. Try to think about any potential positions and accommodate the information to try and find a middle ground

Establish credibility

- Why should the audience listen to what you are saying?
- This builds trust and confidence with the audience

Acknowledge the fact that the topic is controversial

- Address this in the introduction

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