

Preparing the Presentation

Understanding the purpose of your presentation is the key to success. In general a presentation can have two purposes:

- * To inform - tell
- * To persuade – sell



Defining purpose:

The purpose of your presentation not only decides the content and style but also affects the amount of audience interaction.

Depending upon your purpose – to inform, to analyze, or to persuade – you should be flexible enough to adjust to new input and unexpected audience reaction.

Analyzing Audience and Locale:

A thorough understanding of your audience is important for an effective presentation. Never overestimate an audience's knowledge, never underestimate their intelligence. The table below can be used as a preparation.

Audience profile	Answers
Who are they?	
How many will be there?	
Why are they coming?	
What do they know about the subject?	

Why are they interested in the subject?	
What is their relationship to you?	

This kind of prior preparation is important because the nature of your audience has a direct impact on the strategy you devise for your presentation. Remember your audience can be: your friends, foes, clients, colleagues, totally unfamiliar faces or a medley of all these.

At the start of your presentation make eye contact with your audience. This will help you to assess whether they are excited, resistant, hostile or dull.

Always begin with a smile and greet them in a pleasant tone.

Even though your audience is well educated, don't go for words rarely used in conversation, rather than impressing you will end up in confusing them.

The more meticulous you are in your choice of words, the greater are the effects of your oral presentation.

A few key points to keep in mind:

- ↪ Speak with confidence and conviction.
- ↪ Make your points crystal clear and easy to understand.
- ↪ Maintain an attitude of alertness and confidence.
- ↪ Encourage questions from audience.



Locale:

Every place has its unique physical environment. Know the physical setting; find out whether you'll have a podium or a table, whether you'll have a public address system and so on.

If you identify the problems and the nature of your place of presentation, you can either ask for alternative arrangements or modify your materials, visuals and style to suit the environment.

Organizing your content:

People vary in their ability to speak in public, but keep in mind “There’s a natural speaker in everyone of us.” Let this natural speaker come out. If you are still a novice, memorize the first few sentences so that you can move ahead easily. Remember:

1. It’s ok to be yourself.
2. 2 or 3 key points are all you need.
3. You don’t have to be perfect to be successful.
4. Humour helps.
5. You can’t avoid preparation.

The contents of your presentation will have three main parts: introduction, main body, conclusion. In other words,

- Say what you want to say
- Say it
- Then say what you’ve already said.

Ways to Control Anxiety

- **Make sure you are well rehearsed.**

Panic sets in if you are not fully prepared. Work on your timing. Rehearse in front of a practice audience.

- **Warm up with relaxation exercises.**

Relax tense muscles with some simple exercises. This will help to avoid feeling nervous and shaky.

- **Expect the unexpected.**

Accept the things may not go according to plan. Keep your humour intact.

Introduction

The introduction comprises the porch or the opening statement, the aim and the layout. The porch can be a question, a sincere greeting, or a starting statement. This catches the attention of your audience and prepares them for the rest of your presentation.

End your introduction by giving an overview or road map of your presentation. A good introduction is a vehicle to lead the audience into the main body of the speech. After giving a preview, make sure that you provide a smooth transition to the main body of the speech.

Main body

The main body, the discussion, or the text part follows the subsequent to introduction and support your main aim or specific purpose. The major points you highlighted in your opening will be expanded upon here. You can choose from any of the following patterns to organize the main body of your speech.

- Chronological

You can have this pattern for organizing the details which you can arrange sequentially (in the order in which the events occurred or appeared before you). The entire presentation can be arranged chronologically. This method is useful for topics like ‘the profile of your institute’, ‘the changing face of technology’, and ‘history of sports’.

- Categorical

This is one of the easiest and most commonly adopted patterns for many topics. The entire presentation can be divided into various topics and subtopics arranged on the basis of subordination and coordination. This can be used for topics like ‘the role of advertising’, ‘environmental protection’, ‘importance of professional presentation,’ etc.

- Cause and effect

You can adopt this method whenever there exists a cause and effect relationship. Here you have to illustrate and explain the causes of the situation and then focus on the effects. It is relevant for topics like ‘impact of cinema on children’, ‘internet boon or bane’, ‘smoking in children’, etc.

- Problem – solution

Here you divide the presentation into two parts. In the first part describe and analyze the cause and effect of the problem. After the analysis you move on to the main objective of your presentation to suggest or oppose a solution to the problem. It is a very helpful and effective way for persuasive presentation. For topics like “population explosion” this method can be used.

Resist the temptation to include too many points in the body of your speech. Restrict yourself to four or five main points. Every main point is a unit of thought an essential part of a speech. Each point should be clearly stated independent of other main points.

