



Bernburg  
Dessau  
Köthen



**Hochschule Anhalt**  
Anhalt University of Applied Sciences

# kickSTART: Karriere- Your Launch Into Employment

***Fit4Wrk***

***Mastering Soft Skills-  
Your Way to Success***

International Student?  
Looking to work in the area?  
Start your  
**CAREER**  
with us!

- Job-Search Strategy
- CV Guidance
- Workshops
- Competency Training
- Company Networking
- Career Counselling

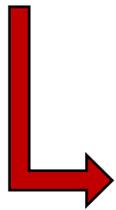
A graphic showing a person's hands holding a document over a laptop keyboard. The text 'International Student?' and 'Looking to work in the area?' is in red. 'Start your' is in grey, and 'CAREER' is in large, bold, black letters with a motion blur effect. 'with us!' is in red. A vertical list of services is on the right, each in a grey arrow pointing left.

## „Competence“

- Is the proven ability to utilize **knowledge**, and **social-**, as well as **methodological-** capabilities in **work-** or learning-**situations** for personal or professional development

## „Key Competencies“

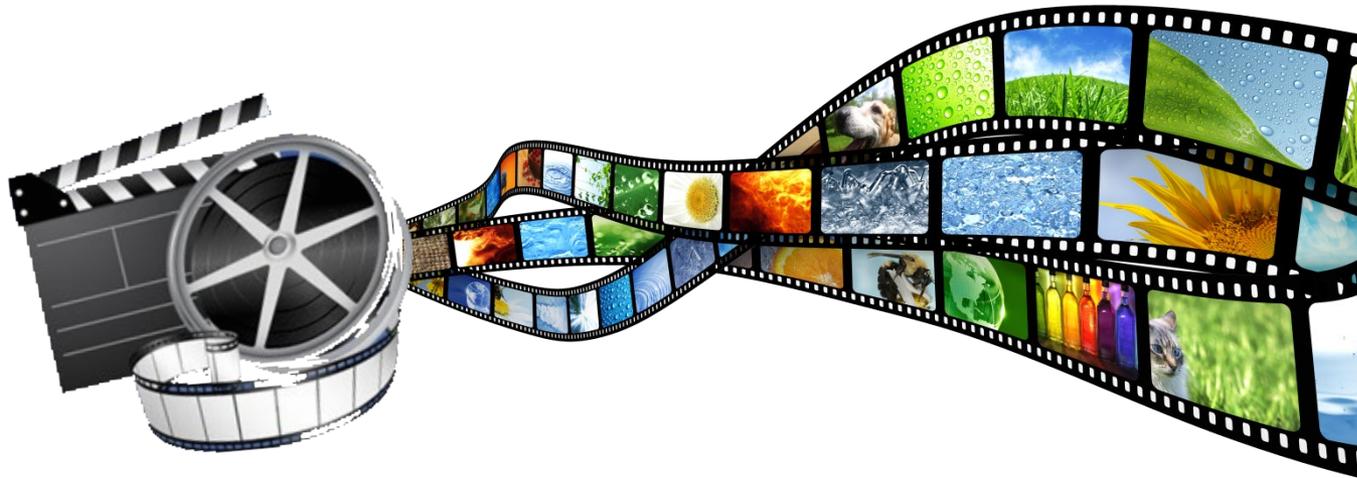
- Help to fulfill important requirements within a framework and are of importance to **everyone, not just specialists**
  - Ability to think independently
  - Ability to take responsibility for own actions
  - Reflective thinking and acting



Key competencies highlight those abilities that people in modern societies need, especially when adapting to the **local employment market** and **cultural conditions**



**Watch Video: Identify and Analyze Your Core Competencies and Key Skills**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJfubKPZLXU>

## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Hierarchical structures** are directly dependent on the size and industry
- **Mittelständler (SMEs)** tend towards flat hierarchies (company has grown in a family context), whereas **large companies** often have stricter hierarchies
- Both cases require different **social competencies** and individual adaption



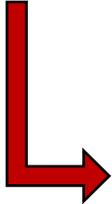
“Yes, I think I have good people skills.  
What kind of idiot question is that?”



## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Autonomy** – The independent completion of tasks without continuous micromanagement by a supervisor is normal in Germany
- **Ability to accept criticism** (even direct)
- The acceptance of personal boundaries, weaknesses. Ask for help.

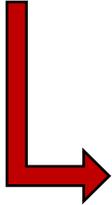




## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Critical Thinking and Opinion Formation.** The superior's opinion is not to be seen as an almighty dogma. It is even encouraged to actively disagree (in a respectful manner) and tell them when they are wrong, or you consider your own idea more beneficial for the company (valid arguments)
- Organisational methods are to be designed efficiently  
**„Work Smart, Not Hard!“**





