



EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION SKILLS



“What is your goal in relation to this audience? To be perceived by the audience as credible and qualified to speak about your subject.”

University of Manchester. (2014) *Resources for Extended Project tutors and assessors* Available at: <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/teachers/students/widening-participation/post-16/extended-project/resources/> (Accessed: 30 April 2021)

WHY GIVE A PRESENTATION?

Valuable transferable skill that a future employer will greatly value

Prospective employers expect reference to these key skills in references, and short presentations are increasingly used as part of an interview process.

Most effective way of getting your point across
Builds confidence

PREPARATION

- Good preparation leads to good presentations
- Practice, practice, practice
- Ensure you run through your presentation several times with all visuals, out loud, preferably with a willing audience
- Who are your audience?
- Content: what is your presentation about? How are you going to introduce the topic?
- Structure: tell them, tell them, tell them!
- Technique: how will you deliver your presentation? What visual aids will you use?
- Managing body language and answering questions

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



AUDIENCE AND CONTENT



WHO ARE YOUR AUDIENCE?

- What age/generation are they?
- What values do they have?
- Do they have any prior knowledge of the subject?
- How will they respond to your presentation?
- What are their expectations?

Failing to consider your audience may lead to them feeling:

Alienated – if you offend their values

Insulted – if you don't pitch the presentation at the right level for their prior experience and knowledge

Confused – if you assume they have knowledge that they actually don't

Bored – if you don't relate the topic to their interests

Patronised – if you use an inappropriate style

CONTENT & STRUCTURE

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

When you're looking at what to put into your presentation, always keep in mind the audience and the main objective and the time allocation.

How are you going to introduce the topic?

WHAT TO INCLUDE

It is very important to explain things clearly, back up points you make with evidence/ support your arguments. Only include necessary information and try not to veer of the point.

Maintain focus on topic and what you have planned to say.

KNOW YOUR CONTENT

Know your research and be prepared to answer questions on it. Try and anticipate questions that may be asked - you may need to defend your point of view or position.

Try not to use acronyms, jargon or unnecessary technical terms

STRUCTURE

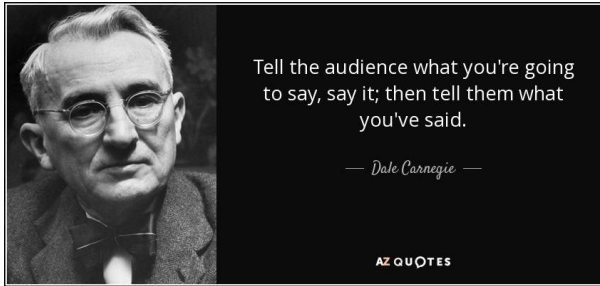
It is important to have structure to the presentation and to stay focused on the main objective.

Introduce yourself, the topic and what your presentation will include

Then do exactly as you have said you will do and talk about the topic, make your points, explain and support what you say.

At the end, sum up by reinstating the main points you have made and what the audience should have learned.

Remember!
Don't try to do too much and cover only what you've been asked



REFINE AND PREPARE

- Decide the main headings for the talk
- Choose subheadings
- Decide the number of slides (if using Powerpoint)
- Write brief notes onto prompt cards

VISUAL AIDS

PHYSICAL

Handouts: If you decide on one keep it short and use bullets points. Check spelling and grammar on any handouts
Flipchart paper or whiteboard

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Quiz sheets or audience polls -a few questions to facilitate audience participation to reinforce key points may be a good warm up or conclusion activity

DIGITAL

Pictures or movie clips
Audio music, radio clips or your own recording

POWERPOINT

- **PowerPoint can be a useful tool for delivering presentations, BUT don't get carried away!**
- **Make sure your slides are clear and not too text-heavy**
- **Only include relevant information**
- **Use at least 14 point font otherwise not everyone will be able to read it.**
- **Make it consistent – use the same fonts throughout**
- **Don't read the words as they are on the slides, your audience can probably read.**
- **Avoid using tacky animations and colours/fonts that make it hard to read.**
- **Check your spelling and grammar**

TECHNIQUES

BODY LANGUAGE

POSTURE

Upright but relaxed
Don't cross your arm – it appears defensive

ATTITUDE

Friendly and approachable
Have an appropriate space between you and your audience

EYE CONTACT

Try and maintain eye contact with different audience members when you are talking – don't look over people's heads or at your feet! Smile! Be aware of your audience – are they becoming distracted – do they look happy? Do they look confused. You may want to stop and check that everyone is clear on the point you are making or if anyone has any questions?

VOICE AND DELIVERY

VOICE

Don't read from a script
Use pauses and silences
Speak slowly and clearly

PRACTICE

You will stay in control of the material if you know it. Practise it out loud a number of times before the event, so that you have a clear understanding of time taken and you can find out what phrases work and what will become tongue-twisters!

HANDLING QUESTIONS

SHARE THE QUESTION

Not everyone will have heard especially if they're thinking about questions that they want to ask.

THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

Think on your feet but remember to try and think through the answer before you give it.

ONLY ANSWER THE QUESTION

Don't get side-tracked or go into huge amounts of detail.

CHECK THE ANSWER WAS OK

Make sure that the person asking is happy with the way you've answered. They might want to ask a follow-up question or need further clarification. If necessary offer to discuss it with them further after the session has finished.