

How to make Better Presentations

Expert knowledge means success

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Note: This publication has not been updated since it was last published. Some of the hyperlinks may have changed and may need updating. In addition, some of the information in this publication may be out of date.

Introduction

What is it that makes some speakers so dynamic they hold their audience spellbound while others are so boring we drift into sleep in our chairs? The fact is that few people are naturally comfortable giving presentations to a group of people. Yet, any of us who are involved in the process – whether to sell our products and services or in influencing others in any way - need to develop the skill of making persuasive presentations.

The potential impact upon individual prestige and status as a result of giving a presentation usually creates feelings of anxiety, although nervousness is vital to good performance because it stimulates the flow of adrenaline to deliver a better-than-average performance. Most people instinctively believe that lack of confidence in delivery will considerably detract from the message they wish to convey. The trick is to direct your nervous energy into your presentation and you will be more likely to give a lively, polished and enthusiastic presentation.

There may be several ways for relaying information, but the most powerful method of communicating with a group is by use of a formal presentation - such as sales presentations, informational and motivational presentations, interviews, briefings, and, of course, training sessions.

Most of us have probably sat through a computer generated slide presentation (more often than not, the ubiquitous PowerPoint) that was ineffective, incomprehensible, or disappointing. Hopefully this won't happen to you as this Publication is concerned with how to make formal presentations and using them as an effective marketing tool for you and your organisation. Here you will learn how to use body language effectively, how to organise your thoughts and information for maximum impact, how to develop and use visual aids and how to deliver what you have prepared. The most important point of all is to remember that the key to effective presentations lies in thorough and adequate preparation.

Types of Presenter - What Type are You?

To become comfortable as a public speaker you need to learn some basic skills and then actively seek places to practice them. Look at the Table below and find the characteristic which most closely describes you:

Characteristics	Category
An Avoider does everything possible to escape from having to stand in front of an audience. In some cases avoiders may seek careers that do not involve making presentations.	Avoider
A Resister is scared of speaking in public. Resisters may not be able to avoid speaking as part of their job, but they never encourage it. When they do speak they do so painfully and with great reluctance.	Resister
The Acceptor will give presentations as part of the job but doesn't seek opportunities to do so. Accepters occasionally give a presentation and feel as though they did a good job. They even find that once in a while they are quite persuasive, and enjoy speaking in front of a group.	Acceptor
A Seeker actively looks for opportunities to speak. The seeker understands that anxiety can be a stimulant which fuels enthusiasm during a presentation. Seekers work at building their communication skills and self-confidence by speaking often.	Seeker

As a presenter, you need to be able to communicate with your audience. Communication is an important yet complex matter. Take a look next to discover what's involved.

History

The study of how to give effective presentations started around 350BC. Aristotle wrote his famous Rhetoric, now considered to be one of the first books on the subject. Unfortunately, some 2350 years later, we are still struggling with the same problems the Greeks encountered.

How Communication Works

Here are the various components of the communication process in detail.

Input. The sender has an intention to communicate with another person. This intention makes up the content of the message.

Sender. The sender encodes the message and gives expression to the content.

Channel. The message is sent via a channel, which can be made of a variety of materials. In acoustic communication it consists of air, in written communication of paper or other writing materials.

Noise. The channel is subjected to various sources of noise. One example is telephone communication, where numerous secondary sounds are audible. Even a solid channel such as paper can be crushed or stained. Such phenomena are also noise in the communicative sense.

Receiver. The receiver decodes the incoming message, or expression. He "translates" it and thus receives the

Output. This is the content decoded by the receiver.

Code. In the process, the relevance of a code becomes obvious: The codes of the sender and receiver must have at least a certain set in common in order to make communication work.