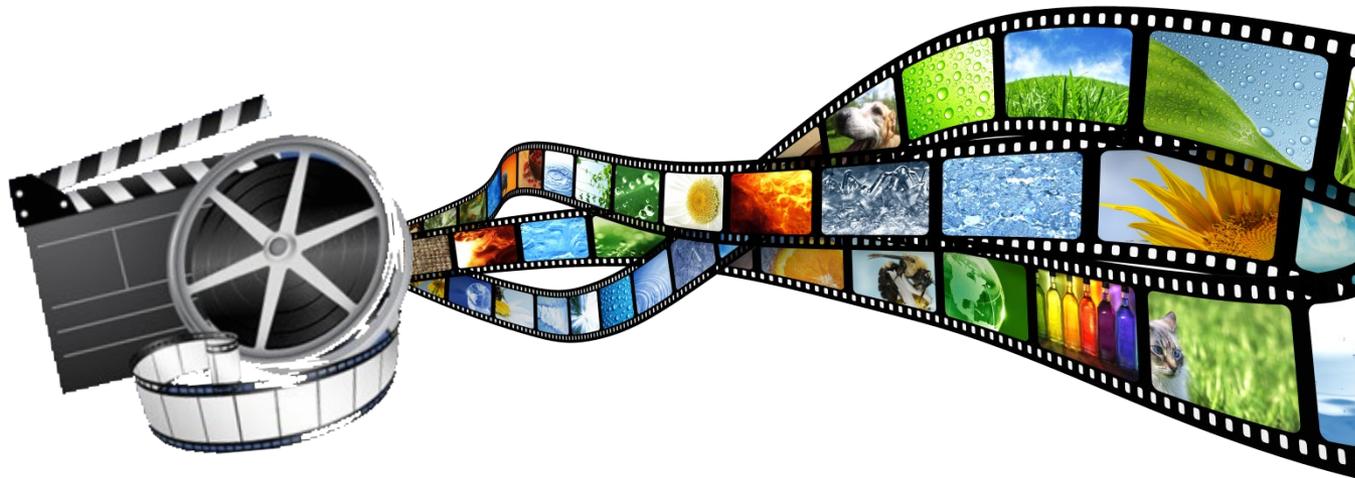
## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Cultural Competencies:** Mentalities already vary heavily in Germany. In addition: handling distinctively different cultures with international partners/clients. Avoid embarrassments!
- **Interdisciplinary thinking** is particularly important with a growing company size, as the coordination effort between different departments needs to be minimized. Different parts of the organisation need to **understand each other**



## Which Skills and Competencies are Important?

**[Watch Video: The Difference Between Hard-and Soft-Skills](#)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhF-Z6xSXs8>

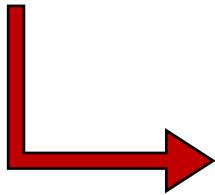


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## What Is Time Management?

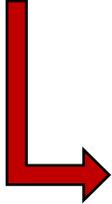
- Time management is the **systematic** and **disciplined** planning of your time



### Why Time Management?

- Focus on the essentials
- More efficient and effective handling of tasks
- Early on identification of problems and hurdles





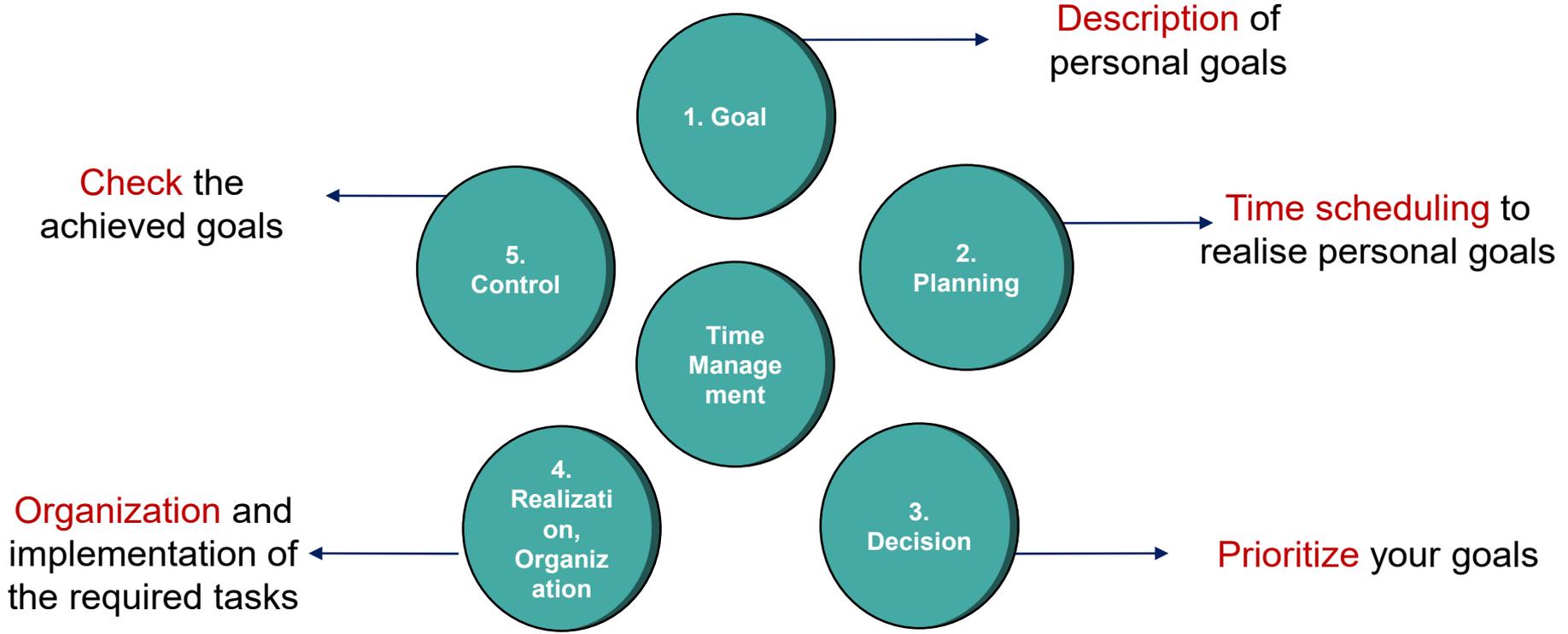
## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Priorities.** Define them clearly, depending on the importance to the company
- **Structure leads to increased efficiency. (More Output with less/the same input)**
- **Punctuality** is the foundation for avoiding loss of time



