SESSION 5

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PUBLIC SPEAKING

UNIT 1 INFORMATIVE SPEECHES; SPEECHES ON/FOR SPECIAL OCCASION

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1.0 OVERVIEW

In this Unit, we introduce Speech Communication, and focus on Informative Speech. We present a few techniques of Informative Speeches, as well as a few Speech Designs. The Unit also discusses another type of speech: Speech on/for special occasions.

There are no activities in this unit but when going through this unit, you should identify how to apply the skills and knowledge discussed here for Assignment 2.

1.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to do the following:-

1. Define Speech Communication;
2. Identify the specificity and characteristics of an Informative Speech;
3. List a few techniques used in Informative Speech;
4. Describe a few Speech Designs (or Organisational Patterns of Speech);
5. Deliver a Speech on/for a special occasion (Assignment 2);
6. Prepare and present an informative speech (combining knowledge gained in this unit and in preceding units: English usage, nonverbal communication, etc.) – Refer to Assignment 3 in Assignment file.

1.2 WHAT IS SPEECH COMMUNICATION?

Speech communication is used in different communication settings. Although it refers more often to the public speaking setting, speech communication can take place in small-group or interpersonal settings.

Examples of Speech Communication are:

- A public lecture given by a visiting academic in the Paul Octave Wiehe Auditorium (public speaking context)
- One person makes a speech to explain the purpose of the workshop being held and the topics to be discussed (small-group communication)
- A teacher explaining a lesson to one student or discussing a particular difficulty encountered by the student (interpersonal communication)
- Speech communication through radio and television (mass media)

Difference between "speeches" and any other oral encounter:

Speech communication is an intentional, purposeful, usually planned, oral delivery of a content or information to an audience.

Intentional

The term "intentional" implies that the speaker has an intent; the speaker has a topic to talk about, intends to convey specific information, ideas, opinions and meaning.

Purposeful

Generally, the speaker's aim is to inform and/or persuade and/or entertain an audience.

Planned

The speaker researches and/or organises the content of his/her speech, plans the use of presentation aids, decides on the verbal, and sometimes nonverbal forms and messages to be used, in order to achieve his/her purpose.

In whatever context or setting Speech communication takes place, the roles are relatively well defined. In this usually planned communication encounter, the speaker and the audience or listener(s) are clearly identified. In this situation, feedback is mainly nonverbal (in the case of speech using mass media like television, immediate feedback is most often nonexistent).

A speech is organised into a beginning, a body and a conclusion (like an essay, which was discussed in Unit 3). It can be supported or illustrated by means of presentation aids (Discussed in Unit 5). The style is conversational and sounds natural, although the text of the speech may be written.

Three main types of speeches are generally identified, depending on the purpose and nature of the speech occasion.

One same speech can sometimes have more than one of the following purposes, but for presentation purposes, we shall deal with each separately:

1. Speeches to inform or Informative Speeches (Studied in this unit).
2. Speeches on/ for Special Occasions (Studied in this Unit).
3. Speeches to persuade or Persuasive Speeches (Studied in Unit 7).

For ethical purposes, it is important to distinguish between the informative speeches and the persuasive speeches we deliver. Also, as audience/citizens, we are more and more exposed to speeches that mix both information and persuasion. It is essential for us to recognise the different forms of speeches, and the techniques used for information, and for persuasion.

1.3 THE INFORMATIVE SPEECH

1.3.1 Aims of the Informative Speech

Informative Speaking or the Informative Speech aims at sharing knowledge and creating understanding with others.

The Informative Speech can communicate information that is totally new or increase knowledge about something: e.g. a speech on an illness that the audience has never heard of, or a speech to increase knowledge about an illness, its causes, prevention and cure.

Throughout our life, we have been exposed to Informative Speeches. In class, teachers make informative speeches to impart knowledge. Religious talks are Informative Speeches, but can be persuasive too! The mass media of radio and television air a variety of informative speeches.

We ourselves engage in informative speaking; for example, when we explain or teach something to a child or another person, when we give a talk on our profession or job to a school audience, or when we make a presentation in class on a specific topic.

> *An informative speech is to be predominantly informative; that is, most of the content of the speech should focus on increasing audience knowledge and clarifying concepts for greater understanding.*
>
> [Pearson & Nelson, 1994, p. 384]

Informative speeches are meant to give objective, factual, balanced and complete information on a topic. Unlike the persuasive speech (discussed in Unit 7), **the informative speech does not attempt to influence people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.** However, since the Informative Speech can shape perceptions and can determine attitudes, beliefs and behaviour, this kind of speech should provide the audience with all relevant or necessary information, revealing or clarifying the audience's options or possible choices. The audience is then left to make its own choice, a reasoned and informed one.

For example, if one has to make an informative speech on electric showers to help the audience make its own choice, one might include such information as:

- The types of showers that exist, and that are available on the local market
- The different brands and prices
- The different types or brands appropriate for different locations, type of housing, water pressure and supply.

After the speech, or after the information is acquired, the individual makes his/her own choice based on personal preferences, requirements and means.

1.3.2 Audience, Topic, Content

- The Audience

It is essential to know for what audience the speech is intended. The audience determines *what* you talk about, the content and level of difficulty of your speech, and how you talk about the subject, e.g. the speech technique(s) to be used (See section 5.4), or even the Speech Designs that are most appropriate (section 5.5).

We know that the same topic, subject and message content cannot be communicated (not to say "thrown at") different audiences in the same way. Therefore, the informative speaker must prepare a speech appropriate for the audience. The appropriate speech is determined by such factors as the audience's age, background or instruction, prior knowledge of the topic dealt with, and language comprehension.

Sometimes, informative speeches are addressed to a "mixed" or varied audience. The speaker must, in this case, be even more careful in the choice of the content and message, and find ways to convey information and knowledge to a maximum number of people, in an effective manner.

The speaker must try to attend to the needs or desires of the audience. It would not serve the purpose of informative speaking if the speaker conveys information or knowledge which does not at all interest the audience, or is too far from its experiences or needs. For example, explaining to a Mauritian audience the precautions to take with garden plants under freezing weather conditions!

To catch and maintain the audience's interests, the speaker can relate the knowledge to be shared or imparted, with the audience's experiences, context and needs.

- **The Topic**

For an informative speech, we often have to narrow a topic or subject. Not all topics are appropriate for informative speeches. Also, not all topics are appropriate for any audience. As mentioned previously, topics have to be relevant to the needs, or interests of the audience.

- **The Content**

After the general topic has been chosen (e.g. tropical diseases), the approach that the speaker chooses, and the information/content included in the speech will be related to the speaker's goal or intent, and to the audience. For example, the speaker (a medical doctor) intends to inform the audience (lower secondary school students) on ways to prevent specific tropical diseases that are likely to affect the given audience (and their family) if certain precautions/measures are not taken.

A speech to introduce a piece of new knowledge will not include the same information as one which aims at increasing the understanding of an audience already familiar with the topic. The speaker must also avoid information overload: the Informative Speech must not provide information in quantity or complexity that cannot be handled by the audience. For instance, one would not deliver the same speech on tropical diseases to school children and doctors!

