
UNIT 8 PRESENTATION SKILLS-II

Structure

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8.0 OBJECTIVES

In the previous Unit the focus was on introductions and outlines. This unit takes you forward and introduces you to

- commonly used structures of presentations
- using visual aids
- language associated with visual aids
- summaries and conclusions
- question/answer sessions at the end of the presentations
- practicing presentations

8.1 WARM UP

Engaging the interest of the audience is central to the success of a presentation. Read these statements about the audience. To what extent do you agree with them? Discuss with a friend or a colleague at the Study Centre.

- Effective presenters recognize that communication is both intellectual and emotional. Organizing your ideas is part of the task. The other is to gain and maintain attention.



- Listeners listen only 25 to 50% of the time.
- The audience will forgive a lot if the speaker is enthusiastic. But don't confuse enthusiasm with loudness.
- Compose for the Ear, not for the Eye.

8.2 READING: STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION

Structures of Presentations

Once you know what you want to say, you need to consolidate the materials into a meaningful message. When organizing your ideas begin by placing your topic in context.

The commonly used structures in presentations are:

- 1) Topical: This is when you have several ideas to present and one idea seems naturally to precede the other. This is one of the most common types of patterns, and it is especially useful for informative presentations.
- 2) Chronological: This uses time sequence for a framework. This structure is useful in informative and persuasive presentations, both of which require background information.
- 3) Classification: Puts things into categories. For example you might want to talk about three aspects of a product- finance, marketing and production.
- 4) Problem/Solution: This is used mostly for persuasive presentations. The first part of the speech outlines a problem and the second part presents a solution.
- 5) Cause/Effect can be used for persuasive speeches. The first part describes the cause of a problem and the second describes its effect.

Check Your Progress 1

The structure of a presentation is outlined at the outset. Here are three such outlines. Match them with the appropriate structures listed above. Check your answers with the Answer key.

- A) Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I'm here to talk to you about lack of efficiency in the Marketing division. Firstly, I will spell out specific

areas where there has been laxity. Secondly, I will share with you what I believe to be the reasons for low performance in this division. Thirdly, I will suggest solutions for tackling this problem. At the end of my presentation we will have a discussion where you can express your views about the problem.

- B) This morning I am going to talk to you about our new policy on personal loans. I will begin my presentation by outlining the main features of this policy. I will then go on to highlight the major employee benefits of this new policy. Next I will talk you through the new procedure for availing these loans. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have in the course of the presentation.
- C) I'm here to make a presentation on Netlinks Worldwide. I shall begin with a brief history of the company, after which I will present a brief profile of its present status. Next I'll go on to talk to you about our major products and services. I will then focus on specific products and services which could meet your needs and enhance your output. I will conclude my presentation with a 10 minute film on useful packages for your company. In all, my presentation will take 30 minutes.

8.3 STUDY SKILLS: VISUAL AIDS

Using Visual Aids



A variety of visual aids like flip charts, line graphs, bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, maps, tables, diagrams, photographs, etc. can be used for presentations. Visual aids are commonly used in presentations to present information which is complex or statistical in nature.

Visual aids can make a presentation more interesting and easier to understand. They also help you to cut down on the amount of talking you have to do.

However, you must ensure that your visuals are relevant, appropriate and clear. You must never overload them with information. Effective presenters introduce and highlight visual information briefly and clearly, making sure they allow their audience time to absorb the information.

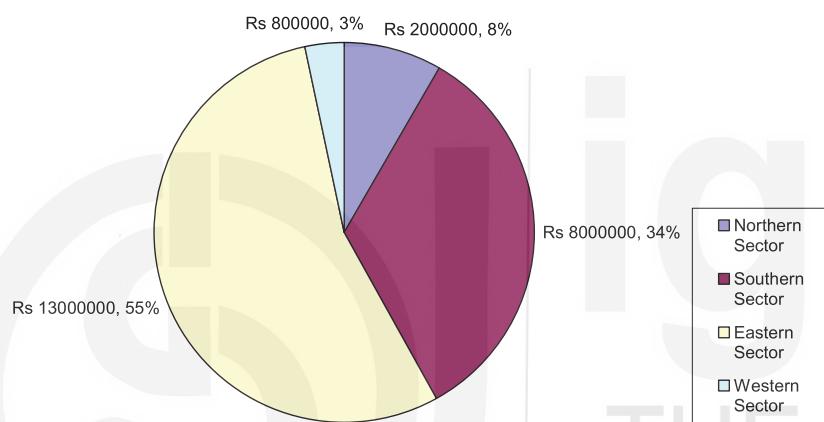
Use visuals to reinforce and clarify, and not to overwhelm the audience.