## The Mechanics of Time Management

- A functional time management includes **5 sub-steps**

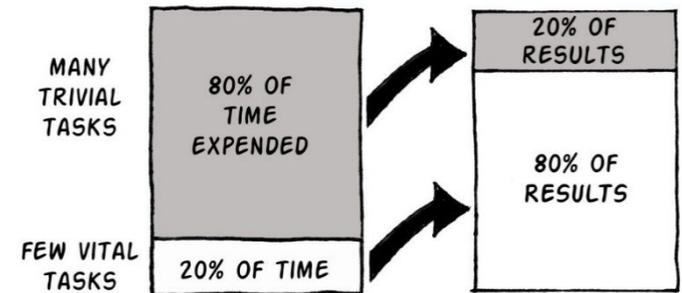


## Planning the Work Input Efficiently- **The Pareto Principle**

- Named after Vilfredo Pareto
- Only 20% of the population possess 80% of wealth
- Most companies generate 80% of turnover with only 20% of customers

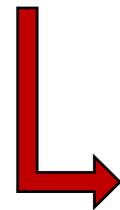
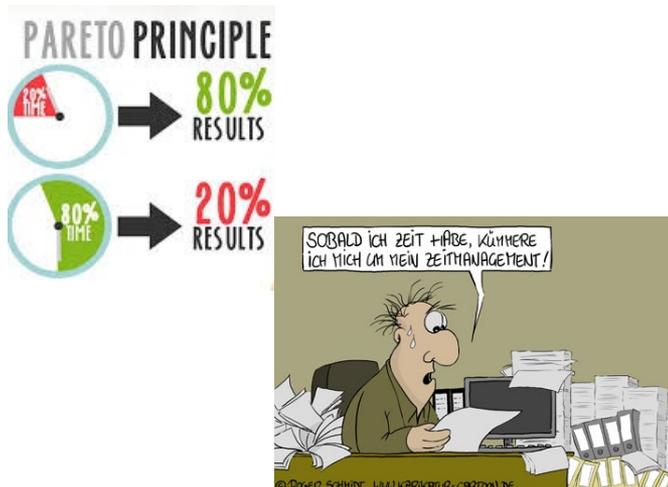


**20: 80 Principle**



## Planning the Work Input Efficiently- **The Pareto Principle**

- The Pareto-Principle can be transferred to every work situation
- Most employees realize they can achieve 80% of results with only 20% effectively used time and energy
- However, the remaining 80% must be invested to achieve an optimal result, in case there is time left

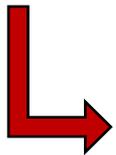


The Pareto Principle helps to plan your personal work effort **ahead of time**, while **avoiding waste of time**.

**Very important in German work environments!**

## Decision- Set Priorities – **The Eisenhower Principle**

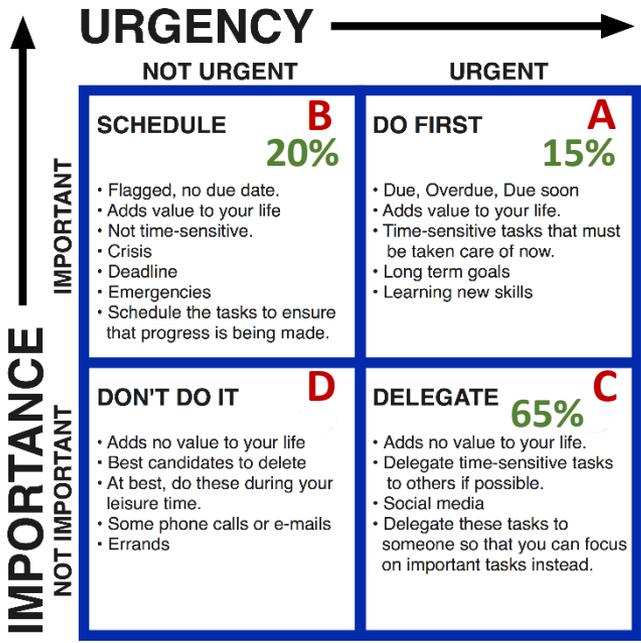
- Divide tasks into 3 categories ABC
- **A-** Tasks that are important in the long-term
- **B-** Tasks that do not yet have urgency
- **C-** Short-term important tasks
- **BUT:** Complete B-tasks **before they become urgent**



The correct assessment of priority is the **core element of time management** in Germany, as not all tasks can be finished within 1 day.