The following ways and means can be used to make the content more interesting, clearer, easier to remember, and to hold the audience's attention:

- Use of examples, illustrations, comparisons,
- Going from the known (knowledge that the audience already possesses) to the unknown (what the speaker wants the audience to learn)
- Use of different types or forms of messages
- Use of visual or other presentation aids, or use of different channels or medium/media of communication

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Activity 1

By now, you should have read through Assignment 3. If you have not done so, refer to it now and then proceed with the rest of this unit.

The first step of Assignment 3 requires you to choose a topic for your informative speech/oral presentation. If you have made your choice, fill in Row 1 of the table below. If you have not made up your mind on a final topic, fill in Rows 1-3 the two or three topics over which you are hesitating. You will make your choice a little later, once you've investigated the scope of your topic and the sources of information.

	Topic	Content (write a sentence outline)	Sources of Information
Example	Solar Energy	To explain what solar energy is, how it functions, its advantages and limits	- interview with two specialists, Mr. X and Ms. Y - Books listed
1			
2			
3			

1.4 TECHNIQUES OF INFORMATIVE SPEECHES

The Informative Speech can use different forms, ways or techniques to convey information. The choice of these techniques is usually determined by the audience, its level of knowledge, and the topic itself. For instance, the speaker should ask the following questions: is the topic a simple, a complex, or a controversial one? What are the speaker's skills and mastery of the subject?

The goal of the informative speaker is to make it easy for the listeners to understand, and to retain, the information imparted. Some techniques that can help to achieve this goal are:

- **definition**
- **description**
- **explanation**
- **demonstration**

Although for convenience sake, we present the different forms or techniques separately, we must remember that more than one form or technique can be used in one same speech. For example, we can define *and* describe the object or process being talked about.

1.4.1 Definition

Definition is used to reveal the meaning of a term, idea, concept or process. For example, in a speech on a given instrument or equipment, the definition will tell the audience what the instrument or equipment is, and what it is used for. Some useful methods of defining are the use of comparison, contrast, synonyms and etymology (the origin or history of a word).

Definition can be used in different kinds of speeches, especially when the audience is not familiar with the subject or topic being talked about. Definitions can also be used at different moments of a speech when there is a need to define a term or idea that the audience may not know.

1.4.2 Description

Description tells the audience what the object, instrument or process is like: what it looks, sounds, feels or smells like. If an object or instrument can be shown, then the speaker can use both description and demonstration (explained in section 5.4.3). Sometimes, it is not practical or possible to carry the object or instrument or machine (e.g. a tractor), to the place where the speech is being delivered. In the case of an informative speech over radio, the medium does not allow the audience to see the object. The speaker and audience must depend on description alone. The speaker has to rely on the use of descriptive language to convey a clear picture: the size, form, weight, colour, and use as reference, the basic questions often used by journalists: the "Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?" questions.

1.4.3 Demonstration and/or Instruction

Demonstration is used, whenever possible or desirable, to show, to the audience an object, a process, a way of doing something: for example, demonstrating how to assemble a kit. Demonstrations are often accompanied by instructions to show or instruct on how something is done or made: e.g. how to use a grinder to grind spices.

Demonstrations often follow a step-by-step sequence. Recipe demonstrations on television constitute a genre we are all familiar with.

Demonstrations need to be clear and simple so as to enable the audience to reproduce the different steps afterwards.

1.4.4 Explanation

> *An explanation is a means of idea development, an alternative way of stating an idea or concept.*
>
> [Pearson & Nelson, 1994, p. 398]

Explanation uses words or terms the audience already knows to increase or provide more in- depth information about relatively abstract concepts, ideas and beliefs. For example, if you are to make a speech on "ideology" or "religion" to secondary school students, you would probably define the term first and then "explain".

Explanation is used to increase the understanding or appreciation of a field of knowledge or of a concept. It is a speech technique often used by teachers in science. For example, in class, the teacher explains a mathematical formula; the science teacher explains how a specific chemical process takes place, after having defined what a chemical process is, the preceding week.

Note: More than one speech technique may be used in one speech. The different techniques are not necessary or appropriate for all speeches.

Activity 2

Refer to the table below and fill in columns 1-5.

1 Topic	2 Content (Sentence Outline)	3 Sources of Information	4 Content (Outline of points to be discussed)	5 Speech Techniques to be used	6 Speech Designs to be used

1.5 SPEECH DESIGNS OR ORGANISATIONAL PATTERNS OF SPEECH

The terms "Speech Designs" or "Patterns of Speech" refer to the type of arrangement used to organise or structure content or information, in a speech. It is the order, sequence or pattern in which ideas are outlined and/or developed.

We shall consider a few types of "speech designs" that can be used individually, or combined, in a speech, depending upon the needs or the purpose of the speech. The choice of a speech design (s) is determined by a number of factors: the nature and purpose of the speech, the information gathered or available, the audience.

1. **Chronological**
2. **Topical**
3. **Spatial**
4. **Sequential**
5. **Problem-and-Solution**
6. **Causal, or cause and effect**

1.5.1 Chronological

The Chronological design is also called the narrative design, or the time-sequence pattern.

This pattern, commonly used in informative speeches, can be used in speeches that deal with some event, idea, practice or issue, over time. In other words, it can be used for subjects that have to do with the past, present and/or future.

For example, if we want to talk about the development of television in Mauritius over the past few decades, we shall find this pattern quite appropriate. Or, if we have to talk of the present situation concerning stillborn babies, we may choose to consider the situation in the forties, in the sixties, in the eighties, and at the end of the twentieth/beginning of twenty-first centuries, to

show that there has been a decrease in stillbirths until the 1980s, before showing that there has been a rise in the last twenty years. Then we may proceed by giving advice on preventive measures to today's parents. (This example is purely fictitious and is not based on facts).

The arrangement in a time sequence can be from the least recent to the most recent, or vice versa.

1.5.2 Topical

The Topical design or topical pattern is a highly versatile pattern that has to do with the subject matter. Divisions that have become standardised, or new classifications, are used to organise the information to be imparted so that the audience can easily grasp the content.

Remember our earlier example concerning a speech on electric showers. For such a speech, the speaker may choose to talk about the different types of electric shower, the advantages and disadvantages of each, the brands and prices, the qualities of each.

Another example: If a radio or television programme wants to talk about the different plants one can grow in the garden, the information may be classified and presented in the following ways: plants to grow in winter or summer, small and big plants and trees, indigenous and "imported" plants.

1.5.3 Spatial

The Spatial design or Spatial pattern organises information in terms of physical or geographical location or proximity.

For example, in a biology lecture, the "heart" may be explained in terms of its place in the structure of the body, in terms of its functions and relation with other parts of the body such as the brain, the lungs, the liver.

Another example is a speech in which one has to present the better-equipped football stadiums on the African continent: one may choose to talk about the stadiums in the northern countries of Africa, then move on to other regions, East-African region or countries, West-African region or countries, southern region or countries.

1.5.4 Sequential

The Sequential pattern or design is a highly versatile pattern; it can be used to outline the steps to be followed in a process, to give instructions that have to be carried out in a systematic way, one after the other.

For example, the sequential pattern can be used to demonstrate the assembling of a kit; first, you assemble these two pieces, then you add the four legs, then you place the four rubber pieces …

Or, when sharing a recipe, this pattern proves helpful and a sure way to obtain a specific cake or dish.

You may have noticed that the speech techniques "demonstration" and "the sequential pattern" are a bit alike.

