

# **How to write effective talking points? (user-friendly talking points)**



# What are talking points ?

- Talking points are a script.
  - They are a way of framing a conversation.
- They should be brief, convincing statements tailored to an event or audience.
  - You prepare and (should) memorize talking points in advance of a communication, in anticipation of specific questions.
  - They help you deliver your message or arguments effectively and concisely.
- They are written differently from remarks, speeches, and interventions.
  - One-on-one conversation



# Qualities of strong talking points

- Concise (as short as possible)
- Easy to understand and remember
- Conversational (they sound natural when said out loud)
- Jargon-free (avoid unfamiliar acronyms or complicated vocabulary)
- Relevant to the audience
- Credible/ strategic messaging



# Scenarios for overseas diplomats

- Presentation of credentials
- Introductory/ courtesy calls
- To deliver instruction from capital
- Demarche
- VVIP/ VIP visits



# Think before you write

- Who will you meet?
  - Get their bio in advance
  - What do they already know about Thailand? What are their interests ?
- What are you trying to achieve?
  - To agree to your requests
  - To get them to understand your POV
  - To get information
- What points must you cover?
  - What do you need to explain?
  - Collaborate with desk officer



# Think before you write

- Put yourself in the shoes of the Ambassador
  - Language – level of comfort with words.
  - Content – highlight important points to remember
  - Structure talking points so he/she can get the points across.
    - Telling a story. Logic and sequence.
    - Too much information – lose the plot.



# Focus on the listener

- Use your imagination.
  - Imagine how the conversation will play out.
  - Imagine questions they might ask.
- Make sure you talking points answer questions they might have:
  - How will the new policy benefit them?
  - Who will be affected?
- Interest them.
  - Give them only the information they only need.
  - Leave out the boring details (bureaucracy, institutional procedures, formalities).



# Logic and Reasoning

- Arrange your talking points according to logic and reasoning.
- Provide enough background to lay foundation
- Chronology.
  - Listeners will remember better.
- Have informative headings and subheadings. Bold-face key words to highlight important points and key information.
  - Speaker will remember better.



# Sample organizational styles

ประเด็นที่ฝ่ายไทยอาจหยิบยก

๑.ทั่วไป

- I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Madam Azoulay, for your re-election as Director-General of UNESCO. Under your able leadership, Thailand is certain that you will lead UNESCO in bringing the global community together through activities under UNESCO's mandate.
- As an active member of several UNESCO bodies and committees, particularly the World Heritage Committee and the Executive Board, please rest assured that Thailand remains committed to supporting your work in all areas under UNESCO mandates.
- I would also like to congratulate you on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNESCO and on the success of the 41<sup>st</sup> UNESCO General Conference (GC) and the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly of States Parties, which were organized physically in November in Paris last year.
- Thailand welcomes the endorsement and supports the implementation of the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Recommendation on Open Science which resulted from the GC Meeting. These two important documents would help ensure that emerging technologies benefit humanity and help overcome digital, technological and knowledge divides existing between developed and developing countries.

๒. บทบาทของไทยในคณะกรรมการมรดกโลก (World Heritage Committee - WHC)

วาระปี ค.ศ. ๒๐๑๙-๒๐๒๓

- As member of the World Heritage Committee, Thailand honours its role as a constructive and responsible Committee member, as well as attaches importance to the credibility of the World Heritage Convention.
- To further deepen our commitment, Thailand has expressed its interest to the World Heritage Centre to host the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee in 2023. We are pleased to have received relevant details and information from the Centre and our relevant agencies are working on them so as to formulate a detailed proposal.

๓. วาระการครบรอบ ๕๐ ปี องค์ยูเนสโกมรดกโลก ในปี ๒๕๖๕

- The year 2022 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. The occasion serves as a good opportunity for all parties concerned to take stock of and reflect on the conservation challenges we face. Looking forward, Thailand is of the view that our deliberations should focus on addressing the remaining significant challenges and to envisage

๔. สถานการณ์ในเมียนมา และประเด็นที่เกี่ยวข้อง (if asked)

## Thailand's Position

- As an immediate neighbour who stands to be most impacted by developments inside Myanmar, Thailand has been closely following the situation in Myanmar with much concern.
- We wish to see peace and stability in Myanmar. Our stance and message have been consistent from the beginning. We have been calling for a cessation of violence, the release of detainees, and peaceful solution through dialogue. We will continue to do so.

## Overview of the Situation in Myanmar

- The overall situation in Myanmar remains very fragile and volatile, with continued clashes and violent incidents involving the use of bombs and explosives by many parties to the conflicts, targeted attacks and shootings in different areas across the country.
- Thailand is monitoring the security situation in Myanmar very closely. We are concerned by the possibility of further destabilisation, especially in areas adjacent to the Thai border provinces.
- We think that it is vital to find ways to encourage and incentivise parties to the conflict to start talking and de-escalate with the goal of stopping the violence.