**Time = Resource**

## Decision- Set Priorities – The Eisenhower Principle



- Priority distribution according to **Urgency** (x-Axis) and **Importance** (y-Axis)
- Percentage **time frame**
- **Trash:** Neither important nor urgent

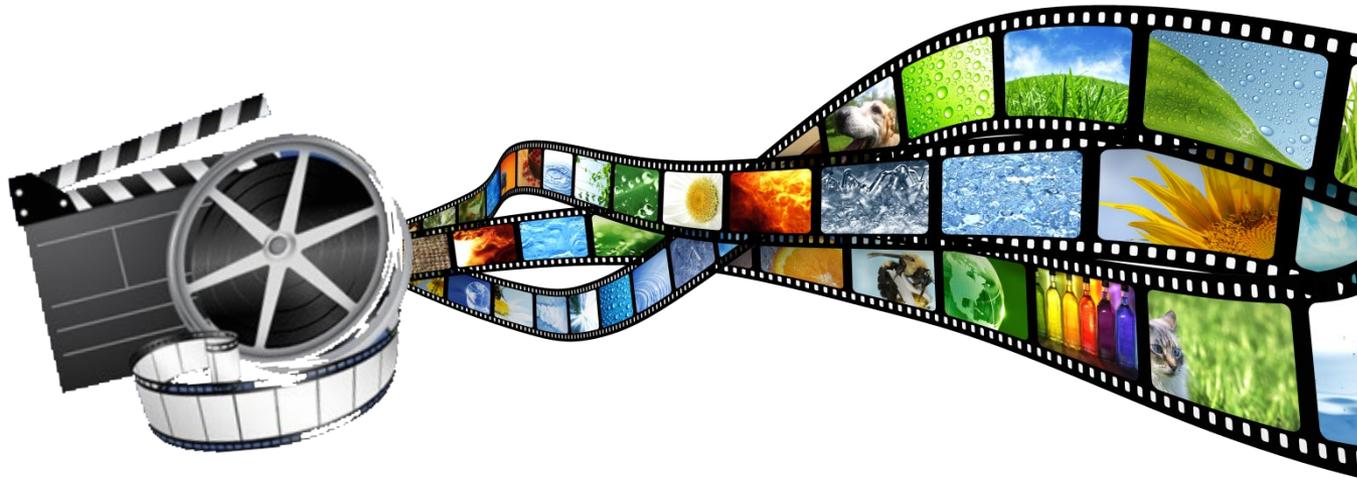
A- Problems & Crises- Immediate Action

C- Time Killers- Reduce Quickly

B- Strategy- Regular Action

D- Distractions- Avoid

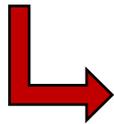
**Watch Video: An Extreme Example- The Elon Musk Method “Time Boxing”**



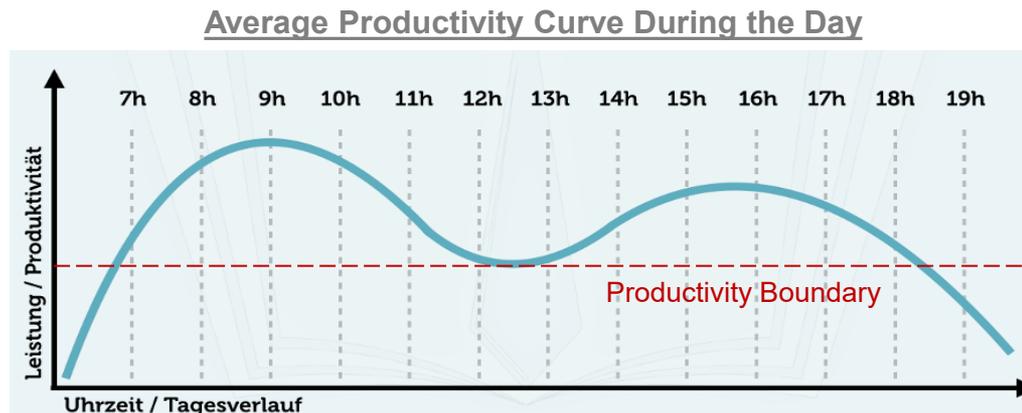
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbAYK4KQrso>

## Stick to Time Management- **The Performance Curve**

- Clearly visible performance-high in the morning and late afternoon
- In between: performance-low (usually after lunch break)
- In case of sickness- underperformance. Stay home!



**Pay attention to performance high-and lows when planning your work**



## Avoid Time Killers

- **Fixed times** for replying to Emails
- Put the mobile phone on silent mode during important work
- Constant availability interferes with structured working
- **Plan meetings with fixed deadlines** (Time start and end with a clock)
- Move social activities to break times/after work
- **Avoid the helper-syndrome** (Learn to say no)
- **Calculate recovery phase!** (No Emails after work!)



