



Presentation Skills Toolkit

According to the most recent iteration of Learning Forward's [Standards for Professional Learning](#), "When professional learning is standards-based, it has greater potential to change what educators know, are able to do, and believe." (Learning Forward, 2012)

The competencies identified within this toolkit reflect many of the competencies identified within the [ISTE Standards for Educators](#). Within each standard, presentation-specific skills have been identified as essential for building one's capacity to plan, facilitate, and share any content in oral presentation form.

Collaborator

- Storytelling
- Listening & Responding to an Audience
- Adaptability & Flexibility

Designer

- Audience-Centric Design
- Engaging the Audience
- Impact

Leader

- Establishing Credibility & Purpose
- Practice & Reflection

Citizen

- Building a Culture of Learning
- Sharing, Licensing & Intellectual Property Rights

Facilitator

- Presenting With Clarity & Confidence
- Emotion: Power & Pitfalls

Inspiration for these competencies was drawn from the following:

[ISTE Standards for Educators](#), ISTE

[Standards for Professional Learning](#),
Learning Forward

Collaborator

Storytelling

"Story, as it turns out, was crucial to our evolution -- more so than opposable thumbs. Opposable thumbs let us hang on; story told us what to hang on to." - Lisa Cron, Wired for Story

As Lisa Cron indicates, stories tie us to values and beliefs. And they tie us to emotion. And as some of the neuroscience you will discover in the resources below indicates, there is nothing that makes content "stick" like emotion. By becoming an effective storyteller, you build not just your capacity as a presenter, but the likelihood that participants will remember and connect with your content. In this section you will find references from different sources of information and perspectives on Storytelling. Use this section to become familiar with the key understandings for deeper applications later on.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Why Your Brain Loves Good Storytelling by Paul J. Zak The Neuroscience of Storytelling , Podcast with Joe Lazauskas The Power of Storytelling to Change the World , TEDTalk David Lieber The Neuroscience of Narrative and Memory by Judy Wills How Stories Change the Brain by Paul J. Zak 5 Tips That Will Make You a Better Storyteller by Jen Massaro Communication Skills 101: Storytelling For Influence by Alison Carter	What are your stories as an educator? Which are the stories from which others might learn? How might you weave them into the content you present? What is the impact you want your stories to have on participants? Which stories resonate with others? How might you find out if you don't yet know? How will you know if you should keep telling a story?	Look at the content you will be presenting at an upcoming event. What stories from your experience as an educator reflect the presentation content? Rank them in order of how compelling they are. Practice telling them to your pet, in a mirror, to a child. Capture yourself telling them on video. How might you tweak your retelling based upon feedback (verbal and nonverbal) from your audiences? Watch videos of others telling stories. What do all the stories you connect with have in common? In other words, what do you see as the elements of an effective story? How might you apply the anatomy of a story to your own stories?

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Listening & Responding to an Audience

Thomas Edison famously said, *"We have but two ears and one mouth so that we may listen twice as much as we talk."* Short of giving an actual speech, these same proportions should hold in a presentation. Listening and responding to an audience means asking good questions, creating space for participants to respond and leaning in to listen and respond in a way that honors both where your audience is and where they want to go.

Below are a few resources and opportunities to learn more and practice these essential presentational skills.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Reflection of Listening , Tools by Jim Knight Active Listening Cards by Global learning Partners Communicate Better by Becoming a Better Listener by Lahcen Haddad Speaking is a Team Sport. 3 Ways to Be Responsive to Your Audience by Stefania Lucchetti The Power of Effective Questions , Video by Learning Heroes	What does being a good listener communicate? How might what you learn about being a good communicator help you support your audience as a presenter? What are some ways you might "research" your audience? What did you learn when you did? How might that inform the content and/or approach to your presentation? What makes questions effective? What does it mean to be "responsive?"	Experiment with Jim Knight's listening reflection tools listed in the Resources for New Learning section. How might practicing listening outside of the context of a presentation serve you as a listener during one? Commit to keeping a question journal. Write down every question you ask for three days. Reflect. Were there trends in your questions? Redundancies? Which types of questions yielded the deepest thinking from others? How might what you learned inform your practice as a presenter moving forward?

