

**SOPPADA:
A handy way to present ideas, proposals,
suggestions, and plans**

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SOPPADA is an easy-to-remember acronym. You can communicate better, faster, more effectively and persuasively when you build your message according to the SOPPADA outline. The word stands for **S**ubject, **O**bjectives, **P**resent situation, **P**roposal, **A**dvantages, **D**isadvantage, and **A**ction recommended.

The method is useful for all kinds of communications – informal oral presentations, formal oral presentations, written memos, and formal written proposals. I have used this outline for 95% of the marketing plans and proposals I have prepared for clients over a 40-year career in advertising. I did not invent the method. A client early in my business life taught me it. In most cases I never use the word “SOPPADA” because if you do, somebody will ask you to explain it. Most of the recipients of a SOPPADA message comment that the proposal is understandable, clear, and succinct. If I have prepared the SOPPADA carefully, most recipients regard it as a breath of fresh air!

If you are called on to make an informal oral presentation about something, just recall the word: Say your **S**ubject loud and clear. Then launch into your **O**bjectives – what the proposal is designed to accomplish. When you run out of those, present facts of the **P**resent situation in 1, 2, 3 order. Now you present the **P**roposal in a couple of sentences, then launch into every **A**dvantage you can think of in 1, 2, 3 order. Now describe the strongest possible **D**isadvantage (one is enough). The **A**ction recommended is NOT to approve the Proposal. The **A**ction recommended is the VERY NEXT STEP in implementing the Proposal.

In written form, the SOPPADA gives you a chance to edit and sharpen as you go. Right up until the very end you may add a fact you forgot, or sharpen an objective. In some presentations I omit the **D**isadvantage, but you must *know* what it is or you may be blindsided.

When you present the SOPPADA message on a flip chart, overhead, or in a Power Point presentation, explain thoroughly as you go. If you encounter corrections, you can make them on the spot to tweak the message. If you encounter hostility, stop. Hear out the complainer. Then withdraw, fix your SOPPADA, and schedule another meeting. Do not press on regardless until you have sensed general agreement on the preceding information. The important thing is to TRY IT. If you frame the next few of your communications in SOPPADA form, it will become second nature to you.

Good luck!

SOPPADA Presentation Method

SUBJECT A phrase

OBJECTIVES What we want to accomplish.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PRESENT SITUATION Where we are now.

1. fact
2. fact
3. fact (Each side of a controversy is a fact.
Lack of knowledge is a fact.)

PROPOSAL What we should do.

A sentence or two.

ADVANTAGES How we will benefit.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

DISADVANTAGE How the proposal will cost us.

1. The single strongest disadvantage (not time or \$).

ACTION RECOMMENDED The very next step to implement.

A sentence

SOPPADA Presentation Method EXAMPLE*

Subject: Why select Brucker Consulting for training

Objectives:

1. Obtain the most effective, affordable training.
2. Make training expertise independent of teacher variability.
3. Start program within 2 months.
4. Measure results in 3 months. Money back if not satisfied.

Present situation:

1. No formal training being given.
2. All experts busy selling.
3. No time to prepare curriculum of critical subjects.
4. Sales and customers being lost.

Proposal:

Assign Brucker Consulting to train your most difficult task on a guaranteed basis.

Advantages:

1. Training system experts optimize content and method.
2. Little time required from key staff.
3. Measurable results: satisfaction or money back

Disadvantage:

1. Requires 24 hours of staff time for demo training of most difficult task.

Action recommended:

Set appointment for the first 4-hour session of 6 (24 hours total) next Tuesday or Thursday.

* This is an example of a sales presentation in SOPPADA style for a hypothetical training organization, Brucker Consulting. Such a presentation might be delivered to a prospect company's management team. The fast-growing company has neglected to establish an internal training operation, and badly needs help. Note that all the steps can be amplified by the presenter.