Here are three samples of visuals commonly used for presentations – a pie chart, a table and a bar graph. In order to be able to talk about them you need language which is specifically used to describe visuals.

Let us recap the useful expressions for introducing visuals which you learnt in the last unit and apply them to the given visuals. The expressions are highlighted in bold. In addition, you will also be introduced to some more formulaic language useful for describing visuals.

- 1) **I'd like to show you** a pie chart that will give you a clear picture of our sales in the four sectors in the last quarter. **As you can see.....**

Sectorwise Sales



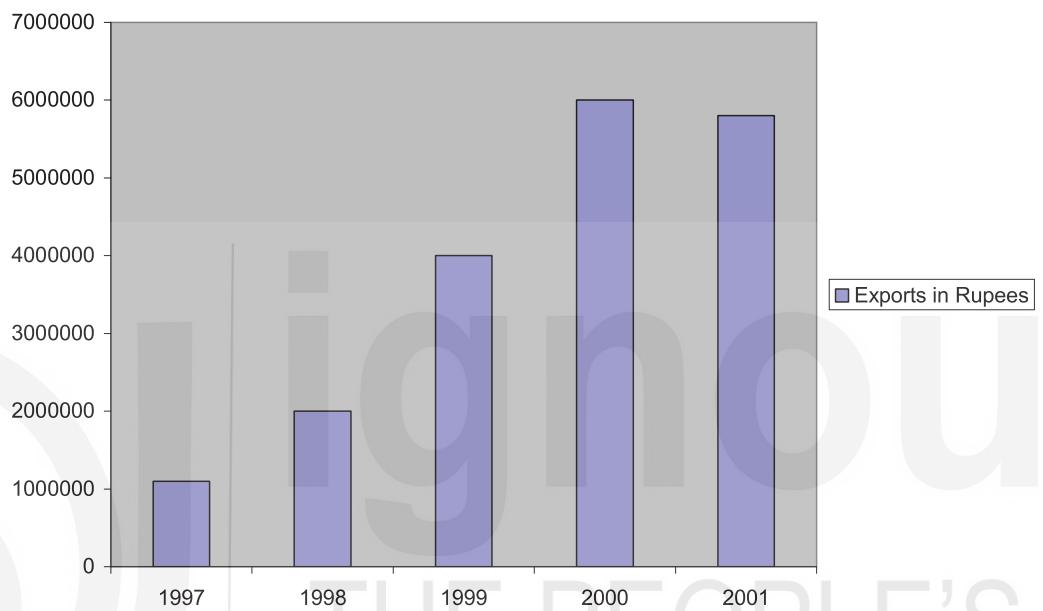
- 2) **Have a look at** this table. It shows the number of students enrolled for our different courses in the last five years. **As you will notice** the demand for our.....

Courses	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
General English	200	180	160	100	50
Business English	35	80	140	140	210
English for Information Technology	20	60	150	80	60

English for the Hotel Industry	40	45	35	45	50
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- 3) This bar graph shows / represents our exports in the last six years.

Exports in Rupees



- 4) Here we can see.....
 5) Let's look at this.....
 6) As you can see in this bar graph

Check Your Progress 2

How would you talk about the visuals given in exercises I, II and III? Practice and record your presentation. Now listen to the three sample tape scripts.

Listen to the tape scripts again and write down the terms used to describe trends in the graph. Check these with the tape script given in the key where these have been underlined for you.

