

speech rather than taking chances winging it – if you get nervous about speaking, a script is your best friend.

Try to practice where you'll be delivering your talk. Some acting strategists suggest rehearsing lines in various positions – standing up, sitting down, with arms open wide, on one leg, while sitting on the toilet, etc. (OK, that last one may be optional.) The more you mix up your position and setting, the more comfortable you'll feel with your speech. Do a practice run for a friend or colleague, or try recording your presentation and playing it back to evaluate which areas need work. Listening to recordings of your past talks can clue you in to bad habits you may be unaware of, as well as inspiring the age-old question: "Is that what I really sound like?"

## **2. Transform Nervous Energy Into Enthusiasm.**

It may sound strange, but I'll often down an energy drink and blast hip-hop music in my earphones before presenting. Why? It pumps me up and helps me turn jitters into focused enthusiasm. Studies have shown that an enthusiastic speech can win out over an eloquent one, and since I'm not exactly the Winston Churchill of presenters, I make sure that I'm as enthusiastic and energetic as possible before going on stage. Of course, individuals respond differently to caffeine overload, so know your own body before guzzling those monster energy drinks.

## **3. Attend Other Presentations.**

If you're giving a talk as part of a conference, try to attend some of the earlier talks by other presenters to scope out their presentation skills and get some context. This shows respect for your fellow presenters while also giving you a chance to feel out the audience. What's the mood of the crowd? Are folks in the mood to laugh or are they a bit more stiff? Are the presentations more strategic or tactical in nature? Another speaker may also say something that you can play off of later in your own presentation.

## **4. Arrive Early.**

It's always best to allow yourself plenty of time to settle in before your talk. Extra time ensures you won't be late (even if Google Maps shuts down) and gives you plenty of time to get adapted to your presentation space.

## **5. Adjust to Your Surroundings.**

The more adjusted to your environment you are, the more comfortable you'll feel. Make sure to spend some in the room where you will be delivering your presentation. If possible, practice with the microphone and lighting, make sure you understand the seating and be aware of any distractions potentially posed by the venue (e.g., a noisy road outside).

## **6. Meet and Greet.**

Do your best to chat with people before your presentation. Talking with audiences makes you seem more likeable and approachable. Ask event attendees questions and take in their responses. They may even give you some inspiration to weave into your talk.

## **7. Use Positive Visualization.**

Whether or not you're a Zen master, know that plenty of studies have proven the effectiveness of positive visualization. When we imagine a positive outcome to a scenario in our mind, it's more likely to play out the way we envision.

Instead of thinking "I'm going to be terrible out there" and visualizing yourself throwing up mid-presentation, imagine yourself getting tons of laughs while presenting with the

enthusiasm of Jimmy Fallon and the poise of Audrey Hepburn (the charm of George Clooney wouldn't hurt either). Positive thoughts can be incredibly effective – give them a shot.

### **8. Remember That Most Audiences Are Sympathetic.**

One of the hardest fears to shake when speaking in public is that the audience is secretly waiting to laugh at your missteps or mistakes. Fortunately, this isn't the case in the vast majority of presentations.

The audience wants to see you succeed. In fact, many people have a fear of public speaking, so even if the audience seems indifferent, the chances are pretty good that most people listening to your presentation can relate to how nerve-racking it can be. If you start to feel nervous, remind yourself that the audience gets it, and actually wants to see you nail it.

### **9. Take Deep Breaths.**

The go-to advice for jitters has truth to it. When we're nervous, our muscles tighten--you may even catch yourself holding your breath. Instead, go ahead and take those deep breaths to get oxygen to your brain and relax your body.

### **10. Smile.**

Smiling increases endorphins, replacing anxiety with calm and making you feel good about your presentation. Smiling also exhibits confidence and enthusiasm to the crowd. And this tip works even if you're doing a webinar and people can't see you.

Just don't overdo it – no one enjoys the maniacal clown look.

creepy clown

Don't be like this guy.

### **11. Exercise.**

Exercise earlier in the day prior to your presentation to boost endorphins, which will help alleviate anxiety. Better pre-register for that Zumba class!

### **12. Work on Your Pauses.**

When you're nervous, it's easy to speed up your presentation and end up talking too fast, which in turn causes you to run out of breath, get more nervous, and panic! Ahh!

Don't be afraid to slow down and use pauses in your speech. Pausing can be used to emphasize certain points and to help your talk feel more conversational. If you feel yourself losing control of your pacing, just take a nice pause and keep cool.

### **13. Don't Try to Cover Too Much Material.**

Yes, your presentations should be full of useful, insightful, and actionable information, but that doesn't mean you should try to condense a vast and complex topic into a 10-minute presentation.

