

Handout 1: Developing Central Messages Using Data to Construct Central Messages

Central Message

The central message of your presentation is the guiding claim or set of claims that a presentation seeks to communicate. For example: *In order to compete with low-cost airlines, we recommend that Fancy Airlines focus on advertising its brand image as the industry leader in on-time flight arrivals, and retain its commitment to high-quality and reliable service in the form of spacious seating, generous luggage allowances, and complimentary entertainment. Rather than pivot to a cost leadership strategy, Fancy Airlines should undertake a differentiated broad market approach designed to attract more business travelers and low-cost airline customers fed up with hidden fees and poor service.*

Note that the above central message asserts a **debatable claim** and provides **specific evidence** for each part of the claim, thereby **overviewing** the presentation.

Consider the model central message above:

1. In your own words, what is the debatable claim asserted?

2. What kinds of evidence does the central message suggest will be used to support different parts of the claim?

3. What are the topics this presentation will cover?