8.4 ENDING THE PRESENTATION

Summaries and Conclusions

Make sure you summarize.

A summary restates the main points and emphasizes what the audience must remember. It should be brief and must not contain any new information.

Create an Effective Conclusion.

Don't just present data or summarized results and leave the audience to draw its own conclusions.

You need to state the logical consequences of what you have said. The conclusion may often contain recommendations. However, the conclusion must also be brief.

Read the two texts that follow: 1 is the summary, and 2 is the conclusion. In the summary we highlight the salient points, while in the conclusions we give recommendations.

1) I'd like to end by emphasizing the main points <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contrary to our expectations our exports have not risen• This is mainly due to our inability to handle foreign buyers• Our Marketing and Sales division has faced various difficulties in overcoming cultural and communication barriers	2) So what do we conclude from this? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We must have specific training in communication skills for those who are dealing with our foreign customers• We must also give them exposure to the culture of our foreign buyers by sending them to International Trade Fairs• Encourage overseas visits for those who deal directly with the foreigners
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Questions? Discussion



During a presentation you are required to give the audience a chance to ask questions. Your policy on questions must be stated right at the outset. While presenting the outline you should let the audience know whether they can interrupt you with questions in the course of the presentations or you would like them to ask questions at the end of your presentation.

Alternatively you can invite the audience to a discussion.

Remember that when members of the audience ask you questions, it means that they have a genuine interest in what you are saying and want to know more. Treat this as an opportunity to get your message across better.

Here are some helpful clues for handling questions:

- try to anticipate questions and prepare responses in advance
- rehearse answers to difficult questions

- listen very carefully – avoid the temptation to interrupt
- make sure you understand the question - paraphrase it if necessary; repeat it if needed
- give yourself time to think
- **be Honest:** if you can't answer the question, say so
- keep control over the audience and don't allow any chaos
- ensure that you entertain only relevant questions
- keep a lookout for time – don't allow the question /discussion session to linger interminably
- **be polite**
- don't forget to thank the audience at the end

Check Your Progress 3

Here are possible ways of dealing with some of the situations mentioned in the clues above. Can you match these with the appropriate clues? Confirm your answers by looking at the Key.

- i) If I understood you correctly, you want to know whether this method of working has been used by any other organization. Is that correct?

.....
...

- ii) I'm afraid I don't see the connection.

.....
...

- iii) To be honest, I don't have that information with me.

.....
...

- iv) Can we ensure that we speak one at a time please?

.....
...

- v) I'm afraid that's all we have time for today.

.....
...

- vi) Thank you for coming and for being such enthusiastic participants.

.....
...

8.5 LANGUAGE FOCUS: TALKING ABOUT INCREASE AND DECREASE

Most visuals used for presentations represent some kind of change or trend – an increase or a decrease. Some of them make comparisons. Be clear about whether you need to talk about the quantum of increase / decrease or the speed at which the increase / decrease has taken place. This will help you to choose the right language.

Here is language that can help you to describe these accurately and appropriately.

When you wish to describe the quantum of increase or decrease you could use the following expressions:

- 1) There was a **marginal fall / rise** in sales or
Sales **rose / fell marginally**.
- 2) There was a **nominal increase / decrease** in expenditure on overheads or
Expenditure on overheads **increased / decreased nominally**
- 3) There was a **considerable improvement** in savings or
Savings **improved considerably**.
- 4) There was a **significant rise** in production or
Production **rose / went up significantly**.

Words like **slight, marked, dramatic** are also used to describe changes or differences.

