



Public Speaking & Presentation

You need the ability to go out there and grab the hearts and minds of your audience in order to inspire them to pursue a desired outcome. ---Belle Halpern

Why should you engage in public speaking?

More than ever, people have to present information to others in the professional arena as such this is your opportunity in your college career to develop these skills.

There are 2 main areas of skill to presenting:

1. Skills of effective presenting; use of teaching aids, use of the voice, structure and so on.
2. Self-management; the ability to remain calm and composed in front of an audience.

Learning these skills make a huge difference not only to the quality of your public presentation but also in your enjoyment of public speaking.

Fantastic presenters are quite a rare commodity, but that's only because most people never took the time to learn.

Being an excellent presenter will enhance your career, social life and your enjoyment of work in general. Great presenters can transform almost any subject into one of interest or even inspiration.

What to Do About a Fear of Public Speaking?

Accept the fact that we need fear. Without the ability to become very fearful no human beings would be here today — our ancestors relied on fear to survive bigger, stronger and faster predators.

When we become highly fearful, the unconscious mind takes over and we become primarily set up for physical action. In order to survive a physical threat we respond automatically for the sake a quick reaction. In certain situations, this can be a life-saver. When presenting we need a little anxiety as a measure to improve recall, raise energy levels and make for a more focused, dynamic speech. An overly laid-back speaker can easily bore!

So you don't want too much anxiety or too much relaxation. You need enough tension to give yourself energy, and enough calmness for clear thinking and recall. You need the right balance.

Public Speaking Tips

- Use eye contact with each member of the audience in turn.
- Remember that some people get nervous in audiences too. Put them at their ease.
- Use visual aids where useful. People like to look at things. Flip charts, overhead projectors and video can all be used to make the presentation more memorable. Too much detail or overly technical information might not be best presented in a visual way however. Keep visuals simple. If you don't have the use of visuals remember that 'words paint pictures in the mind.'
- Consider giving handouts to your audience members. It gives them something to take away and it might be a memory prompt for them when recalling your speech. They can also feel as if you have given them something 'for free'. Too much written material may be off-putting however and you don't want everyone reading during your presentation, so choose carefully when you give them out.
- Don't think how can I survive this? Think how can I do this brilliantly?
- Remember that, as with all things, you need to know where you're going if you're going to get there. Rather than I hope I don't panic, work out how you would like things to be.
- Vary your voice tonality and speed during your presentation. Convey energy when you need to, and slow down to 'draw them in close' when it's appropriate.

Being prepared:

Ask yourself: ***Who? What? How? When? Where? Why?***

Who are you speaking to? What are their interests, presuppositions and values? What do they share in common with others; how are they unique?

What do you wish to communicate? One way of answering this question is to ask yourself about the 'success criteria'. How do you know if and when you have successfully communicated what you have in mind?

How can you best convey your message? Choose your verbal and your nonverbal cues with your audience in mind. Plan a beginning, middle and end.

Why? In order to convert hearers into listeners, you need to know why they should listen to you – and tell them if necessary. What disposes them to listen?

Presentation: Checklist

- Does your introduction grab participant's attention and explain your objectives?
- Do you follow this by clearly defining the points of the presentation?
- Are these main points in logical sequence?
- Do the main points need support from visual aids?
- Does your closing summarize the presentation clearly and concisely?
- Have you tied the conclusion to the introduction?

Delivery:

- Are you knowledgeable about the topic covered in your presentation?
- Do you have your notes in order?
- Where and how will you present (indoors, outdoors, standing, sitting, etc.)?

- Have you visited the presentation site?
- Have you checked your visual aids to ensure they are working and you know how to use them?

Appearance:

- Make sure you are dressed and groomed appropriately.
- Practice your speech standing (or sitting, if applicable), paying close attention to your body language, even your posture, both of which will be assessed by the audience.

Visual Aids:

- Are the visual aids easy to read and easy to understand?
- Are they tied into the points you are trying to communicate?
- Can they be easily seen from all areas of the room?

To aid in producing a great presentation Be concise. Be brief. Use short words and sentences. Where appropriate, support these with short, easy-to-understand examples, which help demonstrate your message.