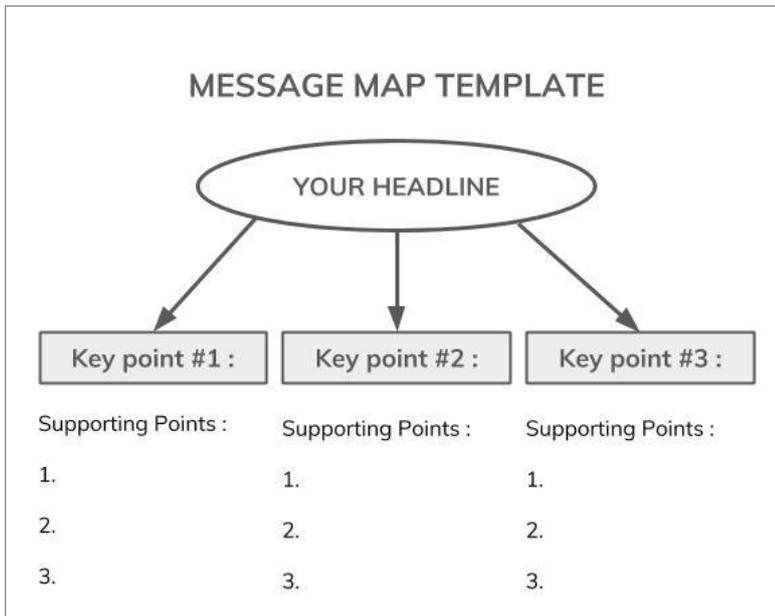


MEMO N°5 : RULE OF THREE



*“The rule of three pervades every aspect of our business and social lives. In literature you’ll find three little pigs, three musketeers, and three wishes granted to an ambitious Aladdin. Painters are familiar with the three primary colors; they know their three secondary colors, too. In science, Newton discovered three laws and scientists discovered three elements that make up the atom. At the dinner table, you’ll find three pieces of cutlery: spoon, knife, fork. The flag of the United States of America has three colors, as the flags of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Argentina, the Russian Federation, Nepal, and many others. There are three medals in the Olympics. Three wise men appeared with three gifts for baby Jesus. Jesus himself is part of the holy Trinity -the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The rule of three helped get U.S. president Barack Obama elected: “Yes we can” voters chanted. Some of the world’s most famous brands are ING, UPS, IBM, SAP, CNN, and the BBC. **Three is everywhere.**”*

Carmine Gallo, *Talk like Ted*. (London: Macmillan, 2014). p.194-195

This rule is of great help both for argumentation (three ideas) and formulation (three words or clauses). It brings relevant complexity (not complication) and pleasant rhythm to the presentation and makes the items easy to memorize for the speaker as well as for the audience. Steve Jobs used it systematically in his presentations.

It does not mean however that all presentations must be structured in three parts. You can have six ideas divided into two parts of three. You also can have six major points in a two-parts/two sub-parts structure, placing one idea in the introduction and one in the conclusion. It can also be combined with binary elements, such as auxiliary ideas or examples.