1.5.5 Problem-and-Solution

The Problem-and-Solution pattern is also called Problem-solving Design. In the case of an informative speech, the speaker establishes that a problem exists, and then suggests a possible solution or different solutions. (Note that this speech pattern is often used in persuasive speeches, in which case the speaker, after establishing that a problem exists, will provide *the* specific solution (s)he is advocating!)

For example, a problem-and-solution pattern can be used by a doctor giving a talk to a group of people on how to heal heartburn. The doctor lists different solutions: change in diet, stopping certain practices (such as heavy smoking), types of medication to be taken.

[In comparison, the persuasive speaker, (for example in a television commercial), will tell the audience that the best solution for heartburns is "product VWX" that is being advertised].

1.5.6 Causal, or Cause-and-Effect

In the causal pattern or design, ideas are developed in relation to each other: Present situations or effects are shown as being results, or consequences of past actions or events. Or, we are told that future consequences will result from today's practices, actions, decisions.

For example, in a speech concerning the tourism industry, the speaker may tell the audience that, if there is no regulation on accommodation services for tourists, then the quality of service goes down and in the long run, the whole tourism industry of the country will suffer.

Note: The cause-and-effect pattern is also frequently used in persuasive speeches. Indeed, many commercials tell us that if we consume "product WXY", then we shall feel or look younger, better, stronger.

Activity 3

Refer to Table in Activity 2. Fill in the last column: "speech designs to be used" after you have carried out research on you topic and gathered material. Go back to the other columns and fill in with as much detail as you can.

1.6 SPEECHES ON/FOR SPECIAL OCCASION

We are all familiar with Speeches on Special Occasions or for ceremonies – for example, on the occasion of a wedding, at a prize-giving ceremony or for Independence Day celebrations.

These occasions can be either informal (e.g. at a wedding) or formal (e.g. the headmaster of a primary school presenting or welcoming the guest speaker on the occasion of Independence Day celebrations).

Speeches on Special Occasions can be informative, entertaining, or even persuasive. Speeches on Special Occasions, like other types of speeches, must take into account the context, the purpose and the audience being addressed. Compared to other types of speeches, Speeches on Special Occasions have their specificity:

> *What's special in this case is not the person doing the speaking but the occasion that creates those expectations in your listeners*

[Pearson & Nelson, 1994, p. 281].

And in this case one of the expectations of the listeners is to hear something profound or memorable.

Below we discuss some categories of speeches on special occasions.

1. Speech of introduction
2. Speech of welcome
3. Speech to present an award
4. Speech of response or acceptance
5. Speech of tribute

1.6.1 Speech of Introduction

A Speech of Introduction usually serves to introduce the main speaker(s) to the audience, and to motivate the audience to listen to the upcoming speaker/speech. The Speaker is presented briefly (profile, accomplishments and standing in the field or subject to be talked about) and the audience is told about the subject and its significance.

The Speech of Introduction does not cover the main speaker's subject; it only serves to arouse the audience's interest and curiosity to hear the main speech. For example, the person making the Speech of Introduction can say something like: "Our guest speaker is going to talk about a nuisance that we all suffer from: Pollution, in its different forms".

The Speech of Introduction needs to build up the speaker's identity (what the speaker knows or has achieved) and not praise his/her abilities as speaker. Remember that the Speech of Introduction must be brief (the audience is here to listen to the speaker, not to you!); therefore, do not dwell too lengthily on the speaker's biography. Often, the more famous the guest speaker you are introducing, the shorter the introduction.

Activity 4

Here is an abridged CV of Ms L. Wong. Due to time constraints, you will not have the chance to speak to her before she delivers her speech on "Media coverage of child Abuse cases". Prepare a brief and interesting Speech to introduce her to your classmates.

Abridged Version of Curriculum Vitae

Name: L. Wong
Date of Birth:
Nationality:
Marital Status: Married [Five adopted children, 12 grand children]

Education
1980 – 1984 PhD in Psychology University (Post-graduate)

1973 – 1976	B.A in Psychology, Sussex University (Undergraduate)
1960 – 1973	Convent of Jesus and Mary.

Employment Record

1998 – Present	Professor of Psychology,
1995 – 1998	Project Director for "Child Protection Issues",
1993 – 1995	Visiting Fellow, University of Cambridge,
1990 – 1992	Senior Lecturer in Psychology,
1986 – 1989	Lecturer in Psychology,
1980 – 1985	Research Assistant, Department of Psychology,
1976 – 1980	Teacher at Rosedale (School).

Research Experience in the field or related fields of "Child Protection" and "Child Abuse".

→ Study of young patients in the hospital environment. Unpublished.

→ Methods of observation and interview of abused children of 5-10 years old. [Co-authored] in Journal of Psychology.

→ **"**Analysis of family structures of battered Women and Children", UNICEF publication, Autumn 1986.

→ Report on Police Training in handling child abuse cases, commissioned by Ministry of Health, UK.

→ Changes in policies for the care and protection of children: a comparative study between UK and France. Funded by Université de L'Europe, and published in its academic journal.

→ Analysis of juvenile delinquency schemes in the West Indies. Ongoing research.

→ Forms of Childhood Abuse and adult types.

Method: Interview, and analysis of biographical materials.

Financial Support: National Prisons Department, UK.

Awards and Honours

1994: Chair, Psychological Research Committee, Carribean Academy of Social Sciences.

1990: The Piaget Award for contributions to studies on Childhood Development.

Publication (about 25 publications in Journals and Books)

- Co-authored Book: “Psychology of Crime”

Other

- Producer of the Series of Monthly Talks on Radio Four on “Psychology and Protection”. Now running into its fourth year.

1.6.2 Speech of Welcome

The speech of welcome usually applies to situations where we have to welcome or introduce guests or visitors other than speakers. The purpose of this kind of speech is to introduce newcomers, guests, visitors to the existing group, and to make them feel more comfortable.

There are numerous occasions for Speeches of Welcome. Some examples are to introduce a new recruit to the rest of the staff, to greet a visitor to your local music group, to welcome a team of players which has arrived for a match with the national or local team, to introduce a foreign professor who will be teaching a few sessions to your group.

Activity 5

Speech of welcome

Ayanda is a visiting student from the University of Zambia, and she will be staying for a month. In a short speech, welcome her to your class. Invent any details you deem necessary and interesting.

1.6.3 Speech to Present an Award

This Speech of Presentation generally informs the audience about the award, the present recipient of the award and his/her achievements. The speech can also give such information as a brief history of the award, the standing of the award and past recipients.

The Speech of Presentation of the award contributes to the atmosphere of dignity and status that this type of situation usually commands.

Activity 6

You have been invited by the Head of the secondary school where you studied to present the Award of "Best Performer at the last HSC examination." Present the award to the winner. Invent any details you deem necessary and interesting.

1.6.4 Speech of Response or Acceptance

Responding to a Welcome

A guest or visitor responds to a speech of welcome to thank the group or organisation for its welcome, and to express appreciation for being invited or accepted.

Acceptance

The person who, as individual or representative of an organisation, receives an award, usually acknowledges the award by means of a speech of acceptance.

The Speaker who receives the award on behalf of a group or organisation, thanks the other persons involved. A few words can also be said to acknowledge the importance of the award and the activity being recognised.

