

Tips for Effective Presentation

Tip 1: Maintain eye contact while presenting and smile

In order to give each of your listeners the feeling of being important and to make them feel personally addressed, it is particularly important to maintain eye contact with the audience during the presentation. Not only does this exude confidence, but it also helps your audience to connect with you and your subject. It also helps you feel less nervous.

Easier said than done right? Here's what can help:

- Find someone in the audience who seems to be genuinely interested in the topic and is listening attentively (for example, your lecturer). Make eye contact with this person at the beginning of the presentation. Once you start feeling more calm and confident let your gaze drift over the audience to address the other listeners as well. Keep returning your gaze to the initial person to stay calm throughout the whole presentation.
- Another alternative is to find a fixed point in the room (preferably on the wall behind the audience) which you fix at the beginning of the presentation. Similar to the first example, after you have achieved confidence, you can let your gaze wander over the audience and return to the previously selected fixed point again and again.

Don't look at the screen!

Don't look at the floor!

Don't just look at your index cards!

Don't just look at the laptop!

Tip 2: Use of gestures and facial expressions

To emphasize the content of your presentation, it is advisable to use appropriate gestures and body language to get your message across. Avoid crossed arms, hands behind your back, or in your pockets during a presentation.

Always stand up straight, and try not to appear tense or stressed. You can do that by using your hands and arms to emphasize what you are saying and get your message across.

Your facial expressions should always be friendly and open. Smile and show that you enjoy the topic and you are confident in the information you are presenting.

Tip 3: Avoid distractions

Often you will not be able to avoid the use of aids. For example, you may need to use a laser pointer to show something on the screen, or you may need to use a pen to write something down on a flipchart.

To avoid distractions for you and the audience, get into the habit of putting down tools you don't need! That way you will not be tempted to deal with them in the first place. You will also have your hands free for gestures.

Tip 4: Be prepared: Practice makes perfect

Practice makes perfect, right? If you prepare well before the presentation, you will feel more relaxed and confident while presenting and it will also improve your body language.

Here are some ways to help you prepare for a presentation:

- Rehearse in front of a crowd
- Take notes
- Experiment
- Time yourself
- Record yourself

Tip 5: Be confident

By appearing self-confident, you convey to the listener that you are confident in your topic and have prepared yourself sufficiently. Try to relax and not appear too stressed or nervous.

Another tip for advanced speakers: Step out in front of the podium and walk around the room and get closer to the audience. This also exudes self-confidence and helps in attracting your audience's attention.

Tip 6: Effective beginning/end

Good presentation skills can help you in captivating your audience straight away. In order to do that, you should start your presentation with a bang. Many studies show that if you can capture someone's interest straight away, there's a good chance they'll listen to the rest of the presentation. Shock the audience, ask them to

imagine something or think of a what-if situation, share a personal story, share a joke, use a quote, or a video. You should also give an overview of the time and structure of your presentation. This outline should run through your presentation so that you can always assign the individual contents to an outline point. It is also helpful for your audience to have the outline displayed in a slimmed-down form during the whole presentation.

How you end the presentation is as important as how you start it. A weak ending will leave the audience uninspired. But a good ending will motivate them and help them walk away on a positive note. For example, include a call to action, end the presentation with a memorable quote, or a personal story, and don't forget to thank and acknowledge the audience.

Tip 7: Speak freely

The headline speaks for itself. To make the presentation as lively and enjoyable as possible, you should avoid reading it off. Speak freely, slowly, and clearly. If you are not yet confident in what you are presenting, try using note cards. But keep in mind: No continuous text, but only short, concise bullet points!

If you use note cards to support you, it is especially advisable at this point to memorize at least the beginning and end of your presentation, as eye contact is crucial at these points.

Tip 8: Avoid filler words

In order to make your presentation flow as smoothly and confidently as possible, you should avoid using filler words such as "um," "so," and so on. For your listeners, these words convey insecurity and inadequate preparation.

Tip 9: Bring along something to share

In addition to a handout, other small takeaways can also significantly improve your presentation. For example, if you are giving a presentation on gummy bears, why not offer some to your audience? If you are giving a presentation about your fishing hobby, why not show the audience your fishing equipment?

Tip 10: Use different types of media

A presentation can quickly become boring and monotonous. To avoid this, it is advisable to use different types of media. For example, combine videos and flipcharts, use the whiteboard, or show something practical on a model. This will

increase the attention of your audience enormously and will help in keeping them engaged until the end.

Tip 11: Use effective pauses

When giving a presentation, you should keep in mind that you have already heard the content several times - your audience probably hasn't! Therefore, give your audience enough time to read and understand the content of your slides.

Effective use of speech pauses is a master technique. It is one of the most versatile tools in a presenter's toolbox. Yet very few people perform it well. A pause, if used correctly, can add a great deal to your presentation or speech. Pause before, during, or after saying something that you would like to emphasize. Pausing between two different parts of your presentation can indicate to the audience that something new is coming. A quick pause could also help you in remembering your next point, without the audience noticing that you forgot what to say.

Tip 12: Speak the language of the audience

When creating your presentation, you should already think about your target audience. This will help you present successfully later on. It is especially important that you speak the language of the audience. Use appropriate and relevant examples. Use "strong" and meaningful words in short sentences to avoid losing the audience.

Make sure to use appropriate analogies and anecdotes and avoid foreign words, empty phrases, and clichés. If you have to use foreign words, explain them in a handout or footnote within the presentation.

Tip 13: Engage with the audience

Always try to keep the attention of your audience and keep them engaged during a presentation. To do this, it is advisable to regularly involve the audience. One way to do this is to ask questions. Deliberately ask "easy" questions so that can easily be answered by your audience.

Another way to involve the audience in your presentation is by interacting with them. To make a point clearer, you can use an example to explain it in more detail, using a person (whose name you should know). You can address participants directly and refer to their work.

Tip 14: Don't fight the stage fright & take deep breaths

Stage fright is one of the biggest enemies of a presentation, yet you shouldn't let yourself be a victim of your fear. Do not fight it, rather address your fear and try and accept it, and transform it into positive enthusiasm. Don't let your stage fright get you all worked up and nervous. Take a couple of deep breaths to get oxygen to your brain and relax your body.

Tip 15: Choose the right angle on standing during a presentation

One of the most frequent questions that speakers ask themselves during a presentation is, how do I best position myself, and where do I stand in front of the audience?