Monroe’s Motivated Sequence

Monroe’s Motivated Sequence (MMS) is an organizational pattern used to develop a sense of want or need in the audience, satisfy that want or need, and to help the audience get enthused about the advantages of that solution.

Need versus Want

- A need is something that fills a significant, life impacting void. For example, we need food, water, shelter. We need money to secure our needs. We need other people.

- A want, on the other hand, is something we would like to have, but does not impact our lives in a significant way. AirPods may be nice to have, but it does not impact our lives in significant ways.

Why is this distinction important? Knowing whether to build a need or want tells you what your focus of the speech is going to be. If your persuasive goal is to fulfill a want, and you present it as if it were fulfilling a need, your audience may be offended. If, on the other hand, you sell a need as a want, you may miss some strong persuasive appeals. Thus, you need to determine and adhere to what kind of appeal you are going to build—a need or a want.

MONROE’S MOTIVATED SEQUENCE--THE FIVE STEPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>IDEAL AUDIENCE RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>to get audience to listen</td>
<td>&quot;I want to hear what you have to say&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>to get audience to feel a need or want</td>
<td>&quot;I agree. I have that need/want&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>to tell audience how to fill need or want</td>
<td>&quot;I see your solution will work&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualization</td>
<td>to get audience to see benefits of solution</td>
<td>&quot;This is a great idea&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>to get audience to take action</td>
<td>&quot;I want it&quot;</td>
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For your presentation, the MMS can be used:

**Step 1:** Get Attention-- Through the use of attention getting devices, you will aim to do two basic things: get the audience’s attention, and ease the audience into the topic.

**Step 2:** Build the Need/Want-- In this step, you will work to get your audience to feel a need or want, whichever you determine to be appropriate. This is accomplished via four steps:

A. Statement: give a definite, concise statement of what the need or want is.
B. Illustration: give one or more examples illustrating the need or want. This is where you try to “paint pictures” verbally to really get audience to feel that need or want.

C. Ramification: here you can offer additional evidence, such as statistics/testimony/examples which give even more weight to the need or want.

D. Pointing: this is where you really point out how this need or want is directly related and important to the audience.

Step 3: Satisfy the Need/Want-- In this step, you will now fill the need/want you built in step 2. It is vital that you be consistent; i.e., be sure the solution you offer really does fit the need/want. There are five steps here:

A. Statement: tell your audience in a very specific, direct sentence what it is you want them to do (THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE WILL HAVE HEARD-PRECISELY-WHAT IT IS YOU ARE ADVOCATING)

B. Explanation: Explain what exactly it is you are advocating.

C. Theoretical Demonstration: This is where you make it clear how what you are advocating fulfills the need you built in step 2.

D. Reference to Practical Experience: This is where you bring in external evidence supporting the value of your proposal.

E. Meeting Objections: here you anticipate counter-arguments and you pre-empt them, i.e., address them before the audience has time to actually bring them up.

Step 4: Visualizing the Results-- In this step you are working to intensify your audience’s desire for your product/service. This is often called the projection step because it looks forward to the future. There are three options here:

Option A: The Positive Method: Using this method, you offer vivid descriptions of how much better the person’s life will be as a result of buying your product or service.

Option B: The Negative Method: Using this method, you offer vivid descriptions of how bad the person’s life will be as a result of not buying your product or service.

Option C: The Contrast Method: Using this method, you combine the previous two methods, addressing negatives first, and positives second.

Step 5: Call for Action-- This step is the final call for the buyer to actually make the purchase, the “go out and get it already” step. It should be brief, powerful, and well worded. End on a strong note, then sit down.
DIFFICULTIES OF USING MMS: (things to watch out for)

1. Careful of repetition. It is very easy to find yourself repeating points from one step in another step. For instance, the attention step should not get into need building. Or in step four, visualization, do not repeat things from step 3.

2. Be sure to do all steps. Frequently we start speeches with "I’m here to get you to. . .” Clearly, that is the statement from step 3. Be sure to use some sort of attention getting device and build the need/want first.

3. Be sure to take time to build the need. What happens is that dealing with the specific action is so straightforward that you want to jump to that. Granted, need/want building is less “‘definite,’” but it is so vitally important.

4. Be sure to use clear “statements” at the beginning of the steps. This allows for clear transitions.

5. Be sure you need/want and action advocated are consistent. In other words, make sure your action has solvency. Solvency is when your proposal really does fill the need/want developed in step 2.

6. Make sure all proposals have workability. An advocated action is workable for an audience if they can reasonably do it—that the advantages outweigh the difficulties of doing it. Can they afford it? Do they have time? Are they able to do it?