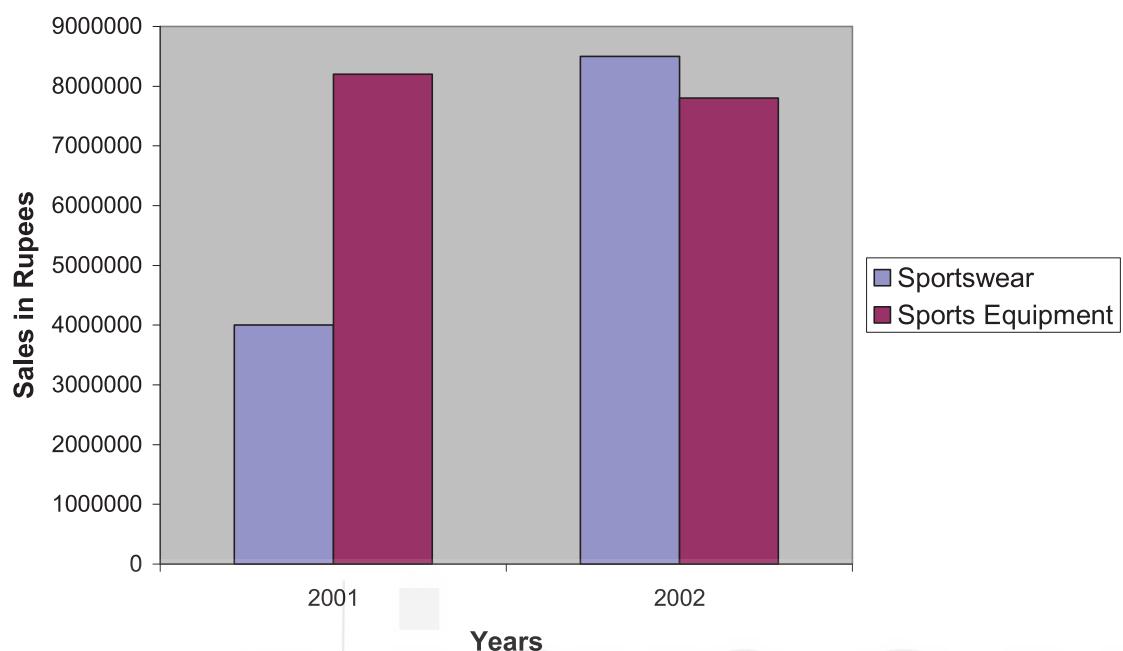
The speed of increase / decrease can be talked about with the help of these expressions:

- 1) There was a **slow increase** in the sale of televisions or
The sale of televisions **increased slowly**.
- 2) There was a **gradual improvement** in the interest rates or
The interest rates **improved gradually**.
- 3) There has been a **steady improvement** in the skilled labour situation over the last five years or
The labour situation has **improved steadily** over the last five years.
- 4) There has been a **rapid rise** in the cell phone market or
The cell phone market has **risen rapidly**.
- 5) There was a **quick decline** in the share market.
The share market **declined / deteriorated / went down quickly**.

Check Your Progress 4

Here is a visual on sales figures of sportswear and sports equipment in the last two years. Complete this write up on the visual making use of suitable words from above:

Sales Figures of Sportswear & Sports Equipment



The bar graph shows the comparative sales figures of Sportswear and sports equipment in the years 2001 and 2002. In the year 2001 our income from sale of sportswear was _____ of the income from sale of sports equipment. However, there was a _____ of more than 40000000 in the sale of sportswear in the year 2002. On the other hand, the sale of sports equipment _____ in 2002.

Check your answers with the key. Remember that a variety of expressions can be used to describe this graph. What is given in the key is one possible way of doing this.

8.6 GRAMMAR: PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions play an extremely important role in talking about visuals. If you say '*The sales rose to Rs. 300000*' instead of saying '*The sales rose by Rs 300000*', the entire meaning of your text will be changed. So it is very important to use the right prepositions.

Check Your Progress 5

Complete this text by inserting the appropriate prepositions from the box. You may use some of the prepositions more than once:

to	on	from
at	by	of

I'd like us to look _____ this part of the graph in more detail. As you will notice, we started this year _____ a weak note with sales at the Rs. 51000 mark. However, as you can see, sales rose dramatically by the end of the first quarter _____ Rs. 51000 _____ Rs. 100000, which means they rose _____ Rs. 490000 – an increase _____ almost 100%. I would also like to draw your attention _____ our performance in the second quarter where the sales have dropped marginally _____ Rs. 700000. If we don't focus our attention _____ the northern sector, chances are that we may have a further decline in our sales.