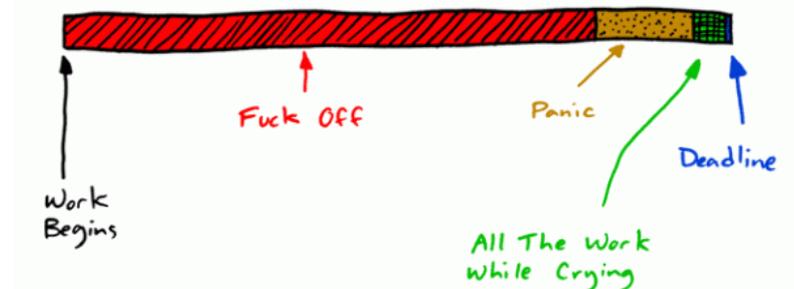
## How Do I Win this Fight? - Procrastination

### Salami-Strategy

Divide the postponed task into individual, smaller steps that are easier to complete.

### The Balance Method

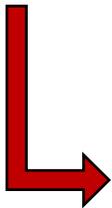
Consider the reasons for postponement in contrast to the advantages of completing the task. If the reasons to postpone outweigh the completion, set priorities! If not, do the task.



## What do I Need to be Able to?

- Formulate goals
- Order tasks according to their importance (priorities)
- Plan work processes anticipatorily
- Accept not being able to do everything on your own. Delegate tasks.
- Avoid distractions (time killers)
- Do not start to postpone, as it unbalances your entire planning

*"Fünf Minuten vor der Zeit, ist des Deutschen Pünktlichkeit."*

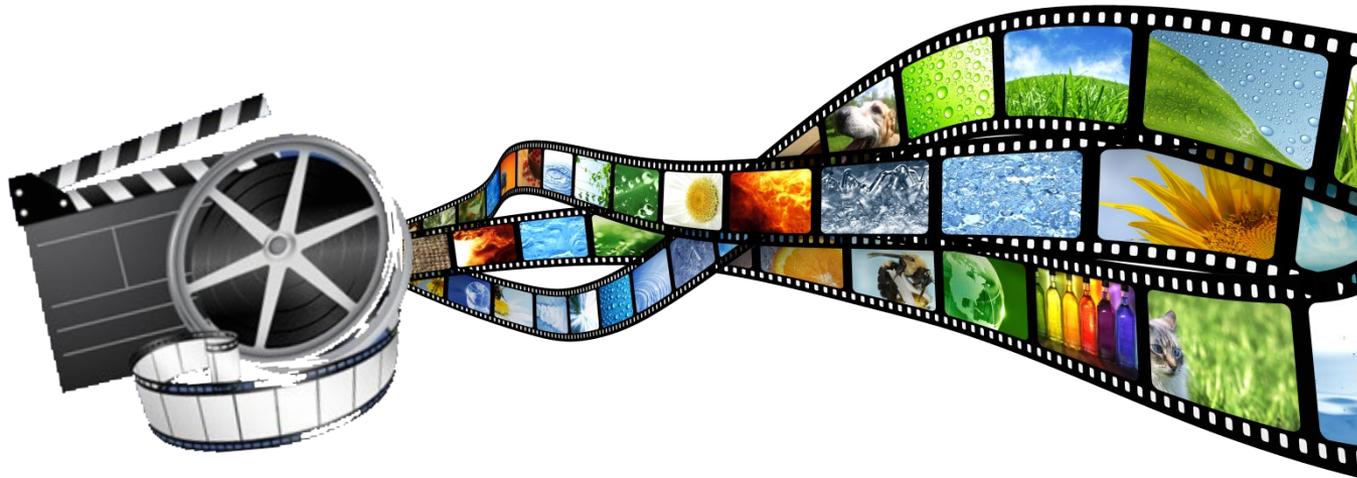


In Germany the concept of time has a significant status. **Time** is regarded a **valuable resource** (personally and for the company). To be efficient, it has to be utilized in the best possible way. This is one of the reasons for the strict division of work- and private-life.

**„Erst die Arbeit, dann das Vergnügen!“**



**Watch Video: Time Management Techniques for Productivity**

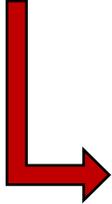


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGVQPU-L7cQ>



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## Particularly Important in German Companies:

- **Being able to speak freely**
- Being able to defend the own opinion with valid arguments
- Filter information / concentrate on the essentials
- Visual information works better than text



## Which Things do I have to Consider **Beforehand?**

### Content

Focus on the essential facts and structure logically. Ask questions in relation to the topic and relate them to the overall subject

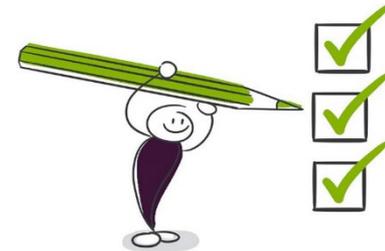


### Technology

Media (notebook, flash drive, projector, cables, speaker etc.) Check if they are complete and working **in advance!** Arrive at the venue early to set up everything.

### Practical Application

Practise the presentation and the structure (time yourself!) e.g. with friends/colleagues. Keep 2 versions readily available in case the meeting gets cut short. 1 detailed, 1 max. 5 minutes.



