

Presentation Tips for Public Speaking

1. **KNOW** the needs of your audience and match your contents to their needs. **Know** your material thoroughly. Put what you have to say **in a logical sequence**. **Practice** and **rehearse** your speech at home or where you can be at ease and comfortable, in front of a mirror, your family, friends or colleagues. **Know** what your strong and weak points are. **Emphasize your strong points** during your presentation.
2. When you are presenting in front of an audience, you are performing as an **ACTOR** is on stage. How you are being perceived is very important. **Dress appropriately** for the occasion. Present the desired image to your audience. Look pleasant, enthusiastic, confident, proud, but not arrogant. **Appear relaxed, even if you feel nervous**. Speak slowly, pronounce clearly, and show appropriate emotion and feeling relating to your topic. Speak to the person farthest away from you to ensure your voice is loud enough to project to the back of the room. **Vary the tone of your voice** and **dramatize** if necessary.
3. **BODY LANGUAGE** is important. **Standing, walking or moving about with appropriate hand gesture or facial expression is preferred to sitting down or standing still with head down and reading from a prepared speech**. Use audio-visual aids or props for enhancement if appropriate and necessary. Master the use of presentation software such as *PowerPoint* well before your presentation. Do not overload your audience with excessive use of animation, sound clips, or gaudy colors which are inappropriate for your topic. Do not torture your audience by putting a lengthy document in tiny print on an overhead and reading it out to them.
4. **SPEAK WITH CONVICTION** as if you really believe in what you are saying. **Persuade your audience effectively**. The material you present orally should have the same ingredients as that which are required for a written research paper, i.e. a logical progression from **INTRODUCTION** (Thesis statement) to **BODY** (strong supporting arguments, accurate and up-to-date information) to **CONCLUSION** (re-state thesis, summary, and logical conclusion).
5. **DO NOT READ FROM NOTES** for any extended length of time although it is quite acceptable to glance at your notes infrequently. Speak loudly and clearly. Sound confident. Do not mumble. If you made an error, correct it, and continue.
6. **MAINTAIN SINCERE EYE CONTACT** with your audience. Have direct eye contact with a number of people in the audience, and every now and then glance at the whole audience while speaking. Use your eye contact to make everyone in your audience feel involved.
7. **SPEAK** to your audience, **LISTEN** to their questions, **RESPOND** to their reactions, **ADJUST** and **ADAPT**. If what you have prepared is obviously not getting across to your audience, change your strategy if you are well prepared to do so. Remember that **communication is the key to a successful presentation**. If you are short of time, **know what can be safely left out**. **Always be prepared for the unexpected**.
8. **PAUSE**. Allow yourself and your audience a little time to reflect and think. Don't race through your presentation and leave your audience, as well as yourself, feeling out of breath.
9. **ADD HUMOR** whenever appropriate and possible. Keep audience interested throughout your entire presentation. Remember that an interesting speech makes time fly, but a boring speech is always too long to endure even if the presentation time is the same.

10. When using **AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS** to enhance your presentation, be sure all necessary equipment is set up and in good working order prior to the presentation. If possible, have an emergency backup system readily available. If it is appropriate show or offer your audience **SAMPLES** of what you are talking about; people usually appreciate it and your presentation is much more interesting for them.
11. Have **HANDOUTS** ready and give them out at the appropriate time. Tell audience ahead of time that you will be giving out an outline of your presentation so that they will not waste time taking unnecessary notes during your presentation.
12. **KNOW WHEN TO STOP** talking. Use a timer or the microwave oven clock to time your presentation when preparing it at home. To end your presentation, **SUMMARIZE** your main points in the same way as you normally do in the **CONCLUSION** of a written paper. Leave your listeners with a positive impression and a sense of completion.
13. **THANK** your audience and offer them to **ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS** they might have. People are often shy to ask so you can encourage them verbally to ask questions.

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