Activity 7

a) You are a visiting student to the Namibia Polytechnic. You have just been introduced and welcomed by one lecturer. Respond to the welcome. Invent any details you deem necessary and interesting.

b) The University of Mauritius has created this year an award for "best behaved class" on campus. Your class has won the award and you have been chosen by your class to receive the award. Prepare a speech of acceptance for the occasion. Invent any details you deem necessary and interesting.

1.6.5 Speech of Tribute

A Speech of Tribute often recognises and celebrates the accomplishments of persons and sometimes the significance of events.

The Speech of Tribute should sketch the relevant achievements and consequences, without exaggeration.

1.7 A FEW POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Speech communication is an *intentional* interaction between a speaker and an audience where the speaker *purposefully*, through *premeditated* verbal and non-verbal messages, informs and/or persuades and/or entertains an audience within a specific communication.
- While the speech is being delivered, direct feedback from the audience is mainly non-verbal.
- The goal of the speech, the audience, the subject matter and context are some of the main factors that influence/determine the content of the speech, the techniques used to convey information and organisational patterns.
- Speeches on /for special occasions are of different types. They must suit the specific occasion or situation.

UNIT 2 MODES OF SPEECH DELIVERY

Unit Structure

2.0 Overview

2.1 Learning Outcomes

2.2 Modes of Speech Delivery

- **2.2.1 Memorised Mode (or Memorised Speaking)**
- **2.2.2 Manuscript Mode (or Manuscript Speaking)**
- **2.2.3 Extemporaneous Mode (or Extemporaneous Speaking)**
- **2.2.4 Impromptu Mode (or Impromptu Speaking)**

2.3 A Few Points to Remember

2.0 OVERVIEW

In this Unit, we learn about different methods of presentation of speeches.

2.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the different modes of speech delivery;
2. Compare and contrast the different modes of speech delivery;
3. Give an effective oral presentation.

2.2 MODES OF SPEECH DELIVERY

Modes of Speech Delivery are methods of presentation of a speech.

Four main modes are commonly identified:

- Memorised mode
- Manuscript mode
- Extemporaneous mode
- Impromptu mode

> *The mode you choose should be appropriate for the message, the audience, and the occasion.*
>
> [Pearson & Nelson, 1994]

2.2.1 Memorised Mode (or Memorised Speaking)

With this mode, a speaker delivers a speech after memorising every word in the speech. Certain situations call for the memorised mode, e.g. acting in a play, reciting a poem you or other people have written.

Some Advantages of Memorised Speaking:

- The speaker is in total control of the wording which has been decided and learnt beforehand.
- The speaker can plan for, or fit into, an exact timing.
- The speaker can use nonverbal language quite amply with this mode of delivery since he/she will have no paper to hold or handle.

Some Disadvantages of Memorised Speaking:

- Time is required for memorisation, and there is the risk of forgetting part of the speech during delivery.

- There is the risk that during delivery, the speaker forgets part of the speech which may contain important information or the speaker may 'go blank' in the middle of the speech, and consequently be at a loss for words and ways to finish the speech.
- The speech can sound memorised and lack spontaneity, reducing the speaker's effectiveness.
- Since the speech is totally prepared in advance and memorised, the speaker cannot respond to the audience/feedback. For instance, when more appropriate words or explanation are needed, the speaker will not be able to react and adapt to the situation.

2.2.2 Manuscript Mode (or Manuscript Speaking)

> *As the name implies, the manuscript mode is a speech delivered with a script of the exact words to be used.*
>
> [Pearson & Nelson, 1994]

In the manuscript mode, the speaker reads out the speech. Indeed, the manuscript contains the fully written speech, word for word. This mode is commonly adopted in symposia where research papers are delivered. Politicians, or speakers making important announcements and who are likely to be quoted, may also prefer this mode.

Some Advantages of Manuscript Speaking:

- The speech can be free of mistakes and error (facts, wording, style) since it is wholly written beforehand.
- The speaker is never at a loss for words because (s)he reads from the manuscript.
- Timing can be controlled if planned in advance.
- Copies of the speech can be made available to journalists to avoid being misquoted.

Some Disadvantages of Manuscript Speaking:

- The speaker tends to pay more attention to the script than to the audience, and to have little eye contact with the audience.
- The manuscript speech restricts the movements and gestures of the speaker who has to read from the script.

- The speech may sound "written" and not spontaneous.
- Reading a written "speech", word for word, makes it very difficult to respond to feedback and adapt to the audience.

2.2.3 Extemporaneous Mode (or Extemporaneous Speaking)

> *The extemporaneous mode is carefully prepared and practised, but it is delivered conversationally without heavy dependence on notes.*
>
> [Pearson & Nelson, 1994]

The speaker will have prepared, organised and rehearsed the speech, but the speech must be delivered in a conversational tone, appearing and sounding spontaneous.

A written script is used which can include the outline, key words, quotations and figures. But the wording is created as the speaker delivers the speech. The speaker focuses on the ideas, messages or meanings to be conveyed.

Advantages of Extemporaneous Speaking:

- The extemporaneous speech allows considerable eye-contact and nonverbal expression.
- The speaker can respond to feedback from the audience, and use wording as well as nonverbal expression that are felt to be more effective and appropriate for the situation.
- Since the speech is largely spontaneous, it is easy to speak in a conversational tone and, to be and sound natural.

Disadvantages of Extemporaneous Speaking:

- An inexperienced speaker may search for words or use weak, inappropriate, or ineffective language.
- Without proper preparation and practice, a speaker may appear to be giving an impromptu speech, or may overuse notes.

- It may be difficult to stick to a specific time frame, since the wording is created progressively as the speech is delivered. The speaker may spend more time on an idea or aspect than intended or necessary.

In spite of certain disadvantages, the extemporaneous mode is usually recommended when learning public speaking because it teaches good preparation, focuses on the message and allows one to adapt to the audience.

2.2.4 Impromptu Mode (or Impromptu Speaking)

An impromptu speech is delivered on the spur of the moment, with no or hardly any time to prepare. For example, if in the middle of an event or meeting, you are asked to make a speech, then you have no choice but to "speak off the cuff"; or, fifteen minutes before an opening ceremony, you are asked to deliver the welcoming speech because the speaker of the day has been taken ill suddenly. In such circumstances, you only have a few minutes to prepare, to jot down a few main ideas on a piece of paper.

There is **hardly any advantage** in an impromptu speech, because of the range of difficulties involved.

However, you can still find yourself having to give an impromptu speech. Knowing the disadvantages of such a situation can help reduce the unpredictability of the result.

Disadvantages of Impromptu Speaking

- The speaker must rely solely on previous knowledge and skills, and (s)he has no time to carry out research, to prepare or to practise.
- Since the language can only be spontaneous, there is no careful choice of words: Words which do not quite convey the speaker's messages or intention, may be uttered. Therefore, impromptu speaking can produce very unpredictable outcomes.

- There is the risk of unnecessary repetition, and/or rambling and omission of important or relevant ideas.

Although we said earlier that the mode of speech should be appropriate for the message the purpose, the audience, the setting or context, and the occasion, we must bear in mind that:

- Different speakers may be more or less comfortable or effective with different modes of delivery.
- Although delivery is an important feature of public speaking, its influence on audience comprehension should not be overrated or overestimated. Comparing the relative importance of delivery and content, certain researchers have found that "there is reason to believe, that content may be more important than delivery". [Pearson and Nelson, 1994].

