

Techniques of giving oral presentations

1. Preparing effective oral presentations

Preparing an oral presentation involves deciding what you want to accomplish or your purpose. Do you want to inform? Do you want to persuade? Do you want to sell? Whatever your purpose may be, you should have a clear idea of where you are going. A second key element in your presentation is knowing your audience. Anticipating knowing your audience will help you organize your presentation.

2. Organization

After determining your purpose and analyzing your audience, you collect information and organize it logically. Many public speaking experts recommend the following effective plan:

Step 1: tell them what you are going to say

Step 2: Say it

Step 3: Tell them what you have just said (as a summary)

The biggest problem with most oral presentations is a failure to focus on a few principal ideas. This is why the body of your short presentation (20 or fewer minutes) should include a limited number of main points. Develop each main point with adequate, but not excessive, explanation and details. Too many details can obscure the main message, so keep your presentation simple and logical.

3. Building audience rapport

Good speakers form a good relationship with their audience. They combine their verbal (voice) and non-verbal (gestures) communication skills and techniques to connect with the audience. They use signposts and body language strategically.

An important point of building audience rapport is to be assertive through open and secure body language. An aggressive stance; however, could involve pointing fingers, staring eyes or standing too close to the other person's comfort zone.

4. Visual aids and multi-media presentation

Before you give your presentation, consider this quote: 'Tell me, I forget, show me I remember, involve me and I understand.' As a speaker, your goal is to make the audience understand and act on your ideas. One way of involving your audience is by using visual aids such as: multi-media slides and overhead projectors..

5. Delivery

Once you have organized your presentation and prepared visuals (tables, graphs,...), practice delivering it. You will feel more confident and appear more professional if you know more about various delivery techniques to use before, during, and after your presentation. Do not memorize your presentation; otherwise, you will sound unnatural.

General tips to remember

Before you give your presentation

- Prepare thoroughly and know your topic well
- Practice it on your own
- Time yourself (20 minutes) longer presentations make the audience bored
- Make sure that the equipment works
- Take some deep breaths

During your presentation

- Begin with a pause and establish your control of the situation
- Present your first sentence without looking at your slides or at a piece of paper
- Maintain eye contact from beginning until the end
- Control your voice (voice projection and vocabulary (don't say any word comes to your mind))
- Talk slowly and stay calm—do not be angry.
- Move naturally (position as a speaker)
- Use visual aids effectively
- Stick to the outline
- Summarize your main points and arrive at the high point of your presentation.

Presentation structure

- Greeting
- Introducing yourself
- Outlining your topic
- Timing and question policy
- The main body
- Conclusion
- Thank the audience
- Answering questions or suggesting discussion

Task to perform:

Use Internet websites to find **appropriate expressions for a successful oral presentation**—from beginning to end. Please be selective in your choice of expressions.