Adaptability & Flexibility

I remember reading that the coach of Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps used to do things like hide Michael's goggles or swim cap before an important race. The rationale was that Michael needed to be prepared for anything and adaptable when something didn't go as planned. The only way to be flexible when it counted...was to practice.

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No two audiences are alike. In fact, no two people are alike. As teachers, we may have infinite patience for varied student readiness and needs. Guess what? Adults are simply grown up kids. They require that same level of patience and ability to pivot based upon interest, need, and level of readiness. Your ability to adapt and stay flexible during a presentation is key to ensuring every one of your learners walks out with the knowledge, skills and mindsets that are a match to the intention of your lesson. Check out the resources in this section to become familiar with key understandings around adaptability & flexibility and how to embed these skills within your practice.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
4 Ways to Embrace Adaptability by Jeff Boss Learn to Be Flexible: Why Two-Way Engagement is Key to a Great Presentation by Caitlin McGuire Permission Slips, Brené Brown 3 Ways To Measure Your Adaptability- and How to Improve It, TEDTalk by Natalie Fratto Five Science-Backed Strategies to Build Resilience by Kira Newman Adaptable People Have These 3 Types of Flexibility, Center For Creative Leadership	What are some of the potential COAs (courses of action) that might present themselves during a presentation? How might you respond to each? What might you need to give yourself permission to do, say, think, feel as a presenter? How might giving yourself that permission impact your ability to adapt and be flexible during a presentation? What might you have to unlearn to be more adaptable during a presentation? What does resilience have in common with adaptability and flexibility? How might building resilience build one's adaptability quotient? Which of the three types of flexibility- cognitive, emotional, dispositional- is most natural? How might self-awareness provide a lens through which to view situations and potential responses?	Practice facilitating your presentation with a friendly preview audience. Enlist one of the participants as a co-conspirator by asking them to do unexpected things (pretend to throw up in the middle of your opening, hide your clicker, refuse to give you an HDMI cable, etc.) How does practice with these scenarios help build your capacity to adapt and respond in a flexible way? Generate a list of What If questions. Try to add at least one question to it each day. Pick one of the strategies shared in the resources from the first column. Tell a trusted colleague you are practicing a specific strategy. Ask for them to give you feedback when they notice you incorporating the strategy.

Designer

Audience- Centric Design

As an educator, you are likely familiar with designing for an audience, although the audience in your classroom has probably been students. There are some things, like making learning meaningful and designing for a variety of levels of readiness that don't change whether you are designing for students or adults. However, there are other things, like honoring experience and navigating unlearning that may have to happen with an adult audience in a much different way than with a student audience.

Below are some new learning resources and opportunities to practice this essential presentational skill.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
80/20 rule video by Jill Jackson Introverts vs. Extroverts: Tips for Designing and Facilitating by Global Learning Partners Designing Learning that Matters Edutopia article by Joshua Block Infographic 2018: Instructional Design and Learning Trends by Danny Brennes Teaching- Centered vs. Learning- Centered Infographic by Global Learning Partners Adult Learning Theories Every Instructional Designer Must Know by Karla Guitierrez	What is the most impactful 20% of your practice as a presenter? How do you know? Though the Infographic 2018: Instructional Design and Learning Trends largely describes current trends in HR, how does it translate to professional learning design for you as a presenter? What are some of the major shifts we need to make when planning for adults vs. planning for students? How might seeing yourself as a designer impact the presentations you plan and facilitate?	Use a simple survey to determine the most impactful parts of your presentation. Reflect on what to keep and what to let go of because it is not impactful for participants. Video your next presentation. Use a tuning protocol to self-reflect on what you noticed and will celebrate and what might be improved upon going forward. Take a look at your plan for your next presentation. Engage in a Tuning Protocol and revise your presentation plan based upon new learning from this section.

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Engaging the Audience

Depending upon which resource you consult, we have somewhere between 7 and 15 seconds to make a first impression. While that isn't a long time, it is long enough to apply some of the strategies and tips provided within the resources for new learning below. Essentially, it is how we use those seconds vs. how long they last that needs to be our focus. Being intentional about how we use our time and personalizing the content for our audience are keys to engagement.