## Humanitarian Assistance

- The humanitarian crisis in Myanmar deserves full attention from the international community, which should give top priority to providing relief and assistance to the people in need in Myanmar, especially cases related to public health and COVID-19, in order to prevent further destabilising effects on Myanmar society and beyond Myanmar's borders.
- Thailand stresses that humanitarian assistance should be de-politicised to ensure its effective and safe delivery. Thailand believes that humanitarian assistance, particularly in public health, could serve as an entry point for key stakeholders in Myanmar to start working together and pave the way for political dialogue in the future.



# KISS: Keep It Short and Simple

## SHORT

- Shorter sentences have more impact.
  - Long, drawn-out sentences are an obstacle to clarity. They are a mouthful and hard to remember.
  - Well-structured sentences and convey a clear message can improve the confidence of the speaker.
- Keep cutting, but make sure the message is still clear.
  - Break long sentences into shorter sentences.
  - Cut out superfluous words.



# **KISS: Keep It Short and Simple**

## **SIMPLE**

- Use simple words.
  - Simple language will not make one look less learned. It will make you look more credible.
- Write simple sentences.
  - Subject Verb Object. Use active rather than passive voice.



# Simple word choices

Formal
Request
Investigate
Incorrect
Allow
Demonstrate
Require
Establish
However
Appear

Informal
Ask for
Look into
Wrong
Let
Show
Need
Set up
But
See



# Simple word choices

Formal	Informal
In view of the fact that	As
A certain number of	Some
Concerning, regarding, relating to	On
Accordingly, consequently	So
In the event of	If
The majority of	Most
Within the framework of	Under
With reference to, with regard to	About
If this is the case	If so
If this is not the case	If not



# Simplifying sentences

- Thailand and the EU are longstanding and natural partners, bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally. This is because of our shared values and commitment to rules-based regionalism and multilateralism, our firmly interconnected economies and aspirations for green growth (i.e., through the European Green Deal and Thailand's own approach called the Bio-Circular-Green, or BCG, Economy Model.)



# Simplifying sentences

- We note that the EU uses economic incentives and carbon pricing to encourage the private sector to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to protect the environment, such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. While these measures will strengthen climate and environmental action, the increased paperwork and required data also affect the cost and ease of doing business for entrepreneurs, especially for MSMEs. In this connection, we would like to exchange knowledge on how the EU is helping to mitigate the negative impacts on its private sector.



# Simplifying sentences

- Thailand is proud and honoured that the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (KKFC) was listed in the World Heritage List last year. I would like to assure you that Thailand will continue to consistently and work in good faith to ensure the best protection and conservation of our World Heritage Sites. Our efforts would also contribute to the purposes and primary mission of the World Heritage Convention.
- Apart from the KKFC, another proud moment for Thailand last year was when the ICS-ICH decided to inscribe “Nora, Dance Drama in Southern Thailand” on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (RL). This is the third inscription since Thailand has ratified the Convention, after the inscription of “Khon” and “Nuad Thai”, or Thai massage.
- Thailand is looking forward to listing more Thai cultural heritages to the list, namely “Songkran” and “Tom Yum Kung”.



# Simplifying sentences

## Overview of the Situation in Myanmar

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- Thailand is monitoring the security situation in Myanmar very closely. We are concerned by the possibility of further destabilisation, especially in areas adjacent to the Thai border provinces.
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# Simplifying sentences

- Like Japan, Thailand seeks to recover from the COVID-19 in a sustainable and green manner. Thailand has adopted the Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model, driven by technology and innovation, striving for economic growth based on the efficient use of resources, responsible consumption and production, waste reduction and low-carbon emissions.
- Encourage Japan to invest more in Thailand in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) in 3 key industrial sectors namely 1) health and well-being 2) smart logistics, and 3) digital as well as areas of Japanese expertise, including smart city, automobiles and robotics.



# Aide-memoire

- An informal summary of a diplomatic interview or conversation that serves as an aid to memory.
  - Written in bullets.
- Usually left at the host country foreign ministry or handed to the host country official by the ambassador, minister, or representative.



# A Caveat

- Recycling earlier talking points without updating
  - Older talking points usually don't reflect new circumstances. They may not also fit the context of the situation.
- Cutting and pasting without adapting
  - You may use passages from a variety of documents. They will not sound like they are written by the same author.
  - Standard talking points may not fit the context of your situation.
  - Beware of inconsistent terminology, repetition or omission. These can undermine logic and clarity.



# Final thoughts

- Good talking points will enhance the speaker's confidence.
- Good talking points will help the counterpart remember your message.
- Good talking points will save you time when writing your report.

