

Module Eight: Presenting Social Science Concepts and Research, continued

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8-1 Completing the Presentation Slides

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Thinking About Visuals

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Assessing Your Responses

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Creating the Visuals

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8-2 Presenting Confidently

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Presentation Best Practices

Perfecting the Delivery

According to the British comedian Eddie Izzard, ["70 percent of what people react to is the look. 20 percent is how you sound, and only 10 percent is what you say."](#) Of course, he's exaggerating for comedic effect. It *does* matter quite a bit what you say. However, he makes the very valid point that the way you present yourself and your issue has an impact on the way it's received by the audience. To prepare, there are some things you can do — before and during your presentation — to influence the impression you make on the audience.

You may be a seasoned public speaker, or you may never have given a public presentation before; regardless, this learning block presents you with some useful information that will help you prepare for future public speaking opportunities.



Make Sure You're as Comfortable as Possible	Try to get a good night's sleep and avoid caffeine and other stimulants so you're relaxed when you give your presentation. You should also wear comfortable clothing. Some presenters take a quick walk before their presentation to calm down. The idea is to be as physically comfortable as possible.
Preparation = Confidence	If you're well-prepared and well-rehearsed, you can deliver your presentation with confidence. If you're confident, you're less likely to be overly nervous. Remember, it's natural to feel slightly nervous or excited before appearing before an audience, and this energy can be channeled into giving a great presentation!
Visualizing	Some people find it helpful to visualize a successful presentation. Imagining that you're comfortable, confident, and connecting with the audience in advance can make you approach your presentation without undue anxiety.
Relaxation Techniques	Taking deep breaths, before you start your presentation, can help to make you calmer. Some presenters will silently repeat a simple, comforting phrase in the moments before they begin their presentation (phrases like: 'Relax, this will be fine,' or 'I'm ready,' or 'All's well').
The Entrance	Capture the attention of your audience by making a confident entrance. If you have cue cards or other materials, take a moment to get these set up. Make eye contact with your audience before beginning. While giving your presentation, make eye contact with the entire audience, not just the front row. Stand up straight, with your shoulders back.

Pacing and Volume	Speak clearly and slowly, avoiding filler words, such as "um." Pause after significant points in your presentation; this gives the audience time to consider and digest your message. Speak at a volume that is appropriate for the space and your audience, and vary your tone, inflection, and pace. If you feel yourself rushing your words, take a breath. Use appropriate pauses as an opportunity to return to a comfortable pace.
Act Natural	Your gestures should be relaxed and natural; don't force your movement. Avoid body language that may be perceived as defensive, such as crossed arms or pointing.
Handling Physical Symptoms	If your throat or mouth is dry, try taking sips of room-temperature water. If your hands are shaking, keep them on the lectern or avoid making gestures. If your legs are trembling, try leaning them against the lectern. If your voice is shaking or cracking, try slowing down and breathing.
Your Sympathetic Audience	Remember that your audience wants you to give an engaging and interesting presentation—they're naturally sympathetic! Make eye contact with someone with a friendly face. Many presenters find themselves relaxing when they focus on talking to <i>individuals</i> in the audience.

Critiquing Your Own Presentation

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8-3 Proofreading, Formatting, and Submitting Project Two: Presentation!

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Finishing Touches and Submission

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8-4 Course Wrap Up

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Reflecting on the Course

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Module Eight Short Responses

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Course Feedback

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