Below are some new learning resources and opportunities to practice this essential presentational skill.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
How to Engage an Audience in a Presentation. Communication Coach, Alex Lyon 26 Ways to Engage Your Target Audience by Jesse Lahey How to Engage an Audience Before, During, and After a Presentation by Ian Altman The Importance of Modeling , blog post by Elena Aguilar via EdWeek Beyond PowerPoint: Presentation Tools by Matt D'Angelo 10 Presentation Tools to Win Over Your Audience by Ashutosh KS	Which of these tips have you already tried? Which is one you might try? How will you know if it had an impact on your audience's engagement? What were some of your takeaways from the Inc. article by Ian Altman? How does shifting from thinking about a presentation only as time in front of an audience to the before, during and after impact your approach as a presenter? How might modeling serve as an engagement tool? How might the tools you use enhance the engagement of your audience?	Take a look at the plan you created for your presentation. Revise to include some of the strategies shared within the resources for new learning. With permission, video your audience during your next presentation. What might you learn from watching the body language of the audience? When were they most engaged? Least? Most thoughtful? Most productive? How might you use what you learned to inform your next presentation? Take a look at the plan for your next presentation. What are the skills you are teaching about through your presentation? Identify how you might be intentional about modeling those throughout your presentation.

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Impact

In [The Rules of Evidence](#), Thomas Guskey encourages us to begin any professional learning endeavor with outcomes. An extension of outcomes is impact. What will be different in the lives of attendees and those they serve because they attended your presentation? Again, as educators, we have experience planning with the end in mind. How does that translate to adult audiences? How might outcomes and your ability to collect evidence of those outcomes differ with an adult audience you may only see for a day or an hour?

Below are some new learning resources and opportunities to practice this essential presentational skill.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Gauge Impact with Five Levels of Data. Article by Thomas Guskey. Donald Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation. Video for additional context The Rules of Evidence. Article by Thomas Guskey Does it Make a Difference? Evaluating Professional Development. Article by Thomas Guskey Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide. Publication by Learning Forward	What will be different in the lives of attendees and those they serve because they attended your presentation? How does what you are reading about impact and evaluation translate to the intentions of your presentation? Why does maximizing your impact as a presenter matter? How will you know when you are there? What are concrete things you already do to determine the impact your presentation will have on intended outcomes?	Take a look at the Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation in Guskey's Does it Make a Difference? article. Reflect on the levels you are currently measuring in your presentations. How might you incorporate additional critical levels to maximize your impact as a presenter? Check out page 15 of Learning Forward's Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide. Though it is written as a timeline, identify what types of activities you might borrow and embed within your presentation to increase its impact and longevity.

Leader

Establishing Credibility & Purpose

In 1967, [Mehrabian & Wiener and Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967](#) conducted studies on communication and determined that, in certain circumstances, 55% of communication is body language, 38% is tone of voice and 7% is made up of the words one speaks. The combination of knowing why we present and the way in which we do so are keys to presenting with credibility and purpose.

Below are some new learning resources and opportunities to practice this essential presentational skill.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Start With Why, TEDTalk by Simon Sinek Nonverbal Communication by HelpGuide Types of Nonverbal Communication by Very Well Mind 10 Tips For Improving Your Public Speaking Skills by Marjorie North 4 Tips To Improve Your Public Speaking video by Motivation2Study Presenting With Purpose by Maurice DeCastro	Why are you presenting the content you are? Why are you the person others need to hear from on this topic? What are the kinds of nonverbal messages <i>you want</i> to send while presenting? What are the nonverbal messages <i>you are</i> sending? What steps might you take to ensure they are a match? Very Well Mind provides different types of nonverbal communication. How might you experiment with three? Who are the presenters you have seen that reek of credibility to you? Why? What pages from their book might you borrow? The resources for new learning offer many tips for public speaking. Which ones feel like you? What is one concrete thing you might try during your next presentation?	Check out Dean Bokhari's advice on How to Draft a Why Statement. Create your own why statement around why you are presenting and what that might mean for your audience. Observe the nonverbal communication of others over the next week or so. What are the nonverbal communications that "speak loudest" to you? How might observing nonverbal communication in others allow you to reflect on your own communications? Video Option: Film several clips from your next presentation. Watch them back. Does your nonverbal communication match the intentions of your verbal communication and presentation overall? What tweaks might enhance that connection?