## How Do I Structure a **Presentation**?

- Every presentation needs an outline/structure
  - For your own orientation
  - For the audience to follow the content
- Don't over-complicate (Not more than 1 level of sub-chapters)
- Mention the structure on each slide (heading)
- Do not forget to include a summary/conclusion (5 most important points)
- Plan the extent of your structure accordingly (less is more)
- **Ca. 2 min per slide** (Shorten if necessary)

Introduction

1/8



Main Part

3/4

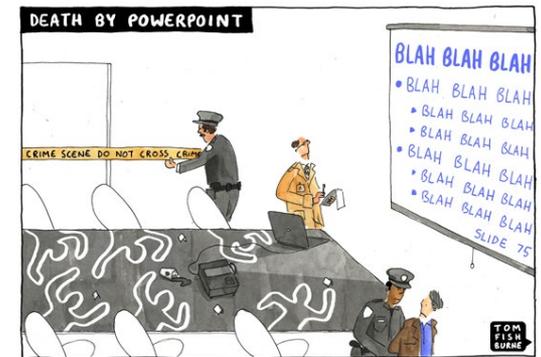


Conclusion

1/8

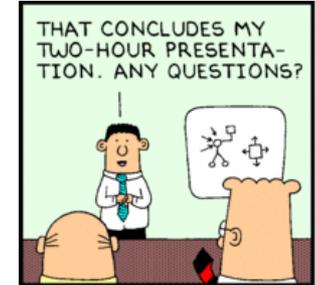
## Which Elements Belong in a **Professional PPT**?

- **Font Size:** min. 8pt; Hierarchical levels according to content: bigger headings and subsequent levels smaller
- **Font Type:** subtle type e.g. (Arial, Times New Roman) not too arty; stick to one, do not mix!
- **Accentuations:** use sparingly, not too much bold or italics
- **Design:** neat and simple; consistent
- **Colour:** not too many different styles, utilize contrasts; not too dark; Rule of thumb: a change in colour represents a change in meaning

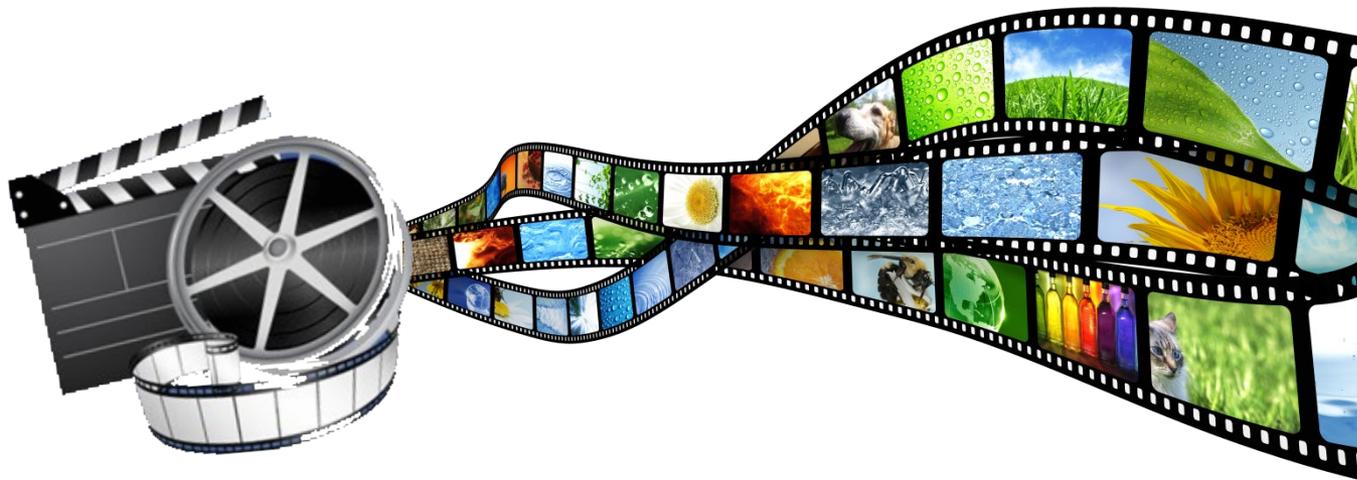


## Which Elements Belong in a **Professional PPT?**

- **Sentence structure:** short points, use notes/bullet points, no overly long quotes
- **Amount of content:** **no overload! (less text is more); pay attention to consistent spacing**
- **Length:** in correspondence with the given time frame, do not exceed, keep conclusion/summary available to skip to when time is running out
- **No. of slides:** rule of thumb: not more than 2 minutes per slide (in relation to max. time)