We are now going to discuss the various presentation aids that may be used for your speech assignment.

UNIT 3 PRESENTATION AIDS

Unit Structure

3.0 Overview

3.1 Learning Outcomes

3.2 Functions of Presentation Aids

3.2.1 Why Use Visual Aids?

3.3 Varieties of Presentation Aids

3.4 How to Optimise the Use of Aids

3.4.1 Preparing for the Presentation

3.4.2 During the Presentation

3.5 Preparing Data for Presentation Aids

3.5.1 Design Principles

3.5.2 Using Animation Effects

3.6 A Few Points to Remember

3.0 OVERVIEW

This unit discusses the use of visual aids as a tool to support and enhance oral presentations.

3.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the functions of presentation aids;
2. Identify the various media that can be used to support the presentation of information;
3. Plan your visual aids and content before the presentation in an effective manner;
4. Design and prepare impactful slides to support your presentation;
5. Use your visual aids intelligently in order to deliver a good presentation.

3.2 FUNCTIONS OF PRESENTATION AIDS

'Presentation aids' is the generic term for various equipment that can be used to help us communicate more effectively. They include devices such as the white or blackboard, overhead projector, slide projector, audio and video equipment.

Various studies have shown that, after listening to a speech conducted without visual aids, people retain only about 20 percent of what they hear. However, if visual items are used to support speech, retention of data increases to approximately 50 percent.

Presentation aids are meant to complement, illustrate, and reinforce what we say.

3.2.1 Why Use Visual Aids?

- They help portray vividly and instantly things that may take time to say. They save time for the speaker and may also operate as 'aide-mémoire' for the latter.
- They can enhance understanding of the topic for the audience.
- They add authenticity to the speech. As goes the saying, "seeing is believing"!
- They add variety in a presentation as they provide the audience with visual items to focus on other that the speaker. Visual materials create interest and thus prevent boredom.
- They help the speech have lasting impact. Visual anchors help the audience remember some key points.
- They give the communicator a physical thing to do, which is sometimes helpful in case of nervousness.

However, when using presentation aids, you should bear in mind a few possible problems. For instance, visual aids are meant to be used as 'aids', i.e. as supporting material for your speech;

they should not dominate the presentation. Many people get so engrossed in the possibilities offered by technology that they allow it to take over, or they are so nervous that they are happy to hide behind their aids. Presentation aids can also take the audience's attention away from the speech specially if the material carries too much information. It is thus important to choose the right kind of visual and to keep the text to a minimum.

3.3 VARIETIES OF PRESENTATION AIDS

There are several types of presentation aids that can be used to support speech. A few of the most commonly used are introduced in this section.

1. White or black board

If the only equipment available for a presentation is a white or black board (or a flip board), the following points need to be considered:

- Boards are most effective when used for very simple visuals, a few keywords or simple diagrams.
- When you are writing or drawing on a board, you are very often turning your back to the audience. You may thus need to raise your voice and keep eye contact from time to time.
- Some areas of the board may not be visible from certain angles. Make sure that everyone in the audience can see clearly what you are writing or drawing on the board. Use big, legible handwriting.
- Keep the board uncluttered by erasing unneeded material that may distract the audience from new topics.

2. Overhead Projector

Overhead projectors (OHP) project images through transparent material on to a white screen or board. These tend to be used less these days due to the availability of laptops connected to RGB projectors but it may be useful for you to know how these work in case you need to use them.

You may draw or write directly on the transparency sheet using a special pen or marker. You may also prepare your transparency by photocopying from any existing printed document or material prepared by yourself on special software (e.g. Powerpoint). However, make sure that you use special photocopy film as write-on films may damage the photocopy machine or may themselves be damaged by heat when photocopying on them.

Do not overload your transparency sheets and make sure you use big typeface for textual data (>30 points). A good transparency sheet contains not more than six lines of text with not more that six words per line.

Before the presentation starts, adjust the focus of projecting lens so that the image is sharp enough. Also, if there is too much light in a room, the projected image will lose definition and look blurred. You may thus need to dim or switch off the light in the room.

During the presentation, switch off the equipment if you are not using it as it may distract the audience's attention.

3. Slide Projector

This is a more sophisticated piece of equipment which projects pictures from a special format called 'slide' ('diapositive' in French). It requires a completely darkened room, which makes note-taking difficult.

Slides offer excellent reproduction of colour pictures. They can be prepared using special 35 mm film and camera. These are, however, quite expensive and require good photographic skills.

4. Multimedia Presentations

Multimedia presentations require equipment like a computer or a laptop and a projector sometimes called RGB (for Red, Green and Blue, colours used by the projector to reproduce an infinite number of colours on the screen).

PowerPoint[3] shows can be used to support speech with special animation effects, such as text and visuals running across the screen and transition effects. However, this type of equipment often requires a technician to operate the equipment. Also, it is imperative that these presentations are rehearsed well in advance as technical problems happen regularly.

5. Hand-outs

Hand-outs can be given to the audience when there is too much data to present during the time allocated or to give listeners a summary of the main points presented by the speaker.

Unless hand-outs are designed to be used as supporting material for the audience to follow the points raised, it may be advisable to distribute hand-outs after the speech. This will avoid the risk of listeners not focusing their attention on your presentation.

In any case, do not distribute materials during your speech as you lose time and may cause some chaos within the audience.

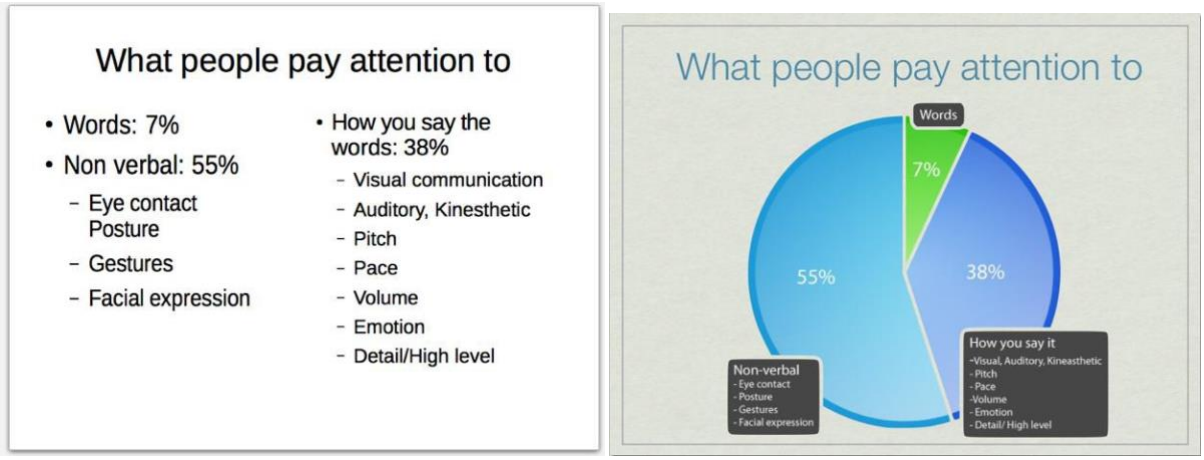
[3] PowerPoint is here cited merely as an example of a slideshow presentation software. Alternative programmes for slide presentation include Apple KeyNote, OpenOffice Impress, LibreOffice Presentation, Google Docs, Prezi.