Elements of Speaking

The various elements of speaking include:

- Body language
- Voice quality
- Intention
- Manner: directness, sincerity
- Dress and clothing (style, colour, appropriateness for situation)
- Visual aids, animation
- Eye contact
- Emotional content, energy, strength
- Self-concept and concept of others
- Listening, hearing the underlying message
- Energy
- Setting, time, place, timing
- How the messenger holds the message
- Sensitivity
- Rhythm and pacing
- Attitude and confidence
- Rapport
- Agenda
- Purpose of communication - knowing what you want to communicate
- Clarity

The Audience

Identifying the characteristics and needs of your audience is extremely important. It will set the tone and the technical level of your presentation. Ask yourself these questions before you begin your preparations:

- What do the members of the audience have in common?
- What are their expectations?
- Why have they invited me to make a presentation? What makes it unique?
- What are they expecting me to tell them?
- How much can I expect them to already know about my topic?
- How much time do I have?

Addressing the Audience

- Stand on the left side of the room - that means the left side from the audience's point of view. You should be at a 45-degree angle to the room. This establishes a non-threatening stance and opens your body to the screen when you need to gesture or move;
- Don't turn your back on your audience. If you're facing the screen, and the audience is facing the screen, then who is presenting?
- If you're using an LCD projector/panel, take advantage of the loop-through cable for simultaneous viewing of your laptop/monitor screen, so you can face the audience 100% of the time;
- Extending your palm outward is a very friendly hand gesture;
- Say a phrase and pause, then say a phrase and pause. Each pause gives you a chance to make eye contact, or to breathe, or to take a moment to think;
- If you know a person's name, use it when you reference that person;
- If you nod your head to a person in the audience, chances are they will return the gesture and nod back to you. Agreement means to use phrases such as "Do you agree?" or "Am I correct?"
- Remember: You can't get an emotion unless you give that emotion, first. You can't get excitement from people unless you give excitement to them. You can't get a smile unless you smile first;
- Don't hide your hands from the audience (behind your back or in your pockets). Avoid situations where your hands are clasped together in front of you. When your hands touch for an extended period (10 seconds or more), the audience tends to look at them and not at your face. The distraction reduces your effectiveness;

The Three-Part Rule of Clear Communication

An effective way to communicate well is to remember this three-pronged rule:

1. Tell them what you're going to tell them.
2. Tell them.
3. Then tell them what you told them.

- Maintain good eye contact with your audience. Don't read from your notes and never read the overhead, slides or pad pages. Only talk when you're looking at someone;
- Talk louder than you think you should. As you increase volume, you automatically increase inflection as well;
- Use a lot of gestures to animate your presentation and channel nervous energy productively. Make your gestures large and above the waist;
- Strive for the Five C's of platform excellence. You should look and sound confident, credible, competent, convincing and comfortable;
- Tell your audience specifically what they will learn in the course of the meeting and how they will be able to apply their new knowledge. Clear objectives keep attendees focused on their responsibilities as active participants.

Set Up

- If you have any choice in the matter, avoid stages that are so high you intimidate your audience;
- Set the podium back a few feet so you can walk in front of it;
- If you are addressing a breakfast, lunch, or dinner audience, ask your introducer to request politely that the people with their backs to the stage turn their chairs forward so they don't have to crane their necks;
- Request that the photographer not take pictures during the first 10-15 minutes of your speech. You want no distractions while you are in the process of feeling out the microphone, adjusting to the lights, and getting the pulse of the audience;
- Remember to have the first row set quite close to the stage. Too much space between the speaker and the first row creates a lack of empathy with the audience;
- Forward-facing rows are best for informational meetings. For decision-making meetings, set up the room so decision-makers face each other.

Multimedia or Not?

Ask yourself these questions to help you decide if multi-media is the right choice for you with your presentation:

- Do you have more than one point to make?
- Could your message be misunderstood or is it a controversial topic?

- Are you going to conduct "how-to" training with multiple steps and procedures?
- Is your subject dry, does it need some excitement?
- Are you using vocabulary or terms unfamiliar to your audience?
- Does the age and interest of your audience require visual stimulation?
- Do you want to add powerful emphasis to your major points?

If you answer "yes" to any of the above questions then you ought to have some form of visual presentation and there is a chance that multi-media could significantly enhance your presentation.