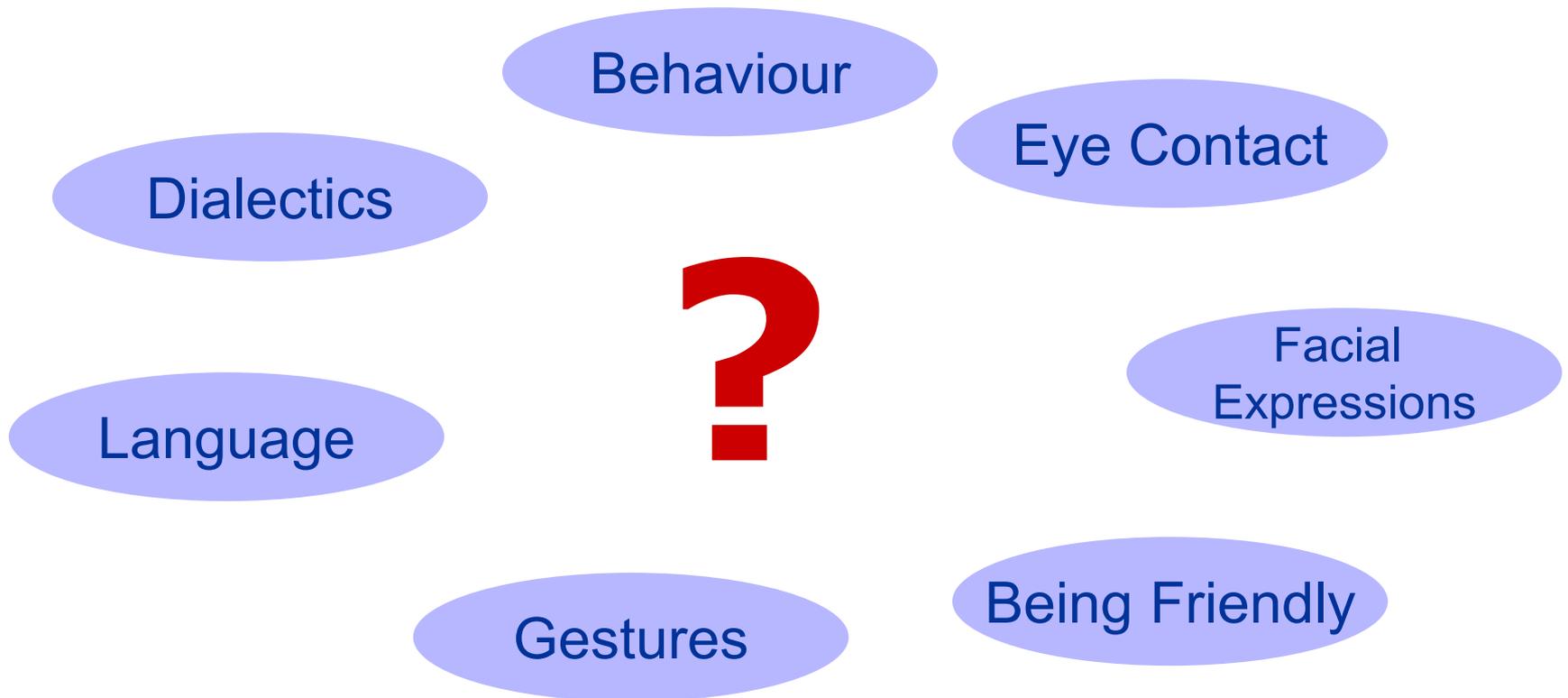


## Watch Video: 7 Presentation Skills to Leave an Impression



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnIPpUiTcRc>

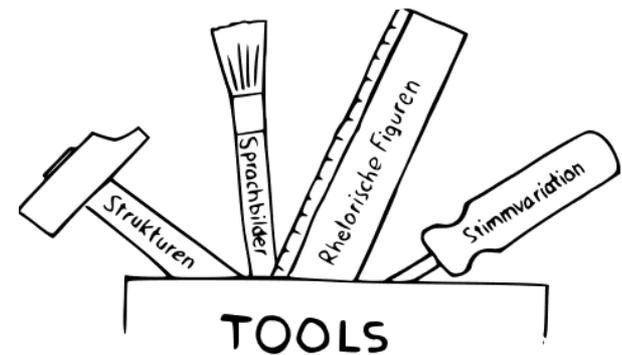
Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „**Speak Well**“



## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „Speak Well“

### Behaviour

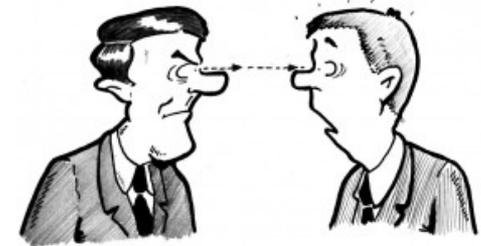
- Stand up-right, always face the audience
- Spread your legs (gives you a firm stand; you're not a pillar!)
- Convey security (know what you're doing)
- Breathing
- Tip: Keep your hands in a bent but open position



## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „Speak Well“

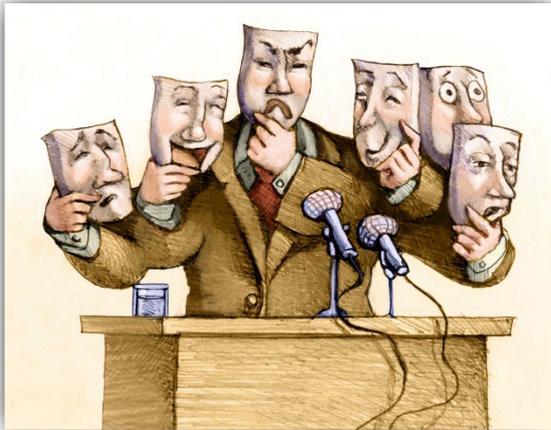
### Eye Contact

- Involves listeners
- Creates a personal relationship
- Allows to check if the audience understood
- Select reference-persons (2-3) to get back to for checking their reaction to content
- Never lose eye contact (e.g. look out the window)
- Don't stare!
- In case of missing eye contact from the audience, ask questions
- **Looking down/stare at your feet** in Germany is equivalent to **„not interested / didn't understand“**



## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „Speak Well“

### Facial Expressions



- Part of non-verbal communication and therefore immensely important to convey information
- Amplifies content
- Emphasizes statements
- Needs to match the content
- Keep neutral, not too emotional
- Avoid strong and abrupt changes in facial expressions during the presentation (decide beforehand)
- **Is mirrored by the audience**, can therefore be decisive for success/ evaluation of presentation

## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „Speak Well“

### Gestures

- Makes presentation more lively/appealing
- Emphasize statements
- Provide structure
- Support the audience's imagination
- Strictly avoid aggressive gestures e.g. **direct finger-pointing**
- Too many gestures can be confusing
- Do not combine movement (walking around) with gestures= distracting
- **Understand the cultural importance of gestures** (can differ from audience to audience, avoid faux-pas)

**Germany:** Everything okay!, 1

**Australia, Iran, Afghanistan, Nigeria,**  
Contempt or: "Screw You!"



## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „**Speak Well**“

### Friendliness

- Has influence on the discussion
- Is perceived as inviting
- Do not try to be overly/artificially friendly  
**(Extremely negative in Germany)**
- **Do not exaggerate-** polite, professional manner
- Stay friendly, even in case of differing opinions in the audience
- Germans are very direct and therefore frugal with friendliness (not to be interpreted negatively esp. reactions from the audience)



## Rhetoric Is More Than Just to „Speak Well“

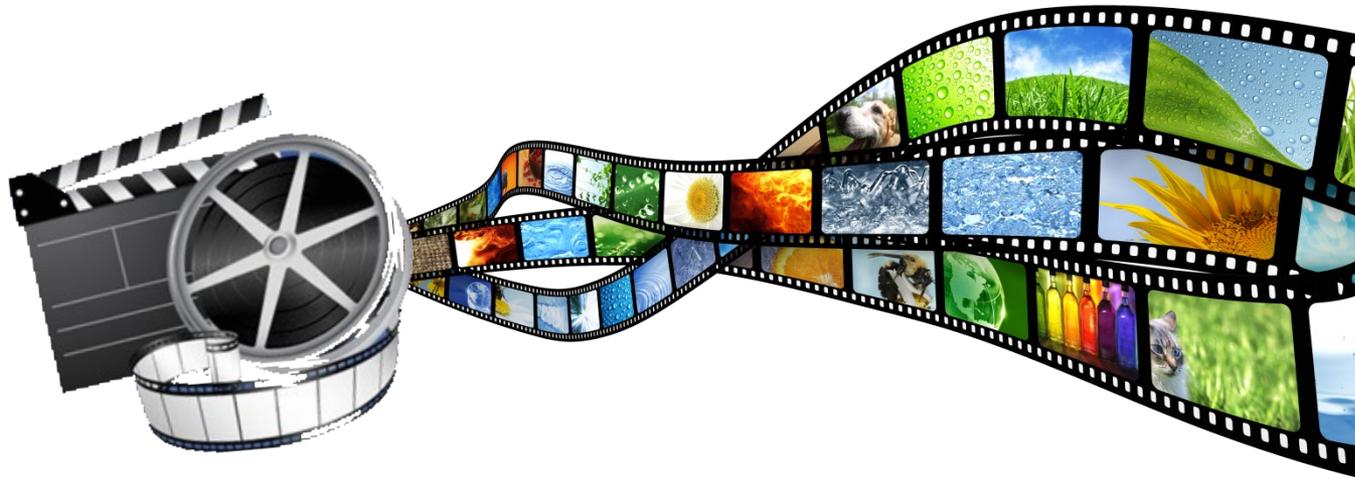
### Language

- Slow, loud enough, understandable
- Vary your tone
- Fast-slow, loud-quiet, high-low
- Use pronunciation to emphasize meaning
- **Integrate pauses!**
- Helps the presenter to think and speak
- Facilitates the understanding of the audience
- It is a tool to structure the presentation
- Suspense- pauses



## Rhetoric Stylistic Tools- Learn How Not to Do It- Donald Trump

Watch Video: 7 Public Speaking Tips We Can (But Shouldn't) Learn From Donald Trump



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05tp0VscN8A>

## What If Something **Goes Wrong?**

- Have a pause to think
- Repeat your last statement
- Go back to the last slide
- Move on, you can come back later
- Consciously control your breathing
- Security through an accomplice in the audience (Pre-selected acquaintances that bridge blackout with questions)
- Admit a blackout (Audience will understand, move to the next point)



### Avoid These **Mistakes**

#### Formal

Exceed speaking time

Speak too fast

Mumble

Inappropriate gestures

Read instead of speaking freely

Different Font Types/Sizes

Too many colours

Exaggerated animations



#### Content

No Structure

Too much information

Not engaging the audience

Bad Jokes

No Questions