3.4 HOW TO OPTIMISE THE USE OF AIDS

3.4.1 Preparing for the Presentation

- Do not be obsessed by PowerPoint slides. It is sometimes better not to have any slide rather than to have poorly designed ones. Remember that PowerPoint is just a tool. Often, speakers hide behind an avalanche of bullet points laden with text which they tend to read out to the audience. This hinders good communication as the speaker becomes a mere reader who annoys the audience as the latter can read on their own at their own pace. Also, reading out means that there is a disconnect between the speaker and the audience with either little or no non-verbal interaction such as eye contact.
- However, it still remains that visuals are powerful presentation aids as they help to have an impact on the audience. Visuals improve processing and retention of the points being presented, provided that they are well designed, relevant and coherent with the speech. Everyone tends to remember visual input better (Remember the saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words").

A photo enhances a presentation and creates more impact.



Graphics also help assimilate the information

- Before preparing the presentation, take the time to think about the purpose of the talk and the expectations of the audience. Try to get as much relevant information as possible about the profile of your audience so that you can pitch your presentation to resonate with them. Why are you being asked to present something to that particular audience? How much do they already know? What should they learn from you? Ask yourself how you would react to the material if you were a member of the audience.
- Take the time to prepare the data that you are going to use on visual aids. Outline your speech and jot down main ideas that can be summed up and used as key points on the material. Do not jump into presentation software right away. It is better to brainstorm using pen and paper or a whiteboard in order not to get caught up with the use of fancy technological tools.
- Start by outlining your presentation: organise your key ideas into a structure. You may for example develop a scenario or a logical structure (e.g. context – problem – solution). It is very important to have a very clear structure as framework for your presentation so that you can know where you are going. If, as a speaker, you do not know where you are going, your audience will be totally lost and disconnected. Think about the key points that your audience should go away with after your presentation. Once you have decided on your outline and structure, gradually incorporate the data, examples or evidence which will support your key points.
- Include relevant stories or examples to illustrate your key points so that it will be easier for your audience to remember your content. However, you need to make sure that all the parts of your presentation remain connected in order to maintain coherence. Be careful about long digressions that may distract you from the main ideas you are supposed to be talking about.
- Remove all that is not really necessary or relevant. Avoid technical jargon, complicated data and buzzwords. Use plain English, not ornate, complicated language which you think will make you look smart.
- Prepare headlines that are powerful, memorable and shareable. For instance, would

someone be able to tweet your headline in less than 140 characters?

- Use visual analogies or metaphors to provide context and clarity around your big ideas and data.
- Practise, practise, practise. All great speakers have had to rehearse numerous times before getting it right. Like you, they have faced stress and panic. Only practice can help improve your performance. The use of presentation aids also requires good co-ordination skills. If you are unsure of yourself, take the time to practise your presentation with your visual aids. Make sure the visual aids are integrated and relevant to your speech.
- Don't just provide information. Convey meaning with passion and self-confidence (but not arrogance). If you do not yourself appear convinced about what you are telling your audience, how can you expect them to be convinced?
- If you will use humour or questions, be sure that you master the craft. Otherwise, it may seem weak and may backfire.
- You may make intelligent use of emotions to create impact and increase retention.
- Test your aids beforehand. Make sure that the equipment you are going to use is functioning properly and that you know how to handle it.
- Be ready to deliver your speech without visual aids as the equipment may be subject to last minute failures.

3.4.2 During the Presentation

- Start strong by hooking their attention. Filler talk or formalities will lose their attention unless done with punch. Set the foundation of the talk right from the start.
- Do not read the text on slides word for word. The audience can read for themselves and will thus be bored or lost if you do that. Remember that you must create a rapport with your audience before making use of visual aids.
- Try to keep talking while pointing to your visual material so that you do not lose your audience's attention. In any case, you should never read the text from the visual.

- Make sure that the audience can see your material from any angle. Do not stand in front of your material.
- Look at your listeners, not your material. It is fine to glance at the material, but get your eyes back on the people in the room as quickly as you can. Your connection with them is the most powerful presentation tool you have.
- Synchronise your speech with the appearance of your slides. There should always be a connection between what is shown on the screen and what you are talking about. Otherwise, there is a risk that people will not listen to you as they try to figure out what is on your slide.
- Let people add things up. You do not always need to provide step by step explanation for every single point. You can create more impact by providing merely the elements and thus allow the audience to connect the dots.
- When possible, show, don't just tell or describe. Provide explanations so the audience can interpret the data themselves. In order to achieve this, you need to have visuals with very simple design which allows for easy understanding. Provide clear graphs or data so that you can focus on talking about meaning and analysis, rather than on description.
- Treat your audience with respect and try to turn them into active participants. If possible, move nearer to them and away from the podium to connect with them. Never turn your back on them and keep good eye contact constantly.
- Surprise your audience, make them question and want to know more.
- Finish strong by answering the initial question or by referring to the anecdotes or rhetorical questions you have asked at the beginning. People tend to mostly remember the beginning and the conclusion. Just as it is important to start strong, you should also have an engaging conclusion which will remain in their mind.
- Recap your main points to ensure people will remember them and go back home with those key points. Make sure they can easily summarise and explain your content to someone else.
- Be prepared to adjust your presentation style and content according to the audience. It is

sometimes better to shorten your presentation by skipping certain parts which may be difficult to understand or may be irrelevant for the audience you face.

3.5 PREPARING DATA FOR PRESENTATION AIDS

Whilst preparing presentation aids, you may use various types of data such as text, illustrations, pictures, diagrams, charts, graphs, curves, tables, etc. Your choice of data format will depend largely on the topic presented and on the points that are discussed.

3.5.1 Design Principles

To construct effective visual aids, a few rules of good design should be followed:

1. KISS (Keep It Simple Short/Stupid) principle

- Make sure that your material is neat and clear. Avoid cluttering your presentation aids with too much data.
- Use white space or negative space to draw attention to the key elements.
- Remember that the purpose of your presentation is to communicate ideas and information, not to dazzle people with fancy graphics.

2. Visibility

- Use big font size and leave enough white space for the data to 'breathe'. You do not want your audience to squint in order to be able to read your slide. They will quickly grow tired and will stop listening to you. So make sure that the size is comfortable for reading from any distance in the room.

3. Balance

- Make sure that the material presented is visually balanced and pleasing to the eye.
- Do not fill in the slides with text from margin to margin.