Presentation Tips for Multi-Media

General

- Always Have A Backup Plan!! Despite careful planning, sometimes things go wrong. If your presentation is based on a PowerPoint presentation, have overhead backups of each page. Try to have an "alternate no AV" lecture planned, if the system should go down;
- Check out the room. Before you start your presentation, check out the room, and make sure it has everything you need. This will avoid unwanted surprises the first day of class;
- Practice. If you have a complex presentation planned, with several different multimedia elements, go to the room beforehand and practice your presentation;
- Use colour to influence mood and emotion. The colours for type, illustrations and backgrounds influence the way they are perceived. Be careful with colours - using too many lessens the impact of each colour and confuses your audience. The following Table provides a basic guide to using colour in your presentations. You should be aware of the positive and negative connotations of colours and the emotional response certain colours may evoke;

The Message

According to research done by Professor Albert Mehrabian of UCLA, visual elements make up 55% of the message, vocal elements make up 38% of the message, and only 7% comes from the actual words used (verbal elements) to communicate the message.

Red – excitement, alert, deficits and financial failure	Green – growth, stimulates interaction
White – new, professionalism, innocence	Blue – conservative approach, truth, trust, justice
Yellow – confidence, warmth, wisdom	Black – authority, strength, history
Purple – dignity, sophistication	Orange – action, optimism
Brown – friendliness, warmth	Grey – integrity, maturity

- Fonts - apply appropriate tpestyles for readability. For hand-outs or take-home material, print the text in a serif typestyle. This style is thought to be 30% easier to read than sans serif. Type that is projected on a screen, using a slide, overhead or multimedia projector, should be in sans serif type. **That's because in the projection process letters lose some of their sharpness, and serif type can look muddy when projected.**

This is "Arial." It is a **sans serif typeface**. It does not have the tiny scrollwork on the ends of each letter.

This is "Times Roman." It is a **serif typeface**. Notice the tiny scrollwork on the ends of each letter.

Fancy script fonts or artistic fonts are difficult to read. Limited use for emphasis or transition slides may work, but for bullet lists, labels on graphs, and the like use simple fonts such as Helvetica, Arial, Swiss, Tahoma, Times Roman, or similar fonts;

- Include photographs to inject realism. The more true to life you make the issue you are presenting, the better your audience will understand and identify with it. Remember the impact you can add by using photos or video of people on location, using products or talking to the audience;
- Insert illustrations to clarify or to emphasise. If your topic is complex, an illustration lets you simplify the way it looks and allows you to show exploded views or views normally not seen or imagined;
- Invest in a laser pointer. They are inexpensive, and are extremely useful;

- Use slides for high-quality images. While all of the new technology is useful, good old fashioned overheads projector slides still have the best quality and brightness.

Microphones

- Use the microphone. Even if you usually talk loudly enough, or you're in a small room, use the microphone. Your audience may not hear you when you turn away from them. If you have other speakers, bring in additional microphones;
- Place the microphone correctly. The top of the microphone should directly face your mouth. Place the microphone about 4-6 inches below your mouth, in the centre of your chest. Try to avoid wearing chains or clothing that can hit or interfere with the microphone.

Computer Presentations

- Use large fonts. On your PowerPoint presentation, use the biggest fonts possible. Small fonts are hard to read;
- Font colour and consistency. A dark background with light text is easily readable – text must stand out from the background to be readable. Successive slides using different colour schemes and fonts, make for an amateurish presentation. Use one colour for titles, one colour for lists, with consistent variations for emphasis or transitions, will create a clean, professional look;
- Use drop shadows. Adding drop shadows to text often makes it more legible;
- Watch your backgrounds. Keep the background simple. Too much in the background can make text hard to read. Generally, a relatively dark to medium background works best for projected slides. Avoid white or light colours. Gradational colour (i.e., dark to medium blue) or stock backgrounds, supplied with the presentation software or available through third-party vendors, often work well, Graphically-rich backgrounds—subtly layered photographs, logos, and other original graphics—relevant to the subject of the presentation help create unique and eye-catching presentations. Just be sure that the graphics do not overwhelm your message or camouflage your text. Beware of irrelevant graphics and distracting animated clip art. Carefully crafted title slides and section title slides should catch and maintain your audience's attention;
- Avoid using red text. Red text is often hard to read;

Using Sound

If using a microphone, test it before the presentation. Generally, microphones work best when located several inches way from your mouth, just below your lower lip.

