



SWANSEA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
PRIFYSGOL FETROPOLITAN ABERTAWE

Presentation techniques

Introduction

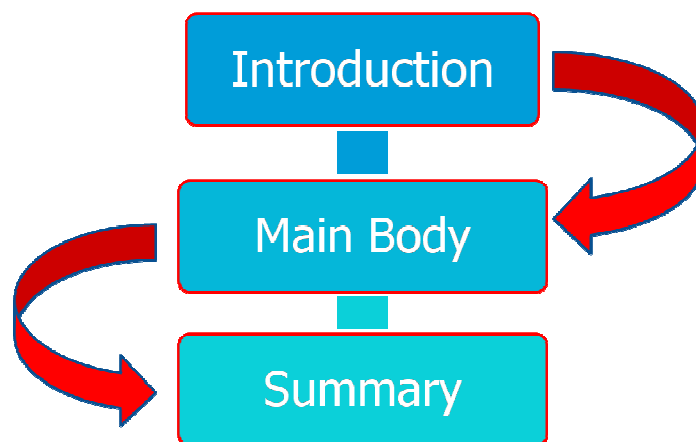
Presentation skills are essential to modern day academic and business settings. There are several ways in which to improve the skills necessary to produce an effective presentation and the ways to achieve this vary from person to person. The ability to produce a good presentation is an important skill in today's competitive environment. A person who can prepare and deliver an effective talk is an asset to any organisation.

Preparation techniques

The key to a successful presentation is in the preparation. Prior to any preparation ensure the objectives are clear and that any questions regarding the presentation are asked, for example the purpose of the presentation and the length of time allowed.

Research the topic to be discussed thoroughly, this will provide underpinning knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic and will ensure that the information will be accurate and informative to the audience, as well as provide the speaker with natural confidence. Tailor the message to the audience, understand their needs, knowledge level and attitude towards the chosen topic.

Careful planning prior to delivery is essential to producing a successful presentation. There are various methods that can be used to achieve effective planning. Mind Maps are a useful tool to assist with the organisation and structure of the presentation. It is important to have a logical structure for example, begin with a brief overview of the topic including background information where necessary leading into the main body and followed by the conclusion.



Following these guidelines will ensure a natural progression and will allow the audience to have a greater understanding of the chosen topic as well as a clear view of the direction of the presentation.

Guidelines for making your Presentation!



Be Prepared.

The 'Boy Scouts' motto 'being prepared' will really make you more focused in your presentation and calm down the nerves. Plan your presentation in stages and produce your work in a clear and simple manner.

Practice

Once you have planned your presentation, practice your presentation out loud. Talk to yourself in a mirror or deliver your presentation to your pet dog. You will soon be able to see what works and doesn't in your talk.

Feel comfortable using your supporting material

When you practice your presentation, do a dress rehearsal using the supporting materials you have created. This way, your presentation will flow more easily on the day.

Project your voice

Remember to project your voice when you are making your presentation so everyone in the class can hear you. Have fluids, such as water handy on the day in order to look after your voice.

Be aware of body language

When practising your presentation, be aware of your posture and decide how you will present yourself on the day (i.e. how you will stand, what you will do with your hands, etc.).

Be enthusiastic about what you have to say

Enthusiasm is contagious. Therefore, have an interest in what you have to say to the class and your audience will be captivated!

Respond to questions and comments politely and sensitively

After your presentation, use your listening skills to understand individual questions and comments and respond in an appropriate manner.

Have fun! Remember that this experience is not meant to be terrifying but exciting! Enjoy the experience of being able to share your findings about a specific topic with your audience and most importantly, have fun!

Making an Oral Presentation

When making an oral presentation in class, you must know your subject well and convince your audience that they have something to gain from listening to you. Here are some things you can do to make an effective oral presentation.

Be prepared. Research your topic to ensure that you are knowledgeable. Practice your presentation until you feel comfortable. Make sure you can present your information within time limits you will have. Anticipate questions you may be asked and prepare your answers to these.

Know your audience. Tailor your presentation to your audience's level of knowledge about the subject of your presentation, what they need to know and their interests.

Be positive. Make it clear that you are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about your subject.

Don't read your presentation. Talk to your audience. Use your notes as prompts as needed.

Provide examples. Try to make your presentation as concrete and "down to earth" as possible. Add appropriate anecdotes and humour to drive home a point.

Use visual aids. Supplement what you say with visual aids such as handouts, charts, transparencies, and slides. Make sure that everyone can easily see the visual aids. Don't use visual aids that are so complex that the audience will spend its time trying to read them instead of listening to you. Visual aids are supplements to what you say, not replacements for what you say.

Maintain eye contact. Shift your eye contact around the room so that everyone feels that you are talking to them.

Actively involve your audience. People can only listen so long without their attention wandering. Making your presentation interesting will help you to capture and keep your audience's attention for a while, but you must do more. Build in some simple and quick activities for your audience so that they are actively involved in your presentation. Ask questions that you are confident your audience will be able to answer.

Use your voice effectively. Vary the tone of your voice and be careful not to talk too quickly.

End on a high note. Leave your audience feeling upbeat about what they have just heard.

Controlling the signs of nerves.

Sweaty armpits – Anti-perspirant

Dry mouth – Lower head slightly and bite tongue gently; Bring water

Too much saliva – put tongue behind top teeth and breathe in through your mouth

Drying up! – Take a few moments; take a deep breath; focus your thoughts.

Tight throat – Yawn secretly; Lower your head, mouth closed, breathe in through nose

Shaking – Body getting rid of excess energy – use positively by employing gestures

Breathlessness – Pause; Take a deep calm breath, letting it out slowly

Butterflies – Tense the muscles of your buttocks and abdomen; Hold and relax

Facial tension – Relax and smile!



In the weeks or days before your talk			
Preparation time- check tasks	To do	Doing now	Done
1. Understand your topic and ensure you know enough background to feel confident with your particular angle on it. This will also give you confidence at question time.			
2. Structure your talk by identifying key messages and points for development within those sections. If you are presenting as a group you will divide the sections between you. Make sure you have a beginning (stating what you will do) a middle (develop your arguments or topic) and an end (present a conclusion). Remember group presentations need to allocate responsibilities.			
3. Decide on the visual style you will use and prepare your slides well. Make sure they are uncluttered and easy to read.			
4. Decide on title for your talk. Try to make it short but informative. Use the ‘Baked Beans’ approach- ‘it says what it is’ – you can always have a fun strap line (like a sub-heading), but it must be catchy.			
5. Write brief notes on prompt cards to help make sure that you cover the ground you intend to, and in the right order.			
6. Practise giving your talk and timing it – either to friends or between yourselves.			
7. Check the room layout for the talk and make sure that you know where you will stand or sit, where your audience will be and the equipment you will use.			
8. Identify your ‘take home message’ and how you are going to deliver it.			
9. Assessment criteria: do you think your talk will meet the assessment criteria? If not, what changes do you need to make?			

On the day of the talk			
Preparation time – check tasks	To do	Doing now	Done
1. Re-read your prompt cards to help make sure that you cover the ground you intend to, and in the right order.			
2. Get to the venue early and check the equipment, if you can.			
3. Remind yourself of the simple but vital rules for delivering your talk confidently (voice, pace, audience, questions).			
4. Support each other in a group presentation. Identify where you will all stand and how you will link between speakers.			
5. Relax, breathe deeply to keep the nerves in check and remember that your audience is on your side!			
You're on! Go for it!			