



Presenting Effectively

Sewwandi
Gunawardhana

Presenting effectively...

Effective communication skills are necessary NOT ONLY to make public speeches or presentations in public but they are essential in day to day life

When we need to communicate with others either to inform/ convince/ sell something/ win their hearts/ get something done by them, *how you say it* matters!

In business or academic activities, the ability of making presentations/speeches effectively is an added advantage

However, effective public speaking is interestingly, a skill you could develop.

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Know your audience

- It is important to know in advance, the audience you are about to address.
- Age, gender, education level, field of expertise, cultural background, etc. may all be considered.
 - For example,; a speech on, “a healthy lifestyle” may be a better topic to discuss with an elderly audience than a speech on, “social networks”

Selection of speech topic

- If you have been given the freedom to select your own topic, select a topic you are familiar with/ something you know very well
- Even if you have been given a topic, research well and do your homework before you actually speak

Prepare

- Preparation is the key to success
- Research your topic well and write down your speech points/ facts on a piece of paper
- Weave your points/ facts logically into a speech
- Read again and again
- Edit! Edit!! Edit!!! (Until the speech suits the given time, does not have too many facts, graphs, etc. and has a clear logical flow)

Rehearse

- Rehearsing your speech makes you more confident
- Try rehearsing in front of a small audience (e.g. two or three friends)
- If you can not find an audience to rehearse, rehearse in front of the mirror.
- With the mirror you can practice appropriate gestures as well.

Keep well within the given time

- Keeping well within the time allocated for your speech is really important.
- However interesting your speech maybe, if you speak too long, your audience will get bored.
- Similarly, do not make the speech too short, it has to at least meet the minimum time limit.
- If your speech is too short, your audience may feel you are lacking confidence in what you say.

Avoid jargon, use simple language

- Do not use difficult words, technical terms, etc. especially when you are speaking to the public.
- Use simple, easily understandable language in public speaking.
- If your message is not delivered clearly, your speech will not achieve what was expected.

Opening, body and conclusion

- Your speech should consist of three parts;
 - Opening
 - Body
 - Conclusion
- The speech opening should be attention grabbing (e.g. a quote, question, prop or anything appropriate)
- The speech body can be rich with facts, graphs, charts, etc. but do not overload your audience with facts and make them tired
- The conclusion should be memorable with a strong message or call for action

Eye contact

- It is important to make proper eye contact with the audience and make them feel wanted or feel engaged
- If it is a small audience, make eye contact with every member of the audience whilst speaking.
- If it is a large audience, try to make random eye contact with some people representing each physical section of the hall/ auditorium.

Gestures/ facial expressions

- Appropriate body language could contribute towards understanding your speech points
- However, the body language used should be natural
- Gestures used and facial expressions should be suitable to the words uttered.

Vocal variety

- Varied volume, rate, pitch etc. could be used to enhance the message delivered through your speech.
- Even the softest tone uttered should be clearly heard by the audience

Visual aids

- Use visual aids and props where necessary as it would help your audience understand your message better.
- If you are presenting PowerPoint slides, the slides themselves are visual aids.

Be in the limelight!

- Speaking in front of an audience means, you are performing!
- Do not hide behind the lectern
- Do not turn your back to the audience and just keep reading your slides to them
- YOU are the SPEAKER and YOU should be in the LIMELIGHT to give your audience a message to remember!



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The end