8.7 LISTENING: PODIUM PANIC

Before doing a listening task, you must take care of the following:

- See that your equipment is in order
- Read through the questions quickly
- Listen to the tape and answer the questions-as much as you can.
- Listen again, to complete answering as well as to check any mistakes.

Check Your Progress 6

Listen to this audio on podium panic and answer the questions that follow. Remember to choose your answers on the basis of the logic used by the speaker.

- i) The speaker suggests that
 - a) almost all speakers suffer from fright
 - b) few speakers suffer from fright
 - c) fright can be totally overcome
- ii) The audience is forgiving when your mistakes are
 - a) because of inadequate preparation
 - b) out of nervousness
 - c) few
- iii) Sharing your fears with friends helps you to
 - a) speak better
 - b) relax and overcome your anxiety
 - c) find solutions to your problems
- iv) Learning your introduction helps you to
 - a) make a good first impression
 - b) to control the audience better
 - c) to feel more confident

8.8 SPEAKING

Plan a complete presentation with outline, introduction, the body - which must include at least one visual, and the conclusion. Also don't forget the question /answer session. The topic could be one that is relevant to your company or interests. In case you can't decide about a topic on your own you may choose one of these:

- 1) Your Favourite sport
- 2) Holidays
- 3) Tourism
- 4) The Structure of your Company / Department
- 5) Training facilities in your company
- 6) Customer service
- 7) Overcoming job stress

Make the presentation before your friends / study partners and ask them to give you a feedback in the following areas:

- 1) Content
- 2) Structure
- 3) Rapport with audience
- 4) Body language
- 5) The quality and use of visual aids
- 6) Language – grammar & vocabulary

Alternatively, record your presentation. Listen to it and assess yourself on the basis of the above mentioned criteria. Take it to the Study Centre, play it to your colleagues for their comments.

8.9 PRONUNCIATION : EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANT WORDS IN CONTEXT

Stressing the right words is an important aspect of Presentation Skills.

Can you underline the words that you think should be stressed more in the given sentences?

- 1) Sales have increased from last year. But the profits have hardly moved at all.
- 2) It's hard to enter the Middle East market. But its harder still to break into the European market.
- 3) There are three points I'd like to make. And all three are about our recent advertising campaign.

- 4) We haven't made big gains yet. But what we've achieved is quite significant.
- 5) We've made inroads into the East zone. But the North zone is still lagging behind.
- 6) Tourist facilities in the region have improved considerably. But we still have a long way to go.
- 7) Better training facilities are not just important. They are an absolute must.
- 8) Customers have a right to expect follow up. We are the ones who have failed them
- 9) The market may be growing. But our market share certainly isn't.
- 10) We need to give more paid leave to our employees. That's the only way to ensure they have adequate time to distress.

8.10 SUMMARY

In this unit, we further developed the ideas we had introduced in the previous unit on Presentations. In the Reading Section we introduced you to the most commonly used structure of Presentations.

In the middle of a Presentation, we often need to use visual aids, especially when the information is complex or statistical in nature. In the section on Study Skills, we give you language which helps you in introducing and talking through pie charts, tables and bar graphs. We also show you ways of ending a Presentation. This would include a recap of the salient points, some recommendations on given situations and the fielding of questions with politeness and honesty.

In the section: Language Focus and Grammar, we have again emphasized on language used in visual aids.

In the Listening section, we have turned to the psychological frame of mind of the Presenter. In the Speaking section, we encourage you to write and practice your own Presentation.