Knowing what to include, and what to leave out, is crucial to the success of a good presentation. I'm not suggesting you skimp when it comes to data or including useful slides (some of my webinars have featured 80+ slides), but I am advocating for a rigorous editing process. If it feels too off-topic, or is only marginally relevant to your main points, leave it out. You can always use the excess material in another presentation.

### **14. Actively Engage the Audience.**

People love to talk and make their opinions heard, but the nature of presentations can often seem like a one-sided proposition. It doesn't have to be, though.

Asking the audience what they think, inviting questions, and other means of welcoming audience participation can boost engagement and make attendees feel like a part of a

conversation. It also makes you, the presenter, seem much more relatable. Consider starting with a poll or survey. Don't be put off by unexpected questions – instead, see them as an opportunity to give your audience what they want.

how do I improve my presentation skills

Hopefully this man has a question, and doesn't just need to go to the bathroom.

### **15. Be Entertaining.**

Even if your presentation is packed with useful information, if your delivery bombs, so will your session.

I find that including some jokes and light-hearted slides is a great way to help the audience (and myself) feel more comfortable, especially when presenting them with a great deal of information. However, it's important to maintain a balance – after all, you're not performing a stand-up routine, and people didn't come to your presentation with the sole intention of being entertained. That said, don't be afraid to inject a little humor into your talk. If you're not sure about whether a presentation is "too much," run through it for a couple of friends and ask them to tell it to you straight.

### **16. Admit You Don't Have All the Answers.**

Very few presenters are willing to publicly concede that they don't actually know everything because they feel it undermines their authority. However, since we all know that nobody can ever know everything about a given topic, admitting so in a presentation can actually improve your credibility.

I don't know

If someone asks a question that stumps you, it's okay to admit it. This can also increase your credibility with the audience, as it demonstrates that, no matter how knowledgeable a person might be, we're all learning, all the time. Nobody expects you to be an omniscient oracle of forbidden knowledge – they just want to learn from you.

### **17. Use a Power Stance.**

Practicing confident body language is another way to boost your pre-presentation jitters. When your body is physically demonstrating confidence, your mind will follow suit. While you don't want to be jutting out your chest in an alpha gorilla pose all afternoon (somebody enjoyed Dawn of the Planet of the Apes a bit too much), studies have shown that using power stances a few minutes before giving a talk (or heading to a big interview) creates a lasting sense of confidence and assurance. Whatever you do, don't sit--sitting is passive. Standing or walking a bit will help you harness those stomach bats (isn't that more appropriate than butterflies?). Before you go on stage, strike your best Power Ranger stance and hold your head high!

### **18. Drink Water.**

Dry mouth is a common result of anxiety. Prevent cottonmouth blues by staying hydrated and drinking plenty of water before your talk (just don't forget to hit the bathroom before starting). Keep a bottle of water at arm's reach while presenting in case you get dry mouth while chatting up a storm. It also provides a solid object to hurl at potential hecklers. (That'll show 'em.)

### **19. Join Toastmasters.**

Toastmaster clubs are groups across the country (and the world) dedicated to helping members improve their presentation skills. Groups get together during lunch or after work to take turns delivering short talks on a chosen topic. The more you present, the better you'll be,

so consider joining a Toastmaster club to become a top-notch orator. Just don't forget, it's BYOB (Bring Your Own Bread).

## 20. Don't Fight the Fear.

Accept your fear rather than trying to fight it. Getting yourself worked up by wondering if people will notice your nervousness will only intensify your anxiety. Remember, those jitters aren't all bad – harness that nervous energy and transform it into positive enthusiasm and you'll be golden.

### Exercise

- Q.1. Describe the presentation skills in your own words.
- Q.2. Elucidate the introduction of presentation skills.
- Q.3. Put the light on the critical summary of presentation skills.
- Q.4. What have you considered about the presentations?
- Q.5. Explain the topic of presentation skills.

