*Communicating with Impact: A1 Assignment*: Your Presentation Skills Guide

Reflection and Analysis

I presented my idea to two colleagues and one reviewer. Their collective feedback with audio and without audio helped me identify areas of my work that I should start, stop, and continue. This feedback was very valuable for me in shaping my future approach.

YouTube video link: <https://youtu.be/6FLe8WbT-e8>

**Positive Aspects: (what I should continue doing)**

My presentation was successful in engaging the audience through interactive questions, which kept them interested and ensured their understanding as I progressed. The use of questions at the end also gave my talk a conversational tone. Furthermore, my slides effectively used visuals to reinforce concepts in a way that was easy for the audience to understand.

**Areas for Improvement: (what I should start)**

However, my speech lacked a clear structure, making it difficult for the audience to organize the information being shared. To improve this, I should begin my presentations by clearly outlining 2-3 key topics or themes that my content will address. Using phrases like “moving to our next point” throughout the presentation will enhance coherence.

In addition, my speaking style was monotonous rather than dynamic, which could make it difficult for key concepts to resonate with the audience. To rectify this, I will concentrate on emphasizing nouns, action verbs, and descriptive phrases to add variety to my oral delivery.

**Things to Avoid: (what I should stop)**

When presenting virtually without shared slides or in situations where technology fails, my communication relies solely on my spoken words. To prepare for these scenarios, I will enhance my slide text to highlight essential keywords, data points, or compelling quotes that the audience can quickly grasp, even without broader context. Over-reliance on "unspoken visuals" can make the presentation fragile.

**Overall feedback:**

The presentation effectively used hand gestures and body language to emphasize key points. However, nervous habits appear under pressure, which can be minimized with practice. The speaker’s facial expressions matched the content, enhancing authenticity. The slides balanced text and visuals well, but text size and keyword highlighting could be improved for readability. Smooth transitions maintained engagement, but lengthy pauses disrupted the flow. Regular practice and timing can help improve this. Overall, refining these areas will enhance the focus on the core content.

In summary, non-verbal tools like strategic gestures, evocative facial expressions, and concise slides strongly supported the delivery of resonating ideas during this presentation. Addressing areas needing tweaks from nervous tics to seamless flow will elevate an already above-average effort to excel as an impactful speaker able to meaningfully connect with any audience.

Self-Analysis:

Short summary on Networking:

Networking is about cultivating relationships to open new opportunities. It involves attending events, establishing authentic connections, and maintaining consistent follow-ups. It's important to help before seeking help. Prioritize listening over self-promotion. Focus on the quality of connections rather than the quantity. Personalize your follow-ups. Maintain authenticity instead of viewing interactions as transactions. Lifelong partnerships can broaden your horizons. Begin by reaching out on a small scale.

The crux of networking lies in nurturing genuine relationships, providing value, ensuring regular engagement, and emphasizing meaningful interactions over numerous ones.

**Strengths:** The deliberate use of body language and hand gestures was a key strength highlighted by the reviewers. By keeping my hands active and using broad gestures to emphasize important points, I was able to underscore my messages and keep the audience engaged. My facial expressions were in sync with the content and sentiment I was trying to convey, which increased relatability. Furthermore, the design of my slides struck a good balance between text and visuals, simplifying complex topics into easily understandable elements.

**Areas for Improvement:** However, several areas needed refinement. My nervous habit of swaying detracted from the perceived confidence and professionalism, which are crucial for gaining audience trust. By adjusting my posture, slowing down my speech pace, and holding my notes less tightly, I can likely eliminate these visual distractions. Reviewers also noted that my transitions were marred by lengthy pauses, which disrupted the momentum of the presentation and engagement. Better memorization of segues and rehearsing with timers could help smooth out the flow. Lastly, making basic design changes such as increasing text size for readability and bolding keywords would enhance the usability of the deck.

Plan of Action:   
**Minimize Nervous Habits:** Practice your presentation in front of a mirror or record yourself to become aware of any nervous habits such as swaying. Once you’re aware of these habits, you can consciously work on reducing them. Deep breathing exercises before the presentation can also help calm your nerves (*Harvard Business Publishing Education*, n.d.).

**Enhancing Speaking Style:**

1. **Practice Tone Variation:** Work on aligning the emotional quality of your voice with the content of your presentation.