When starting your presentation in large rooms, ask a person at the back corner of the room to wave if your speaking volume is adequate.

Repeat any audience questions before answering.

- AVOID ALL CAPS! All caps look like you're shouting;
- Include a good combination of words, pictures, and graphics. A variety keeps the presentation interesting;
- Display information by Progressive Building. The audience usually respond well to gradually adding information;
- Incorporate audio into computer presentations. Incorporate sound effects or audio clips into your presentations but remember that these special features should be used to emphasize your point and convey your important information, not used to hide the fact that you do not have a point;
- Try not to rely on the Internet. If you are displaying web pages, download them beforehand and save them to disk. Network connections can be slow and unreliable at times;
- Use a wireless mouse. Using a wireless mouse enables you to advance pages from across the room.

Tables and Charts

- General - Charts and graphs clarify information by taking statistics - which can often be intimidating or confusing - and putting them into an easily understood visual format. If you must use a table in a visual aid, show only those figures you specifically mention in your table (don't photocopy or photograph entire tables from reports). Give your figures credibility by discreetly identifying their source;
- Colours - use a dull colour such as grey to display axes, tick marks, and grids to avoid distracting from the data itself;
- Pie Charts - limit pie charts to no more than 6 slices. Avoid showing slices of less than 10% of the total. Combine all these into an "other" category. When possible, use colour rather than hatching to distinguish pieces of the pie;
- Bar Charts - keep multiple bars and stacked bars to a minimum since they are harder to understand; the audience should be able to read and understand your chart in less than 30 seconds. Provide a legend or label the bars directly;
- Line and Area Charts - limit line charts to no more than 5 lines for readability. Whenever possible, differentiate lines by colour and thickness rather than by symbols to avoid clutter. Include only data that illustrates the point you want to make - don't overdo it in one chart. Position labels horizontally rather than vertically. Whenever possible, label bars and lines directly rather than using legends for faster understanding. Keep grids and labels to a minimum. Divide the axis into units that are multiples of

two, five, or ten for ease of interpretation.

Videotape

- Always use the highest quality version possible. VHS videotape doesn't stand the test of time very well and does not hold up over several generations of copies. Use the newest tape or recording possible, and avoid several-generation copies (a copy of a copy of a copy...). If taping a programme off television, use the fastest tape speed and use the original version, not a copy. If making your own tape using a camcorder, try to use an external microphone rather than the one inside the camcorder.

The 8 to 1 Rule

This rule requires that the maximum viewing distance for the audience to read small-sized text is eight times the height of the full image. Thus, if the back row is 40 feet away, your image should be at least five feet high.

PowerPoint Presentation Hints and Tips

Here are several basic hints and tips for creating presentation graphics in Microsoft PowerPoint. Many of these principles apply to any presentation software.

- Consider the overall message of the presentation and formulate a practical strategy to execute it;
- Use outlines, flowcharts, graphs, and cue slides to emphasize your main points;
- Carefully edit your presentation, eliminating unnecessary or repetitious points to avoid losing audience interest;
- Use graphics when illustrating trends, complex issues, or abstract concepts. This increases both comprehension and retention;
- Mirror your audience. Know who they are and adjust the tone of your presentation to avoid talking over their heads or telling them what they already know;
- **Don't read off the screen. Use slides as prompts, outlines, or conversation points, not cue cards.** Interact with your audience and exhibit a sense of **humour when it's appropriate.** Move around the room and make eye contact with as many people as possible;
- Make your text readable - titles should be around 36 - 40 point or more. Body copy should be about 24 point or more;
- Use your slides to visually punctuate your message - use statements instead of sentences, keep it short, use key words to help audience focus on your message;

- Text slides should be brief - no more than eight words per line and no more than eight lines per slide;
- Use a colour format that gives good contrast between background and text: Dark backgrounds with light coloured text work best, drop shadows should be black or a darker value of background colour;
- Use clip art and photos wisely – graphics should enhance and clarify your message. Subdue graphics that has text overlaid on it for clarity. Use drop shadows on text that overlays graphics;
- Watch the file size when using graphics - graphics can greatly increase your file size. Make sure you will have a way to take your file with you if you plan to use it for computer projection.