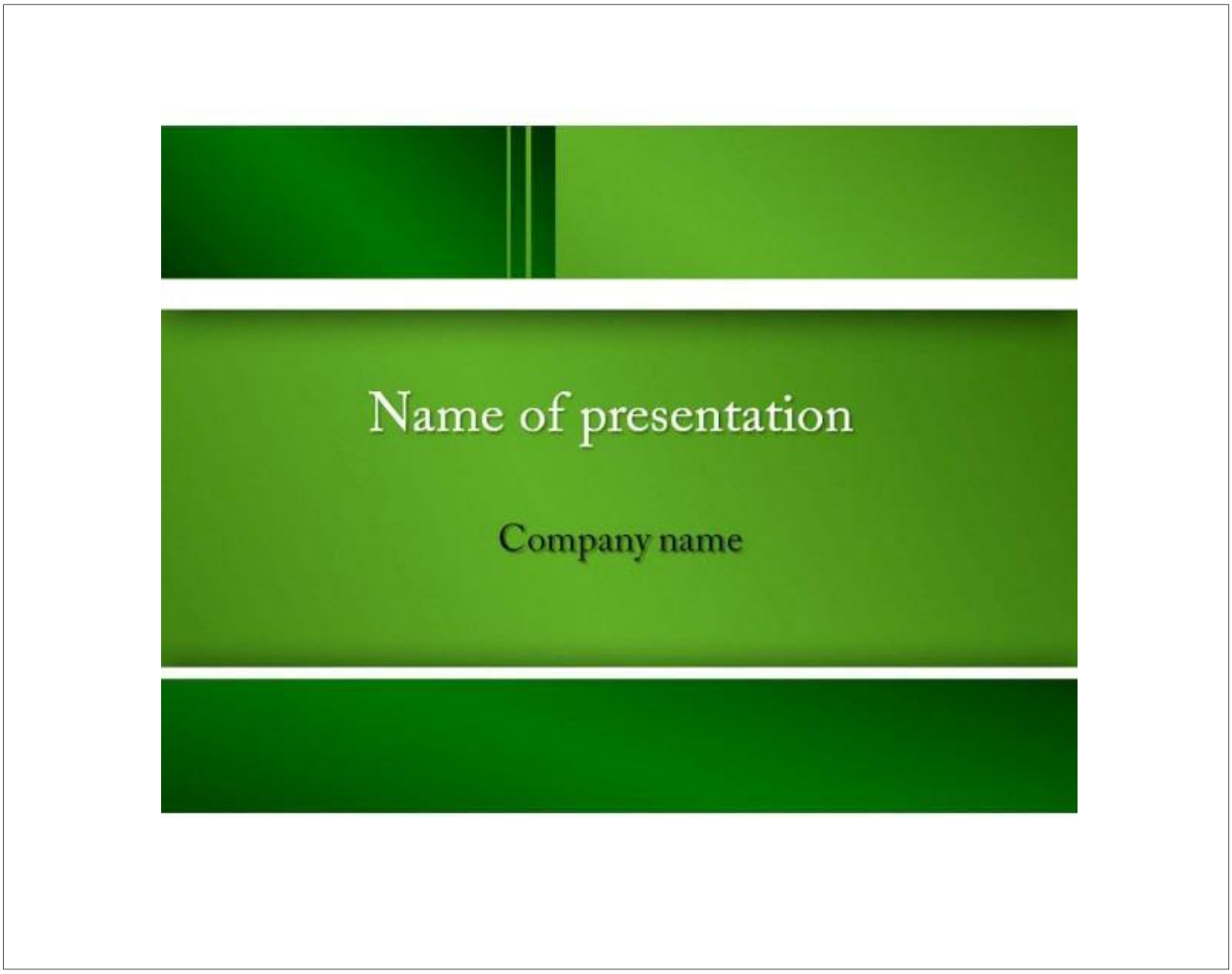
Source: http://useyourbean.com/category/advertising/

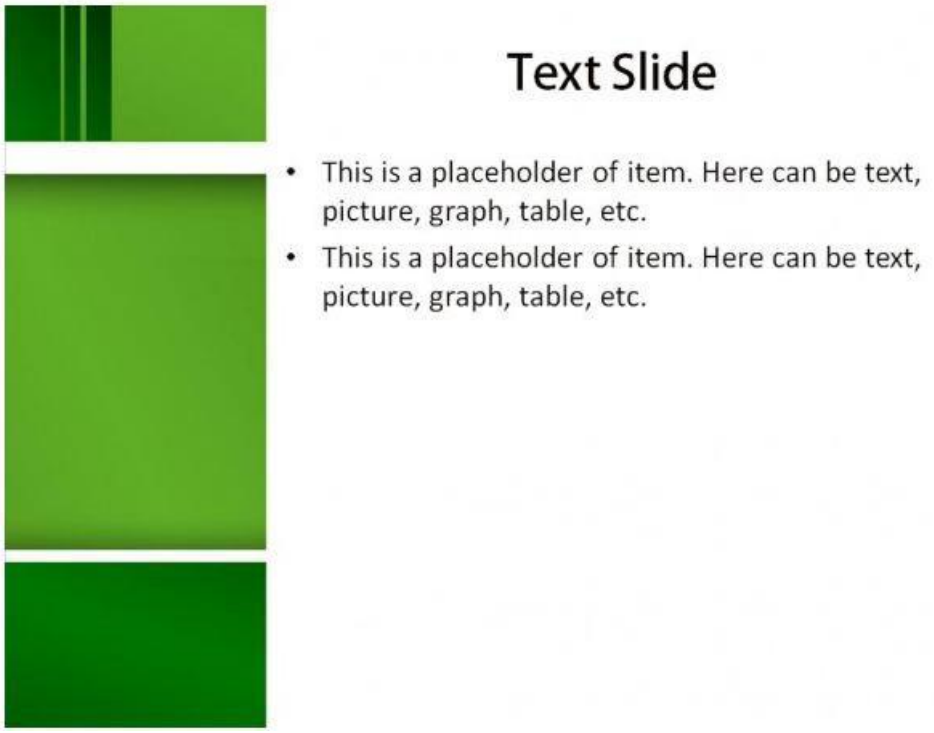
4. Concision

- Put only your key ideas in words. Reduce the text to an absolute minimum and keep only one idea per slide. In fact, sometimes, the best slides have no bullet points or even no text at all (refer to Steve Jobs' KeyNote presentations).
- Do not hesitate to eliminate words rather than reduce type size or line spacing to "fit everything in".
- Use concise words.

5. Unity

- Use white space, type and colours consistently throughout your material.
- Use the same design or layout with the same margins on all slides so that the look remains coherent throughout the presentation.