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Practice & Reflection

[John Dewey](#) said, "We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience." As busy as we all are, reflection sometimes draws the short straw in terms of priority, yet it is an important piece of our growth and development. To give reflection its due, we need to be intentional about reflection as a practice, embedding it as presenters and as part of the experience we are providing our audience.

Below are some resources and opportunities to practice this essential presentational skill.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
How to Practice Effectively...For Just About Anything video by Annie Bolster and Don Greene Identifying Problems of Practice. Article by Rachel Blundell via Learning Forward Setting Intentions: A Powerful Tool to Help us Learn, blog post by Elena Aguilar via Edutopia Frameworks for Reflection by Anna Durfee 21st Century PD: Retention, Reflection, and Redistribution of Knowledge by Bob Dillon Learning Through Reflection by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick	The How to Practice Effectively video gives concrete advice for maximizing the effectiveness of your practice. What are the presentational skills that lie "at the edge of your current ability?" How might you be intentional about practicing them? What is the difference between thinking critically and being critical of our practice? In her blog post, Setting Intentions: A Powerful Tool to Help us Learn, Elena Aguilar describes how she sets an intention before any professional development. What might this look like for you? How might you apply the suggestions in a collaborative setting? How is the process the same or different if you audience is intimate or extremely large? How might some of the ideas presented within the Edutopia articles translate to ideas for reflection either for you as a presenter or that you might incorporate within your presentation to facilitate reflection among participants?	Consider incorporating a Problem of Practice Tuning Protocol as part of your presentation reflection. Use that Problem of Practice to focus professional learning and match intentions with outcomes for those who attend. Heard of the - #observeme protocol in classrooms? Consider using it as a presenter. Encourage colleagues to view your presentation in person or via video and provide feedback. Offer to do the same for them. Sample Peer Observation Form- feel free to use, modify, or create your own. Take a look at the plan for your next presentation. What opportunities exist to embed reflection within that plan? How might you be intentional about reflection afterwards? What simple structures or protocols might help you carry forward what you learn as an outcome of your reflection?

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Citizen

Building a Culture of Learning

Management consultant Peter Drucker famously said, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." And so while as a presenter, the plan you have created for your audience is important, so too is the culture you cultivate for participants. Creating a sense of culture in a short window of time among participants who may or may not know each other is an exciting opportunity challenge.

Below are a few resources and things to practice as you take on that challenge as a presenter.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Tips for Room Setup and Use by Global Learning Partners 8 Tips for Balancing Dialogue with Content by Jeanette Romkema, Kathy Hickman and Elaine Wiersma Appreciative Inquiry , resource by Center for Appreciative Inquiry at Champlain College 4 Ways to Create a Learning Culture on Your Team by Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic and Josh Bersin Tim Brown on Nudging Your Company Culture Toward Creativity by Tim Brown Fun Retrospectives: Energizers by Paulo Caroli and Taina Caetano	How might how you design your presentational space impact the culture of learning among audience members? When have you been part of an optimal culture of learning? What were the elements that made it optimal? How might you recreate some or all of those elements within your presentation? What opportunities exist for you to model a culture of learning within your presentation? How do you build culture quickly and among people that may or may not know one another? How might ritual and celebration contribute to culture? How might you weave those things within your presentation? What compels you to learn? What makes you feel connected to others? How might you create opportunities for both among participants?	Create a ritual that all participants, no matter what you are presenting on, experience. Use an Appreciative Inquiry cycle to cultivate a learning culture within your presentations. Borrow some of the advice from the resources for new learning. Generate a list of advice that sounds like you and look for intentional opportunities to weave that advice into your practice as a presenter. Start small, get feedback, and reflect. Identify energizers that support the kind of learning culture you want to create within your presentations. Keep a journal of the energizers you try and how your audience responds.

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Sharing, Licensing & Intellectual Property Rights

As our world becomes increasingly digital and increasingly open, we have more resources at our disposal than ever before. What is our responsibility to attribution, to contribution, and to ensuring the content we use and promote models digital citizenship?