Your Digital Projector¹

Specifications

One of the many specifications you'll come across when shopping for a digital projector is resolution. Because the resolution output of computer hardware and software has steadily increased over the years, this is an important feature to consider before you buy. What exactly is resolution? Essentially it's a measure of picture quality. Digital images such as those produced by computers are composed of thousands of uniform-sized dots called pixels (shorthand for "picture elements"). They are arranged in hundreds of rows to create the illusion of a continuous image.

Resolution is simply a measurement of how many pixels there are in an image or display device. It is typically expressed as a horizontal and vertical dimension. Depending on resolution, pixels can be larger or smaller. The lower the resolution, the larger the pixels and the coarser the image (or its representation on a viewing device). Conversely, smaller pixels yield greater detail.

Computer Resolution Standards	Designation Resolution (In Pixels)
VGA(Video Graphics Array)	640 x 480
SVGA(Super VGA)	800 x 600
XGA(Extended Graphics Array)	1024 x 768
SXGA(Super XGA)	1280 x 1024
UXGA(Ultra XGA)	1600 x 1280

Why doesn't everyone just use the highest possible resolutions? The primary reason is that higher resolutions generate significantly larger files. For example, taking an image from 640 x 480 to 800 x 600 resolution means a 56% increase in pixels. It also takes a lot more computer power, plus significantly more costly viewing devices, to display higher resolution images.

An important issue to remember in choosing a projector is that no matter how detailed your output, you'll always be limited by the resolution of your projector. To display images with higher resolution, projectors compress the images, discarding pixels where necessary. The result is a loss of picture quality. The good news is that today's intelligent compression schemes offer reasonable compromises. When it comes to evaluating a projector, consider your current and future needs. If you're using your projector to show graphics with extremely detailed rendering such as for CAD (Computer-Aided Design) or high-end graphics work, look for higher resolution equipment. If you're using your projector mainly to show text and line drawings, a lower resolution projector will be sufficient. On the other hand, if you think your needs could ramp up in the future, you definitely should invest in a projector that you won't outgrow.

Lumens

Anyone evaluating projectors will eventually come across the term lumens or ANSI lumens. And, as projector technology continues to advance, the numbers placed in front of these words become larger and larger. First it was 250. Then 400 or 500 or 650. Now you'll see 3000 (or higher) ANSI lumens highlighted on the feature list of some LCD projectors. What do these numbers mean? And how should they affect your buying decision? Brightness is something we perceive. We call one thing brighter or dimmer based on comparison with other things. It follows that measuring brightness is, at best, a way of ranking these comparisons.



The brightness, or luminance, of a light source is defined as the intensity of light per unit area projected in a given direction. When light energy falls upon a surface (say, a screen) it is called illuminance. The international unit of measure for illuminance is the lux (lumen per square metre).

All projectors have a sweet spot, an area

(usually the centre of the screen) where light output is at its maximum. Measuring light intensity only at the sweet spot doesn't accurately reflect the intensity of the overall projected light. Therefore, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has developed a model for measuring light intensity over the entire screen—aptly named ANSI lumens.

ANSI lumens are calculated by measuring the light intensity at nine distinct points on the screen then averaging their values. This method obviously provides the most realistic and consistent measure of a projector's real capacity for projecting bright images. So how does this information relate to choosing your projector?

First of all, you'll want to consider the relative brightness of the environment in which you'll be presenting. The more ANSI lumens your projector packs, the less you'll have to depend on low-light presentation environments around 1000 ANSI lumens might be the number to shoot for if you're showing in large venues such as trade show floors or university lecture halls. But if your projector will always be used in a single environment it would be a shame to waste money on an overpowered projector when 450 ANSI lumens might be perfectly adequate.

Tips, Traps and more...