Conclusion

You can conclude your presentations by reviewing the main points. Give a signal such as *to sum up, to conclude, to review*. As you conclude, remind the audience briefly about the purpose of your presentation, which could be either to persuade them or to inform them.

Question time

Very often presentations are followed by a question period. Questions provide you with vital feedback about the ideas that you have put forth in your presentation. Preparing for questions therefore is as important as preparing for your presentation.

Coping with difficult questions:

Coping with a difficult question is a presenter's nightmare. If a questioner tries to trip you up with a difficult question, maintain a polite but firm attitude. Do not reveal annoyance, but soon as possible, divert to the other members of the audience.

If any person in the audience tries to monopolise question time, you have to learn to handle that too by indicating that each questioner has to be given a fair chance.

Dealing with difficult questions:

- While preparing for the presentation, make a list of questions which you think your audience will ask and mentally prepare yourself to answer them.
- Indicate when you are ready for questions.
- Avoid becoming defensive. Make questioners feel that their questions are welcome.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, be truthful and say so. Admitting ignorance is better than hedging.
- Think before you speak.

Use the outline on the next page to organize your presentation. The outline is flexible, so if it doesn't suit your needs, change it. The important **point at this point is to have a structure for your presentation**, so avoid putting in too much detail.

Presentation outline

Purpose:

Title:

Time:

Beginning

Interesting beginning:

Purpose:

Summary of main points:

Middle

First main point:

Second main point:

Third main point:

Fourth main point:

Ending

Summary of main points:

Conclusion:

Interesting ending:

Visual Aids

Ours is a visually oriented society.

Spoken words are ephemeral: as soon as they come out of our mouth they evaporate into air. Because of this limitation, speeches often need strong visual support – handouts, chalkboards, flip chart, slides, computers, charts, tables, film, etc.

The importance of visual aids:

- increase audience interest;
- illustrate key points;
- signal transition from one part of the presentation to the next;
- increase impact of message;
- help listeners retain information;
- help you; present ideas without depending on notes; and
- for those not familiar with your language or accent, turn the incomprehensible to understandable.

Guidelines to make effective visuals

- If you feel that the audience needs explanations for your visual aids explain to them lest they should misunderstand it.
- Organize the visual aids as a part of the presentation. Fit them into the plan.
- Emphasize the visual aids. Point to them with bodily action and with words.
- Talk to the audience, not to the visual aids. Make sure that lecterns, pillars, charts, and such don't block anyone's view. Take care not to stand in anyone's line of vision.
- Refrain from removing the aid before the audience has an opportunity to absorb the material.
- Don't talk about the visual aid after you have put it aside.
- Use enough visuals to make your points clear, but don't over do it.
- Don't use too many lines or figures on one aid, make sure that it's visible to one and all from all the corners of room.
- It should not be very light that the audience finds it too hard to see. Too small an illustration will not be visible to those in the back of the audience.
- Keep them at an inconspicuous place, if aids are too many, or they may distract the attention of the audience.
- Be familiar with the basic operation of the electronic devices which you would use for your presentation.

Visual Aids Used in Presentations:

SI No:	Type	Tips
1.	Overhead Transparencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use larger fonts. Avoid decorative fonts. • Separate the transparencies using sheets. • Keep transparencies uncluttered. • Show only the required information. • Do not add multiple colours or exciting backdrops to your slides. • Use pointer on the screen, or your pencil or pen on the transparency to draw audience's attention to the specific item. • Familiarize yourself with the operation of the overhead projector. • Be ready with your notes incase of power failure.
2.	Power Point Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the computer system / equipment before loading. • Familiarise yourself with the operation of the slides • Transfer your files to the hard disk. • Be familiar with the operation of slide show. • Rehearse your presentation. • Keep a printed copy of the slides (6 slides on a sheet of paper) for use in case of computer malfunction.
3.	Flip chart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use different coloured markers. • Keep two pads of paper. • Write in large letters. • Use only one side of the chart. • Wait for the audience to grasp the contents before turning pages.

Language for Your Presentation

Saying Hello

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

Good afternoon, everyone.

Right ...

Expressing purpose

My purpose / objective / aim today is ...

What I want to do this morning is ...

I'm here today to ...

Signposting

This talk is divided into four main parts: firstly, ...etc.

Let me begin with / To start with / Firstly, I'd like to look at ...

Then / Secondly, I'll talking about ...

Thirdly ...

My fourth point will be about ...

Finally I'll be looking at ...

Schedule

My presentation / talk / lecture will take / last about 20 minutes.

We'll be having a coffee break at about ...

We'll stopping for lunch at ...

Inviting questions

If any one has any questions, please feel free to interrupt at any time.

If you have any questions, please stop me at any time, and I will be happy to answer them.

Please stop me at any time if you have any questions.