### Short Questions with Answers

- Q.1. What do you know about the Remember the audience?**  
**Ans:** The most important aspect of making a presentation is to consider the needs of the audience. If you simply read or repeat information 'off by heart' your presentation will probably sound very flat and dull to the audience. There is also a greater risk that you will lose your place in your talk.
- Q.2. How do we Prepare for the presentation?**  
**Ans:** Write out your main argument or conclusion, just as you would for a writing activity. Write out the main points as headings and bullet points on a series of index cards or on a sheet of paper. These will prompt your memory if you lose your place. Visit the room and try out the technology. This will increase your confidence on the day. Time yourself making the presentation. Cut it back if it is too long. Have a clear and opening and closing line that refers directly to the main issue.
- Q.3. Describe shortly about the Use visual aids?**  
**Ans:** Use acetates on an overhead projector. Use only a few lines of text in large print or a simple diagram for each acetate. If you are very confident the technology will work, you may prefer to use PowerPoint. However, ensure you have acetate back-ups. If you use PowerPoint or similar software, avoid gimmicks such as jingles, animation, or sound effects that either distract attention or slow down the presentation. If you 'fly in' text, make sure you use the same method throughout the presentation. Keep it simple. Use technology as a tool where it helps, rather than for the sake of it.
- Q.4. What do you know about the On the presentation day?**  
**Ans:** Arrive first. Arrive early enough to check the equipment and seating are as you want them. Have water to hand. Act confident no matter how you are feeling. Do not make apologies for things you haven't done. Act as if it all as if everything is as it should be. Make eye contact with the audience. Smile. Speed pacing.

## Multiple Choice Questions with Answers

1. In order to gain long lasting positive outlook, you'll need more than willpower and conscious effort

(a) alone, that's where, inspiration comes in.

(b) alone, that's where inspiration comes in.

(c) alone, that's where inspiration, comes in.

(d) alone, that's where inspiration comes, in.

Ans: (b)

2. If you want to gain inspiration, success

(a) stories, are an excellent way to do so.

(b) stories are, an excellent way to do so.

(c) stories are an excellent way to do so.

(d) stories are an excellent, way to do so.

Ans: (c)

3. If you want to gain inspiration, success

(a) stories, are an excellent way to do so.

(b) stories are, an excellent way to do so.

(c) stories are an excellent, way to do so.

(d) stories are an excellent way to do so.

Ans: (d)

4. There are so many examples of people who challenged the world around them, and eventually

(a) managed, to succeed against all odds.

(b) managed to succeed against all odds.

(c) managed to succeed, against all odds.

(d) managed to succeed against, all odds.

Ans: (c)

5. Read as many success stories as you can, you'll start to notice something

(a) common, between all of those achievers.

(b) common between, all of those achievers.

(c) common between all of those achievers.

(d) common between all of those, achievers.

Ans: (c)

6. "Well mostly it's the way they

(a) talk to me, if they, talk to me at all.

(b) talk to me, if they talk to me at all.

(c) talk to me, if they talk, to me at all.

(d) talk to me, if they talk to me, at all.

Ans: (b)

7. When first trying to become more positive, you'll encounter a lot of resistance from nearly everything

(a) and, everyone, we warned you earlier.

(b) and everyone, we warned, you earlier.

(c) and everyone, we, warned you earlier.

(d) and everyone, we warned you earlier.

Ans: (d)

# Delivering Your Presentation

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## Learning Outcomes:

- The body of the presentation is where you present your ideas. To present your ideas convincingly, you will need to illustrate and support them.
- Present data and facts.
- Read quotes from experts.
- Relate personal experiences.
- Provide vivid descriptions.
- Ask questions to stimulate thinking.
- Share a personal experience.
- Begin with a joke or humorous story.
- Project a cartoon or colorful visual.
- Give a unique demonstration.

## Introduction

How you say things may often appear to be more important than what you say. Have you listened to charismatic speakers who gain and maintain the attention of the audience? Have you also encountered speakers who quickly put an audience to sleep? Experienced presenters learn to communicate effectively by using voice, gestures, and visual aids while trying to establishing a comfortable environment for the audience.

A presentation is not simply a speech to a large gathering, or even to a small one. Nor is it just selling an idea to a colleague. It is a mixture of all three. The distinction is worth making because many people in business treat presentations either too formally or too informally. They either imagine they are addressing a cast of thousands, and as a result appear pompous, or they approach it as an intimate chat and come across as ill-prepared.

The semi-formal nature of a presentation means it needs simple, but tight organisation. Think about the structure of the 10 o'clock news and follow the tried and tested format which everyone is familiar with and understands.

In your introduction you present your listeners – whether they are two people or 20 people – with the main theme, tone and style of your presentation. You tell them what to expect – “This is going to be about higher education, the changing needs of industry and some new initiatives to bring the two closer together.”

It may take two words, it may take several statements. Generally, the shorter, and the simpler, the better.

Now sell the subject to them, explain why they should listen. If appropriate, also tell them something about yourself in order to help set the scene and justify you as the presenter.

"As secondary school teachers (I've been one for 20 years) we all have a key role to play in these important and impending changes."