Timing and Preparation

- If you have the opportunity before your presentation, allow plenty of lead time to setup the room and your equipment and to test your presentation;
- Start promptly at the scheduled time. End promptly, leaving adequate time for audience questions;
- Be sure you have prioritized the key messages you want to get across to your audience. During your presentation, be ready to skip over less important visuals and content material as you notice time getting short;
- Double check all spelling, grammar and numbers. Assume there will be technical problems to work out. Arrive early enough at the presentation room to test all visuals and equipment. Always bring printed copies of your visuals for backup if all else fails.

In today's market, projectors can be grouped by ANSI lumen output as follows:

Less than 2000 lumens	Typically small and highly portable, these are the lowest light output projectors available today, and they are typically the least expensive. For display of training videos or still photography in a darkened room, projectors in this category may be perfect for your needs. Keep in mind that the low light output means that you will want to make your presentations in a dark or dimly lit room so that the image on the screen is not washed out by ambient room light.
2000 to 3000 lumens	This lumen range is a step up in performance and price. These machines are suitable for normal business conference room and classroom use. Presentations should be done with the room lighting reduced somewhat for best screen viewing. A completely dark room is usually not necessary.
3000 to 4500 lumens	This represents the high-performance range of the portable and semi-portable projectors. Products in this class are suitable for large conference rooms and classrooms. They offer more flexibility in terms of ambient room light, since the image is bright enough that a reasonable amount of room light can be tolerated without washing out the image. They also offer more flexibility in terms of audience size, since they produce enough lumens to properly light a larger screen.
4500 lumens and up	These ultra-bright projectors are in several performance classes unto themselves, ranging from 4500 lumens up to 12000 lumens or more. Prices of these products also cover a wide range depending on other performance characteristics. They are used in a variety of large venue applications, including board rooms, conference rooms, training rooms, auditoriums, churches, concerts, nightclubs, and so forth.

Source: <http://www.projectorcentral.com/buyers4.htm>

Preparation Checklist

- What's the purpose of the presentation?
- Who is the audience, and what is their interest in the presentation?
- What do I really know and believe about this topic as it relates to this audience?
- What additional research can I do?
- What are the main points of this presentation?
- What visual aids do I need?
- Do I have an effective opening?
- Have I prepared the style and the sorts of words I will use?
- Have I prepared an introduction for myself?
- Have I taken care of the little details that will put me at ease?

Rehearsing the Presentation

- When rehearsing before a live being, eliminate your overview and summary slide. Find out what they found interesting, memorable, confusing. Have them list what they thought was most important! Did they get your message?
- Test all your equipment in advance of the presentation;
- Rehearse using as much or all of the

tools you plan use during the real thing;

- Have a backup plan: What if your projector dies, computer crashes, slide tray still on the plane. What is plan B. (And did you practice it?);
- Introduction, Objective, Overview, Presentation, Summary (Conclusion).

Presentation Openings

- You only get one chance to make a first impression;
- **Your audience will "judge" you in the first few minutes;**
- Pacing is important – you need to build a rapport before you move on;
- Open your presentation in a way that will grab your audience's attention, in other words use a hook. A hook is a statement or object to get attention. Some examples of different types of openings are: using a quotation that is relevant to your topic, telling a story that relates to your presentation, asking a direct question such as 'Are you all small business owners?'

How to Kill an Opening

- Start late;
- Start with an apology;
- Start with an unrelated anecdote;
- Start slowly;
- Tell an inappropriate joke or tell it badly;
- Suffer an equipment failure.

Get Visible

- Usually, when a person stands on the same level as the chairs, most people see only the top third of the presenter's body. In a setting of 25 people or more, it is preferable to use a platform or podium to raise the presenter two or more feet off the floor. Platforms make it possible for those in back to see more of the presenter. Besides, it is more difficult to communicate when less of your body is visible;
- Whether or not to use a lectern is another issue. Lecterns cover about 75% of the body and restrict the movement of presenters, but many people like to use them to hold their notes or to hide behind. The best presenters avoid lecterns, but if you must use one, make sure it is angled 45 degrees to the audience and can be adjusted to the heights of different speakers.