Below are a few resources and things to practice as you take on that challenge as a presenter.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
Digital Citizenship in Education , ISTE Digital Citizenship: Professional Development & Advice , Common Sense Education Be a Model Digital Citizen by John Ross Creative Commons Licenses Explained , CC Attribution-ShareAlike License Digital Responsibility by Google for Education Giving Presentations by Columbia College (<i>because we can all use reminders</i>) How to Attribute a CC Licensed Work? by the Community College Consortium for OERs	What are the best practices we are communicating to students around digital citizenship? What opportunities do I have to model those practices as a presenter to other educators? What are my rights to the content I create? Where might I go to get more information about this? What are the resources I find the most helpful? How might I engage my network to continue to be a learner in this space? Where do I stand on sharing what I create with others? How am I supporting and contributing to the learning of others as a digital citizen?	Review the resources provided on sites like Google for Education, ISTE, Digital Promise, and Common Sense Education. Read through their blogs, take one of their courses. How might staying current on digital citizenship enable you to be a model digital citizen? Join a #digcit Twitter chat. Connect with others in this space and ask questions and share ideas. How might broadening and engaging your network allow you to be a model digital citizen? Consider being a reviewer of Open Educational Resources or licensing your work under a Creative Commons license. How does active participation make you a better and/or more engaged digital citizen?

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Facilitator

Presenting With Clarity & Confidence

Confidence may sound like something you either have or you don't. But like anything, confidence can be learned, practiced and improved upon. Motivational speaker Ron Kaufman says, "Be confident enough to encourage confidence in others." And as a presenter, your ability to inspire confidence in others is a huge piece of your work as a presenter.

The resources and activities below will help you develop, practice, and reflect upon confidence and clarity as essential presentational skills.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
4 Secrets to Communicating With Clarity by IAEI Magazine 5 Mindfulness Techniques to Help You Present With Confidence, Clarity, and Impact by Maurice DeCastro The Surprising Secret to Speaking With Confidence. TEDx Caroline Goyder Clarity is the Key to Communicating Purpose by Jamie Glass	When have you been the most confident version of yourself? How might you recreate at least some of the conditions that contributed to that confidence every time you present? How does mindfulness contribute to your confidence? How are clarity and confidence interconnected? How might you get feedback on the clarity of your presentation? What do audience members that have clarity do and say?	Experiment with some of the ideas from the resources in the 1st column. From which did you learn something new? Which contributed your own confidence? Which might bring additional clarity to your presentations? In Clarity is the Key to Communicating Purpose, Glass recommends testing your message for clarity. Try her recommended test. What did you learn? How might what you learned inform future presentations?

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Emotion: Power and Pitfalls

Public speaking ranks consistently among [America's Most Common Fears](#). And even if you don't have a fear of public speaking, you may find presenting for an adult audience more nerve wracking than presenting in front of a student audience. And if that doesn't fit either, education, because it is something with which we all have personal experience, is a topic to which we all connect emotionally. Emotion is a good thing. It means we care about education, are invested in its success, and we are always in pursuit of how to do education better. In the resources for new learning section, you will find tips for how to manage your own emotion and the emotions of others while presenting as well as advice for how to leverage emotion to maximize the engagement of your audience.

Resources for New Learning	Questions for Reflection	Potential Tasks for Skill Development
How to Manage Emotions in a Speech by Meghan Gonzalez 15 Ways to Calm Your Nerves Before a Big Presentation by Larry Kim How to Achieve Emotional Power in Speeches and Presentations by Gary Genard The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk , Brené Brown 7 Helpful Tips to Build an Emotional Connection With Your Audience by Maria Brown Using Mindfulness to Make a Powerful Presentation by Brittany Krueger	What are physical clues you are nervous about something? What are three strategies you might try when you notice these clues? How might you humanize the content you are presenting? How might learning into vulnerability allow you to connect with your audience? How might being curious about your audience facilitate connection? What is your self-talk before, during, and after presentations? How might you reframe negative thoughts? What opportunities exist to practice mindfulness and gratitude?	Experiment with some of the strategies shared within the resources in the left hand column. Discard the ones that don't work for you. Write down and practice the ones that do. Host a lunch & learn with other educators who are working on their presentation skills. If you can't get together physically, share videos of one another talking about any topic for 3-5 minutes. Ask a framing question to solicit specific feedback tied to emotion. Reflect on what you might keep, tweak, or stop doing in response to that feedback and try again. What did you learn from the experience?

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