Give them a preview (a road map) of the journey that you are about to take them on: "I am going to talk about a new concept in degree courses. First I shall describe the status quo. Then I shall explain why change is necessary. Next we will look at the proposed new initiatives in some detail and finally I shall round up by saying what action I think all of you might want to take to speed up implementation. I suspect – I hope – that there will be some interesting surprises for you along the way."

### 1.Voice:

Talking lips. Using your voice effectively can have a great impact on your delivery. The best speaking voice is conversational, natural, and enthusiastic. Use the following guidelines to develop an effective speaking voice:

Alter the pitch (high and low) of your voice to prevent yourself from sounding monotone. Don't alter the pitch too much, however, because this may make you sound unnatural.

Speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone in the room, but vary the volume of your voice to maintain interest and emphasize key points.

Stress certain words as another way to add emphasis. Typically when you stress a word, the pitch and the volume increase.

Alter the rate at which you speak to maintain interest and add emphasis. Speak faster to show excitement and/or build suspense. Speak slower to show the importance of an idea. Pause after important ideas to allow the audience time to grasp them.

### 2.Gestures

Speakers often communicate with their audience either intentionally or unintentionally using gestures and other physical behaviors. Use the guidelines below to help use gestures to your benefit:

Maintain eye contact with members of the audience to keep their attention level high. Eye contact signals that you care about the audience and you are attuned to their needs. Also use eye contact to detect confusion or boredom so that you can then modify your approach.

Use positive facial expressions such as smiles, expressive eyes, and looks of empathy and encouragement to communicate feelings and emotions.

Stand naturally with your feet spread slightly apart and arms relaxed at your sides.

Minimize gestures like pacing back and forth, rocking back and forth, playing with coins in your pocket, wringing your hands, and other types of fidgeting. These gestures not only signal that you are nervous, but they are distracting to the listener as well.

Use quick and energetic movements of your hands and arms to add expression to your talk. Maintain the attention of the audience by making your movements unpredictable.

### 3.Visual Aids in Presentation

Man in front of a slide presentation. Visual aids can help you emphasize main ideas, illustrate a concept, or stimulate the interest of your listeners. Examples of visual aids include posters, overheads, flip charts, photographs, computer-generated slides, and three-dimensional effects.

Use visual aids to emphasize important points and add interest to your presentation — don't put every word of your entire presentation on them.

Select the appropriate visual aid for the environment. It may be possible to pass visuals around to a small audience but in large groups you'll need to project them.

Give the visuals a consistent appearance including color and spacing. Start the text at the same place on each visual.

Try to observe the seven by seven rule: on an overhead slide have no more than seven lines and seven words per line. Similar rules would also pertain to flip charts, PowerPoint and other computer generated slides, and posters.

Use a simple typeface or font. Don't use more than two different typefaces, if possible.

Make sure the text is large enough for people in the back of the room to read. Letters on a flipchart should be at least 3 inches in height. For a projected overhead or slide, fonts between 20 and 48 points are customary.

Don't show visuals that conflict with what you're saying — this includes displaying them once you've moved beyond their content.

Don't read the text that's on the visual, but do paraphrase and add to it.

#### **4. Establishing a Comfortable Environment**

While you won't always have control over the environment when you do a presentation there may be ways you can modify the environment so that it is both comfortable for you and the audience members. The guidelines that follow are intended to help you become aware of environmental factors that can affect the delivery of your presentation.

#### **5. Make sure the lighting is adequate**

Locate the temperature controls and regulate the temperature if necessary. If it is too warm or too cold, audience members will focus on their discomfort rather than on your presentation.

Conduct a test of any audiovisual equipment to ensure it's in working order. Have a backup plan in place just in case — whatever can go wrong, will go wrong at the worst possible time.

Clean off any white boards or chalk boards that might distract the audience.

Make adjustments to the setup of the room to ensure everyone in the audience will be able to see you. Make sure that everyone can see the visuals you plan to use.

If possible, practice your talk in the setting where you are scheduled to speak. This will not only help you determine what other factors you might have to overcome, but also make you feel more comfortable. If practicing in the room isn't possible, try to visit it prior to your presentation so you know what to expect.

When possible, greet members of the audience as they come into the room. Not only will this make them feel welcome and at ease, but it may also help reduce your nervousness.

Try to eliminate barriers between you and the audience. These kinds of barriers include lecterns, tables, or audiovisual equipment. Physical barriers communicate that you're trying to maintain your distance from the audience.

### **SUMMARY**

An effective presenter needs to be flexible, energetic and enthusiastic. This guide will help you turn your written presentation into an imaginative public performance.

Other useful guides: Planning an effective presentation, Using visual aids.

Making a presentation puts you on public display. An audience not only listens to your ideas, it also responds to the way you use your voice and your body. You need more than a well