Giving a presentation

Lincoln University
Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki
AOTEAROA • NEW ZEALAND

A. Prepare

1. Decide on your general purpose
   - *Is it to inform, to persuade, to entertain, a mix of these?*

2. Decide on your specific purpose(s)
   - *What are the specific objectives that can be achieved in the time available ?*

3. Analyse the setting
   - *Cultural context ?*
   - *Formal or informal ?*
   - *Place - facilities, size & layout of room ?*
   - *Time of day & place in programme ?*
   - *Time allotted ?*
     (NB 10 mins = approx 500 words;
     20 mins = approx 1000 words)

4. Analyse your audience
   - *Size of audience ?*
   - *Demographics - age, gender, group membership, language background ?*
   - *Knowledge level & interest ?*
   - *Motivation - "captive" or volunteer ?*
   - *Attitudes & beliefs - accepting or sceptical of your findings ?*

5. Decide on the format
   - *Written speech? Lecture with notes?*
   - *Use of props or visuals ?*
   - *Audience participation ?*

6. Gather the information

B. Focus

1. Clarify your main message or theme

   ▪ *What is the underlying message you want the audience to remember ?*

2. Choose the key points

   ▪ *Be ruthless – expect that your audience might remember only 3-5 main points*

3. Select supporting detail for each point

   ▪ *What evidence will you use to support the key points?*

C. Organise & develop

1. Create a logical framework

- Choose an appropriate logical sequence

  - *For example, chronological, spatial, problem-solution, advantages-disadvantages, detail (general to specific), significance*

- Lead your audience through the material by making the logical structure obvious

  - *Use regular <u>preview</u> (e.g. "There are three reasons for this approach") and <u>review</u> (e.g. "So, it's clear that ...") statements*
  - *Use signposting language to list points (e.g. "First"," Next") and to move from one point to another (e.g. "I'd like to move on now to ...")*

2. Develop the ideas

- *How will you explain the material to **this** audience in **this** setting ?*

3. Write an introduction

"Tell them what you're going to tell them"

- *Include an opening which interests and involves the audience (link the audience to the subject),*
- *a statement of the topic,*
- *a reference to the aims or purpose,*
- *background information,*
- *an overview*

4. Write a conclusion

"Remind them what you've told them."

- *Include a link back to the aims/purpose of the presentation,*
- *a summary of important points,*
- *implications, evaluations, conclusions,*
- *a firm finish*

5. Design supporting materials

- *See page 5 for tips on designing visuals*

Designing visuals

Focus on key points
- Limit your slide to 1 main idea and 3 - 4 items of details
- Use key words and phrases rather than whole sentences

Make the slides "visually interesting"
- Use diagrams, graphs etc in preference to words where appropriate
- Use visual clues to highlight relationships between points

Make slides easy to read
- Make sure the text is large enough.
- Limit upper case to first letter of proper nouns and first words of titles
- Check that the colour (and colour contrast) is easy to read at a distance

Make slides simple and "uncrowded"
- Limit the amount of information (e.g. max. of 7 - 9 words per line, 6 - 7 lines of text or 25-30 words per image)
- Use space and "shape" carefully (left align text; double space lines)
- Use a consistent style (use a limited range of font size, colour, and other features such as underlining, italics, bolding etc.)

Use graphs, tables & diagrams appropriately
- Use diagrams to illustrate complex relationships
- Use graphs to summarise data
- Choose graphs which suit your data (e.g. pie charts to show percentages of the whole; bar graphs to compare or rank; line graphs for changes over time, frequencies, correlation)
- Use tables sparingly, and avoid including too many numbers

Create visuals that will be integrated with the spoken message
- Select visuals that are relevant
- Let them aid you, not replace you (introduce them so the audience understands their purpose; talk <u>about</u> them, rather than repeat or read them)

D. Rehearse

1. Practise your delivery

- Language
  - *Use language appropriate to this audience and setting*
  - *Use an oral style (unless the setting calls for "written language read aloud")*

- Body language
  - *Maintain eye contact with the audience*
  - *Make yourself (not the equipment) central*
  - *Aim for a relaxed posture (but not too relaxed !)*

- Voice
  - *Use a strong voice (check beforehand that you can be heard)*
  - *Speak slightly more slowly than usual but with your natural rhythm*
  - *Speak clearly*
  - *Pause frequently*
  - *Keep your head up*

- Enthusiasm & energy
  - *Show enthusiasm*
  - *Build rapport with the audience –"talk" to the audience, use "we" and "you", smile !*

2. Check the venue & practise with equipment

3. Anticipate the questions

E. Present

1. Take charge

- *Remember that some degree of nervousness is usual – and valuable (adrenalin ensures you are ready for peak performance!)*
- *To help control nervousness ...*
  - *Be (very) well prepared*
  - *Use positive self talk*
  - *Learn to control your breathing and breathe from the diaphragm.*
  - *Know exactly how you'll begin.*

2. Relax ! Look on it as a learning experience !

Using visuals

Keep yourself central
- Position yourself in the centre
- Maintain eye contact with the audience
- Remove the image if it will distract the audience

Decide how you will focus attention on individual points
- Laser pointer? Mouse? Highlighting?

Check the "practicalities”
- Which side should you stand on?
- What is the audience's view?
- How many slides should you use?
- How long should you display images for?

Develop a contingency plan (in case the technology fails)

Useful Resources

If you would like to know more about giving an oral presentation, check out the workshops, drop-in sessions, and individual appointments we offer.   Visit our website at http://ltl.lincoln.ac.nz/ *or ask at the Service Point*

There are also many useful resources available in the LU library and on the Web. For instance:

Hay, I., Bochner, D., & Dungey, C. (2002). *Making the grade: A guide to successful communication and study* (2nd ed.)*.* Melbourne, Australia: Oxford University Press.

Loughborough University's site on oral presentations: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/library/skills/topicslist/topic---oral-presentations.html

University of Technology, Sydney's site on oral presentations: http://www.ssu.uts.edu.au/helps/resources/speaking/index.html

There is also a range of web sites for those studying in English as an additional language. For instance:

University of Warwick's site on English for conferences: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/learning_english/leap/conferences/