Equipment and Software

- Test all of your equipment, software, network connections, and phone lines

and make sure that they all work together;

- Make sure electrical, network, and phone cords are solidly connected to their outlets. Move cords out of your speaking traffic pattern and if possible, tape them down to avoid tripping and/or pulling them loose during your presentation;
- If using software, be sure to have critical files on floppy in case of damage or loss from the hard disk;
- Be prepared with alternative plans in case equipment, software, or connection lines fail. Handouts or overhead transparencies are good backup and "insurance".

Lighting

- Find out where light switches are located. Display one of your visuals and walk around the periphery of the seating area to see the audience's view under different lighting conditions. Identify the best combination of lighting for the audience when you use visuals;
- If light switches are remotely located from your presentation area, ask a session moderator or audience member to control the lights at your cue. Make sure they have an opportunity to identify switches for each lighting bank and test the switches;
- Check that you have enough light to read any notes or to use the computer keyboard.

Visuals

- Test your visuals for legibility. Adjust the screen/projector distance or zoom lens on projector to make sure your visuals are legible to your most distant viewer;
- Have alternative visuals such as audience handouts or overhead transparencies in case of equipment, software, connection malfunction.

How to Handle Questions

- Set the expectation up front;
- Listen to the entire question;
- Pause and repeat the question;
- Credit the questioner;
- Respond to the question honestly and as best you can;
- **If you don't know the answer, say so.**

How to Monitor Visual Feedback

- **Your listeners respond when you're talking;**
- Seek out the feedback;
- Are they looking at you?

- Are they bored?
- Can they hear you?
- Do they not understand?
- Are they fidgety?

Public Speaking Fears

The most common fears about speaking in public are:

- "Drying up";
- Mind going blank;
- Having the Heckler from Hell!
- Having someone in the audience who knows more than you;
- People noticing that you are nervous;
- The impossible to answer "question from Hell";
- The audience talking over you or walking out;
- Having to run screaming from the room;
- Presentation so awful your social/career relationships will be ruined forever.

Conquering Fear

Fear can be conquered by:

- Knowing the room;
- Knowing the audience;
- Knowing your material;
- Learning how to relax;
- Visualising yourself speaking;
- Realising that people want you to succeed;
- Gaining experience.

Things to do when the presentation is over

- Thank your audience;
- Make materials available;
- Make yourself available;
- Provide your audience with ways to reach you – telephone and e-mail details;
- Get feedback - Find out what they thought of you, what they learned, what they were hoping to learn but didn't, how you can improve your presentation, how to improve your communication skills.

Tips for Great Public Speaking

- Use eye contact with each member of the audience in turn;
- Remember some people get nervous in audiences too – put them at ease (and **don't misread them!**);
- Use visual aids (slides, videos, flip charts);

- Use handouts;
- **Don't think "How can I survive this?" think "How can I do this brilliantly?"**
- Begin with the end in mind;
- Vary voice tonality and speed;
- When you carry yourself well, you project a sense of confidence. Correct posture will assist with your breathing on stage. Correct posture will prevent you from tiring whilst on stage;
- Relax (seek training if you need it);
- Read a good book on presenting (try "Inspire Any Audience" by Tony Jeary).

Software and Other Resources

- Microsoft PowerPoint is part of Microsoft Office suite and is an easy to use package: you can pick up the basics in less than thirty minutes. (www.microsoft.com). For a large selection of free clip art, photographs, animations, and sound files, go to: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/>
- PowerPoint templates plus animations, 3D effects and more: www.office3d.com
- PowerPoint Tips & Tricks - PowerPoint is the presentation software that comes with Microsoft Office. While there are several brands of presentation software on the market, PowerPoint is the most widely known. PowerPoint can be a powerful tool to help convey your ideas to an audience.
- Add-in graphics such as screen beans: <http://www.bitbetter.com/>
- Adobe Acrobat is a family of products that helps you create, modify, distribute electronic documents as well as publish them on the Web. The latest version of Adobe Acrobat (5.0) packs some powerful new features including better Web integration, new security controls, batch processing and improved consistency with Microsoft Office documents. Although Acrobat 5.0 has several uses, you may not know that it's possible to create a presentation that can be saved as a portable document format (PDF). Acrobat tends to be more and more web-oriented so you will want to use it for Web-based presentations: www.adobe.com
- Corel Presentations is part of the Corel suite and is one of the most used Presentation Tools after PowerPoint. The release of the latest Corel's Word Perfect Office X5 suite includes Presentations with many new features and compatibility with Microsoft files:

<http://www.corel.com/corel/product/index.jsp?pid=prod3670083&cid=catalog3550067&segid=1140&storeKey=gb&languageCode=en>

- Presentation Publisher creates stunning multimedia presentations and slide shows using over 100 digital effects. Presentation Publisher can turn your presentation into an EXE file which can be sent via e-mail or disk to another user for them to view. See details at: http://download.cnet.com/Presentation-Publisher/3000-2075_4-10011426.html

Recommended Reading

- Making Presentations by Tim Hindle, published by Dorling Kindersley; ISBN: 0751305278.

- Creating Dynamic Multimedia Presentations Using Microsoft PowerPoint, by Carol M. Lehman, published by South-Western Pub; ISBN: 0324025378.



- Knockout Presentations: How to Deliver Your Message with Power, Punch, and Pizzazz, by Diane Diresta, published by Chandler House Press; ISBN: 1886284253.
- Say It With Confidence: Overcoming the Mental Blocks That Keep You from Making Great Presentations & Speeches, by Margo T. Krasne, published by Warner Books; ISBN: 0446672882.
- Say It with Charts: The Executive's Guide to Visual Communication, by Gene Zelazny, published by McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.; ISBN: 007136997X.
- Say It with Presentations, by Gene Zelazny, published by McGraw-Hill Publishing Company; ISBN: 0071354077.
- High Impact Presentations, by Lee Bowman and Jackie Stewart OBE, published by Bene Factum Publishing Ltd; ISBN: 0952275457.
- Delivering Dynamic Presentations: Using Your Voice and Body for Impact, by Ralph Hillman and William D. Thompson (Editor), published by Allyn & Bacon; ISBN: 0205268102.
- Visualizing Your Business: Let Graphics Tell the Story, by Keith R. Herrmann, published by John Wiley & Sons; ISBN: 0471371998.

- Powerful Presentations, by Jons Ehrenborg and John Mattock, published by Kogan Page; ISBN: 0749435739.
- The Oxford Union Guide to Successful Public Speaking, by Dominic Hughes and Benedict Phillips, published by Virgin Publishing; ISBN: 0753504227.
- How to Develop Self-confidence and Influence People by Public Speaking, by Dale Carnegie, published by Vermilion; ISBN: 0749305797.
- Secrets of Superstar Speakers, by Lilly Walters, published by McGraw-Hill Publishing Company; ISBN: 0071347070.
- Just Say A Few Words, by Bob Monkhouse, published by Virgin Publishing; ISBN: 1852911417.
- Presentation Skills, by Suzy Siddons, published by Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD); ISBN: 0852928106.
- Present Yourself, by Michael J. Gelb, published by Jalmar Press; ISBN: 0915190516.
- The Art of Public Speaking, by Lucas, published by McGraw-Hill Publishing Company; ISBN: 0071182403.
- Janner's Complete Speechmaker, by Greville Janner, published by Century; ISBN: 0712679472.
- Artful Persuasion, by Harry Mills, published by Amacom; ISBN: 0814470637.
- Everything You Need to Know About Public Speaking, published by Collins; ISBN: 0007102356.
- Inspire Any Audience, by Tony Jeary, published by Eagle Publishing; ISBN: 0863473563.

Further Information

This guide is for general interest - it is always essential to take advice on specific issues. We believe that the facts are correct as at the date of publication, but there may be certain errors and omissions for which we cannot be responsible.

If you would like to receive further information about this subject or other publications, please call us – see our contact details on the next page.

Acknowledgement:

¹ Acknowledgement – the section headed “Your Digital Projector” on page 7 is derived from excellent guidance provided by projector manufacturer Boxlight – visit them at: www.boxlight.com

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