Discouraging questions

At the end of my talk there will be a question and answer session. I would appreciate if you could keep your questions until then.

I'll be happy to answer any questions at the end of my presentation.

Language – the don'ts

- Avoid Jargon.
- Avoid complex phrases.
- Avoid being too formal.
- Avoid long sentences.

Language - the dos

- Use everyday language
- Use concrete words
- Use rhetorical questions
- Use dramatic structures

More Language Phrases for your Presentations**Moving on**

Lets now move on to / turn to ...

I now want to go on to ...

This leads / bring me to ...

I'd now like to move on to / turn to ...

So far we had looked at ...Now I'd like to ...

Asking check up questions

Are you with me so far?

Is everyone with me?

Is that clear to everyone?

Before I go on, are there any questions about ...?

Using rhetorical questions

What should we do? (pause)

How much would it cost? (pause)

Dramatic structure

We have a revolutionary product. —→ What we have is a revolutionary product.

Giving examples

Let me give you an example

such as ...

for instance ...

Summarising

What I'm trying to say is ...

Let me just try and sum that up before we move on to ...

Making comparisons

It's like ...

It's as if ...

Painting word pictures

Imagine ...

Suppose ...

Body Language – the don'ts

- Don't point at any one.
- Don't rock backward & forward.
- Don't stand rooted on the spot.
- Don't leave your hands by your sides.
- Don't avoid eye contact.

Using Visual Aids – Language Phrases

I'd like you to look at this ...
 Let me show you ...
 As you can see ...
 Let's have a look at ...
 Let's look at ...
 If you look at the screen, you'll see ...
 This table / diagram / chart / slide shows ...
 On the right / left you can see ...

More dramatic

Have a look at ...
 Look at ...
 I'll let you read this ...

Stressing a point

It is vital / essential / imperative that we ...
 We must ...

Stretching vowels

These figures are extremely useful.
 We are waaaay ahead of the competition.

Using adverbs

Extremely	really
Entirely	very
Completely	quite
Totally	

Repeating words

Communication is vital. Without communication nothing is achieved, with little communication little is achieved.

Stressed auxiliaries

We can't and won't be able to accept the offer.
 Finance is the key.
 Targets have been reached over the last year.

Adding do, does or did

To implement an appraisal system, we **do** need management support.
 The economy **does** need investment.
 We **did** work hard and the results show that.

Voice & Pronunciation**Project your voice**

- aim at the back

Emphasize the importance

- say some words louder
- repeat important words

Making it interesting

- Go faster to excite
- Go slower to show importance
- Pause often and look round the audience
- Give emphasis with voice and body

Language phrases**Summing up**

So, to sum up, ...

To summarise, ...

To recapitulate / recap ...

Let me now sum up ...

Concluding

Let me end by saying ...

I'd like to finish by emphasizing ...

In conclusion I'd like to say ...

Finally, may I say ...

Making a recommendation

So, what I would suggest is that we ...

So, I would recommend that the ...

Handouts

I'll be distributing the handouts in a few minutes ...

The handouts are over by the door.

Copies of my transparencies / slides are on the table by the door.

Questions

If you have any questions or comments, I'll be happy to answer them.

If there are any questions, I'll do my best to answer them.

Are there any more questions?

I'll be happy to answer any questions, but I'd like to hold the last few minutes for a summary.

If any one has any questions or comments to start off...

Closing

Thank you for your attention / time.

Thank you for listening.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Handling questions – Language Phrases

Paraphrasing the question

If I've understood your question correctly, you're saying ...

So, what you're asking is ...

Well, the question is ...Is that right?

Let me just check that I've understood your question. You're asking ...

Getting the questioner to rephrase

Sorry, I'm not quite with you. Could you repeat that?

I'm afraid I don't quite see what you mean.

Postponing an answer

I'll be dealing with that a little later on, so if you don't mind I'd rather answer that question then.

I'll be coming to that, so if you don't mind I won't answer your question straightaway. But I won't forget.

Answering questions – by admitting ignorance

I'm afraid I don't know the answer to that one. Perhaps someone here can help us out?

I'm sorry I don't know the answer to that, but what I will do is find out and send/give you an answer before the end of the week.

Answer questions – by saying you are not the right person to ask

I'm afraid that's not my field, but I'm sure Mr / Ms / Mrs ...will be able to answer you.

I'm afraid I don't have that information, but I can ask our ...our department to send you the details.

Coming back to the point

Going back to what I was saying ...

As I was saying ...

Rephrasing

Sorry, perhaps I'm not making myself clear. Let me put it another way.

What I was trying to say was ...

Checking your answer

Is that Ok?

Is that clearer now?

Does that answer your question?

Ending

I think we have time for one more question ...

If there are no other questions, I'll finish there. Thank you very much.