

## **A Checklist for your Presentation**

You owe your audience and yourself a good presentation, but creating an effective presentation takes planning and practice, so here are some pointers.

### ***Start preparing early; don't wait until the last few days to prepare***

- Prepare it early, let it rest a little bit and come back to it.
- Practice your entire presentation-including your slides.
- If you can, practice it before a group of colleagues or friends.

### ***Think about your audience***

- Who are they and why are they here?
- What are their interests?
- What do they know; what do they want to know; what is a worthwhile investment in their time?

### ***Be clear about your purpose***

- Are you **informing** or **persuading**?
- Tell them what you are going to do, tell them, tell them what you told them.
- What do you want the audience to know, feel, or believe afterwards?

### ***Use an effective introduction***

- Orient the audience; explain why it is important; set the tone.
- Establish a relationship between the speaker and the audience; establish credibility.
- Avoid weak introductions such as apologies, jokes, rhetorical questions.

### ***Organize your presentation clearly and simply***

- Prioritize topics and allocate time accordingly.
- Stick to only 3-5 main points.
- Have a well thought pattern (examples are problem/solution, chronological, cause and effect, topical); use transitions to move smoothly from one point to the next.

### ***Use supporting materials to flesh out main points***

- Use examples, statistics, expert opinions, anecdotes.

### ***Compose for the ear, not for the eye***

- Use simple words, simple sentences, markers, repetition, images, personal language (“You” and “I”).

### ***Create an effective conclusion***

- Summarize, set final image, provide closure; don't trail off, don't use trite phrases.

- Don't just present data or summarized results and leave the audience to draw its own conclusions.
- You have had much more time to work with your information than your audience; share your insight and understanding and tell them what you've concluded from your work.

### ***Sound spontaneous, conversational, and enthusiastic***

- Use key phrases in your notes so you don't have to read, use the overhead instead of notes.
- Vary volume, don't be afraid of silence, and don't use fillers like "um"...
- Practice, Practice, Practice.

### ***Use body language effectively***

- Use relaxed gestures, eye contact; don't play with a pen or pointer.
- Don't block visual aids.

### ***Use visual aids to enhance the message***

- You will probably need to use PowerPoint or overhead transparencies in your presentation but to be effective, they must be designed and used properly.
- Use visuals to reinforce and clarify, not overwhelm.
- Keep visual aids uncluttered; use titles to guide the audience.
- If you use audio or video, make sure the equipment is compatible.

### ***Analyze the environment***

- Check out size of room, placement of chairs, time of day, temperature, distractions.
- Check out AV equipment ahead of time; have a spare bulb.

### ***Cope with stage fright by remembering***

- It's normal; it can be helpful, everyone feels it.