2. **Adjust Pitch:** Experiment with varying the highness or lowness of your voice to add dynamism to your speech.

3. **Modulate Volume:** Emphasize key points by altering your volume - louder for important information, softer for detailed explanations.

4. **Record and Review:** Record your practice sessions, listen to them, and make necessary adjustments. This will help you identify areas for improvement and track your progress.

Top 3 Suggestions for Peer:

**Find your Style**: There's a multitude of successful speaking techniques, so it's crucial to discover the one that's uniquely yours. Incorporate your personality, experiences, and choice of words into a distinctive pace and flow of speech that's tailor-made for you. Regularly rehearse expressing your vision. Seek honest feedback and persistently refine your most potent style (*PM Article: 15 Tips for Communicating With Impact*, 2015).

**Minimizing communication noise ensures your message is clear and actionable:** Remember, communication isn't just about words; body language and tone are crucial too. Any misalignment can distort your intended message. Clear communication fosters trust and a positive work environment (Tronstad, 2023).

**Storytelling is an influential communication strategy** : By knowing your audience, staying genuine, invoking emotions, delivering a clear message, and honing your storytelling abilities, you can craft engaging and unforgettable narratives for your listeners (OneUpOneDown, 2023).

Script:

Hi, good evening guys. Thank you for spending your time with me this evening. So today we are going to talk about networking. Have you been to any networking events before? Yes, that's nice. So I've let me explain how networking works there. There is basic idea about networking is that you go and meet new people and build relationships with them, but there's also a mutual benefit on talking and having a conversation with the new. People, right? Yeah. So in the beginning I was so shy and hesitant how to put myself to an uncomfortable area to unknown people, but then I pushed my boundaries to become a open networker. So I went to events happening in my school and seminar and conferences that boost my confidence to talk with new people. And I also saw an amazing investment in networking. Say I gained visibility and there are people who helped me through some things in school. Say, uh, about basic things in, uh, U. S. say email, uh, the formats and other things, say mentorship. It altered me in a very different way as, uh, it gave me a different perspective.So I can say, like, when you Go and meet when you go out. You kind of feel like you are really new to this, but networking is a place where you can really explore your options on, uh, about your career wise and professional wise, and you can have access to sponsors and collabs. So let me make a clear idea on what are the Things you need to prioritize when you're networking, you have to make an appointment or a meeting beforehand. If you're going to meet one by one on one, and if that is very difficult, you can go and attend to gatherings virtually or physically. So, in this habit, you will start having a follow up and start building a really good connection, which will, uh, which will be like a really good drive. To help you and support you through professional things, so I'm welcome to answer your questions.

Do you have any questions?

How the networking is helpful for you? So personally, I am an introvert, so networking pushed me boundaries to talk with new people as in professionally, which, which gave me a confidence about myself and the communication. So it really had an impact in my communication.

So for networking, so you're from a different like cultural background. So how do you like connect with people which are, uh, who are coming from a different cultural background? So how do you like cope up with the differences between you guys? Yes. So that is really a nice question again. So, uh, there's going to be a huge difference in things or the conversation we're going to have, but in a networking platform, in a networking event, people are very interested to know about, uh, new things like they are also here for the same reason to know about each other. So we can be beneficial to both. So, uh, the one point I would say is to start with a lot of confidence and, uh, yeah. To have trust on the content you're going to talk about. Thank you.

**Reference:**

*Harvard Business Publishing Education*. (n.d.). <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/H0382Z-PDF-ENG>

OneUpOneDown. (2023, December 4). *5 Tips for Impactful communication through Storytelling - OneUpOneDown - Women Mentoring*. OneUpOneDown - Women Mentoring. <https://oneuponedown.org/blog-post/5-tips-for-impactful-communication-throughstorytelling/#:~:text=Storytelling%20is%20a%20powerful%20tool,memorable%20experiences%20for%20your%20audience>

*PM Article: 15 Tips for Communicating with Impact*. (2015, February 20). icma.org. <https://icma.org/articles/pm-magazine/pm-article-15-tips-communicating-impact>

Tronstad, T. H. (2023, March 16). The importance of communicating for impact. *Signicat*. <https://www.signicat.com/blog/how-to-communicate-for-impact>