8.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

- 1) Goodale, M. *Professional Presentations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2) Hollett, V. *Business Opportunities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

8.12 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Reading: Structure of Presentation

Check Your Progress 1

- A) 4 Problem - solution

- B) 1 Topical
- C) 2 Chronological

Study Skills: Visual Aids

Using Visual Aids

Check Your Progress 2

Tape scripts

- I) As you can see, the Eastern sector registered the highest sales amounting to Rs 13000000, which was followed by the Southern sector at Rs 8000000. These two alone account for 89% of our sales. The sales figures of the Western and Northern regions are extremely worrying. The western sector's sales figures were disappointing at Rs.2000000 while the Northern sector performed dismally with just 3% of total sales in the last quarter. This is a matter of serious concern and we.....(fade out).
- II) As you will notice the demand for our Business English courses has seen a quick and phenomenal rise in the five years. On the other hand, the registration for our General English course which was the most popular in 1999, has declined dramatically to 1/4th by 2003. The English for Information Technology which peaked at 140 in 2001, has declined surprisingly. This is amazing because the number of students enrolling for the IT courses is on the rise. We must see how we can promote this course more aggressively. The number of candidates for the Hotel Industry course has been fluctuating between 40 and 50 in the last five years. In keeping with these trends(fade out).
- III) As you can see in this bar graph, we've had a steady and fairly dramatic rise in our exports from just Rs 1100000 in 1997 to Rs 6000000 in 2000. However, there was a slight drop in 2001. We now need to ensure that.....(fade out)

Questions / Discussion

Check Your Progress 3

- i) If I understood you correctly, you want to know whether this method of working has been used by any other organization. Is that correct?

Answer: make sure you understand the question - paraphrase it if necessary; repeat it if needed

- ii) I'm afraid I don't see the connection.

Answer: Ensure that you entertain only relevant questions

- iii) To be honest, I don't have that information with me.

Answer: Be Honest: if you can't answer the question, say so

- iv) Can we ensure that we speak one at a time please?

Answer: Keep control over the audience and don't allow any chaos

- v) I'm afraid that's all we have time for today.

Answer: Keep a lookout for time – don't allow the question /discussion session to linger interminably

- vi) Thank you for coming and for being such enthusiastic participants.

Answer : Don't forget to thank the audience at the end

Language Focus: Talking about Increase or Decrease

Check Your Progress 4

The bar graph shows the comparative sales figures of Sportwear and sports equipment in the years 2001 and 2002. In the year 2001 our income from sale of sportswear was **half** of the income from sale of sports equipment. However, there was a **dramatic increase** of more than 40000000 in the sale of sportswear in the year 2002. On the other hand, the sale of sports equipment **fell marginally** in 2002.

Grammar: Prepositions

Check Your Progress 5

Complete this text by inserting the appropriate prepositions:

I'd like us to look **at** this part of the graph in more detail. As you will notice, we started this year **on** a weak note with sales at the Rs 51000 mark. However, as you can see, sales rose dramatically by the end of the first quarter **from** Rs 51000 **to** Rs 100000, which means they rose **by** Rs 490000 – an increase **of** almost 100%. I would also like to draw your attention **to** our performance in the second quarter where the sales have dropped marginally **to** Rs 700000. If we don't focus our attention **on** the northern sector, chances are that we may have a further decline in our sales.

Listening: Podium Panic

Tape script

Everyone experiences stage fright, speech anxiety, or talking terror. Surveys show that fear of speaking in front of groups is one of the greatest fears people have. Some surveys find people actually claiming that the thought of giving a speech is more frightening than falling off a cliff, financial difficulties, snakes, and even death.

I'd like to share with you some techniques people use for coping with fright.

Remember that your audience understands your nervousness; they know what you are feeling and will forgive it; similarly they will forgive honest mistakes.

Also nervousness is usually invisible; most will not notice the small changes in your voice or occasional mistakes; most speakers who describe themselves as nervous appear confident and calm to the audience.

All you need to do is be yourself; let the real you come through. Don't be afraid to hesitate when you speak, but just make sure you pause at the right places. A certain amount of hesitation is quite natural.

You can help yourself further by beginning in your comfort zone; practice with friends; share your fears with them.

Another way to counter fright is to begin with a slow, well-prepared introduction. Memorize your introduction, so that when you begin you will feel confident and in control. Also ensure that you have a confident and clear conclusion.

However, the most important thing is to be well prepared and practice.

Check Your Progress - 6

- i) a
- ii) b
- iii) b
- iv) c