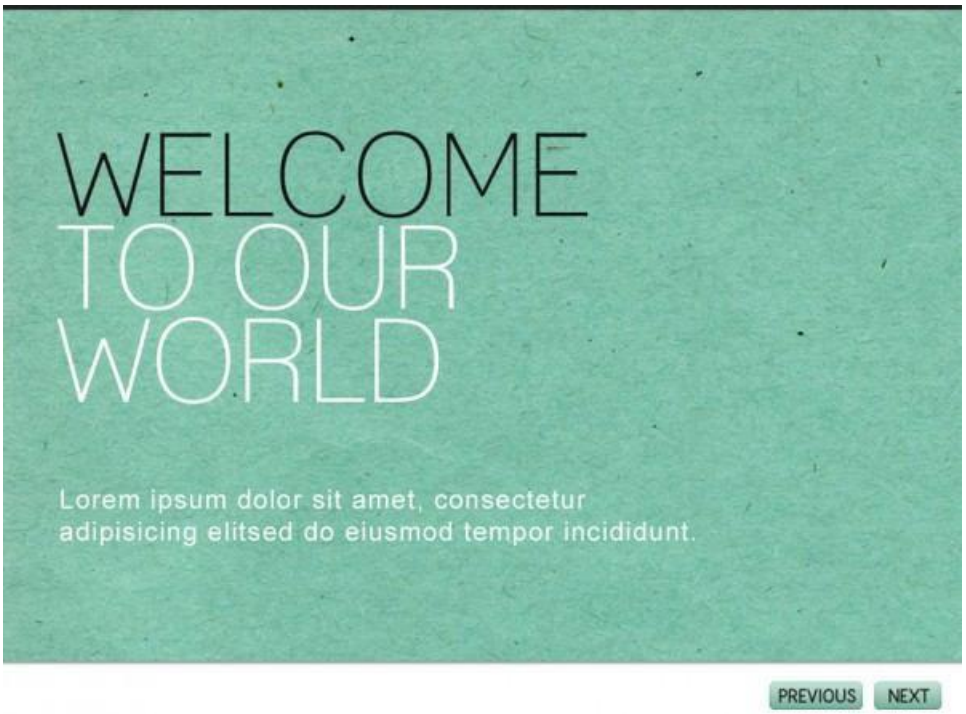


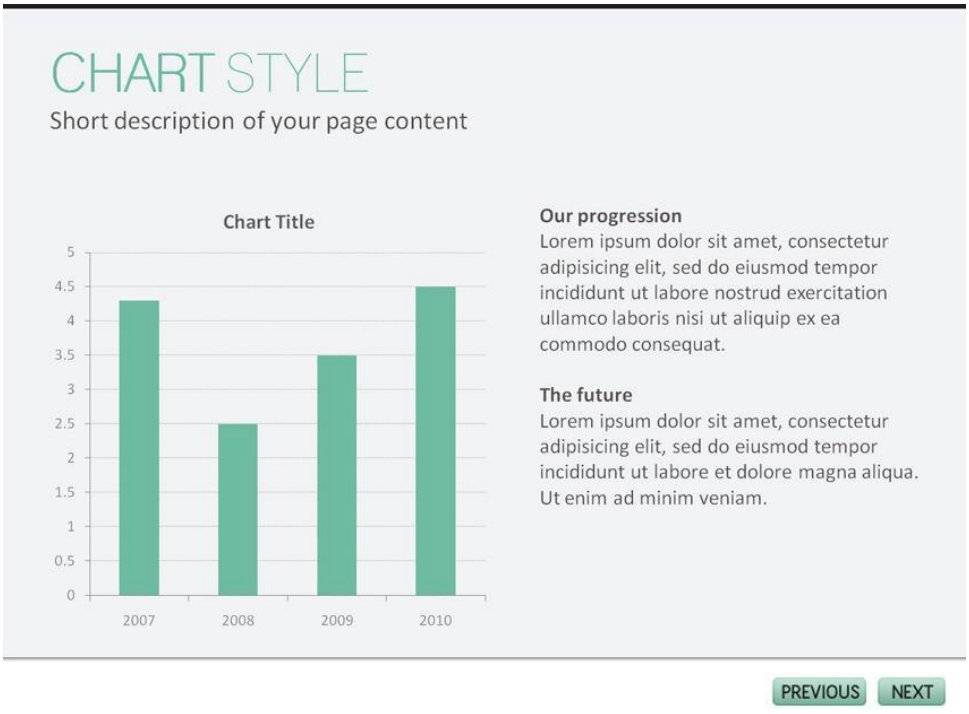


. Source: http://www.mytemplatesshop.com/neutral-green-powerpoint-template-free-n0046.html

6. Sobriety

- Colour adds impact to the meaning of speech. But you must be sober in your use of colours if you are using more than one. Sometimes two colours are more than enough! Remember that black also counts as a colour…
- Use a few typefaces well. Do not use more than two typefaces and avoid overkill (e.g. using 'bold + italics + underlined'). In fact, avoid using underlined as far as possible.





Source: http://workawesome.com/communication/9-big-bold-designer-powerpoint-templates/

- Do not try to put fancy icons or clipart (especially those proposed by the software) or logos to illustrate every single point.

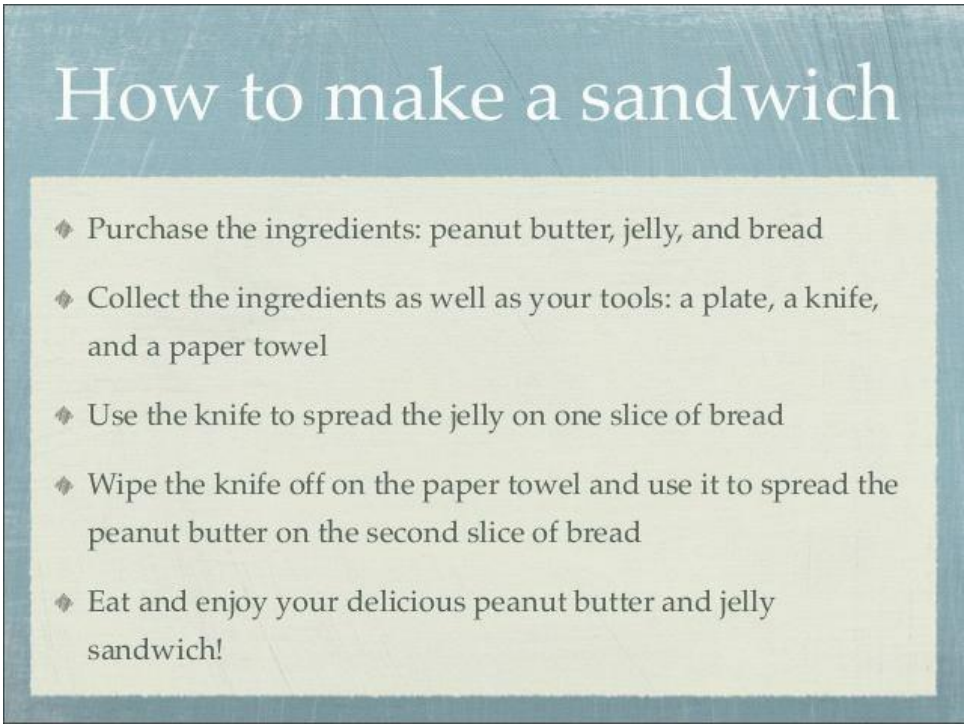
The use of clipart is outdated.

- It is better have one big picture which is powerful, beautiful and inspiring so that it stays in the minds of people.
- Do not use many transitions and effects. Animations are nice, provided that they remain subtle. For example, you do not need to animate every single bullet point. Remember that exaggeration in animations can lead to a feeling of nausea. For detailed explanation about how to use animations, refer to section 7.4.2.
- You can use audio and video clips to illustrate your points, again provided that they are really relevant and to the point.
- Do not use cheesy sound effects from the slideshow presentation software.

7. Emphasis

- Restrict emphasis to that which is truly important. Avoid paragraphs with too many words set in bold-faced text for instance.

- Ideally, you should use only one typeface with little variations in size and look so that those very important ideas really stand out.



Source：http://www.slideshare.net/alexrister1/introduction-to-slide-design

8. Professional use

- Be careful about image resolution, file size and aspect ratio. Do not stretch the original picture as it will appear distorted, unnatural and ugly.
- Pay attention to the quality of the image resolution which should be high in order to avoid the pixellation effect. This often happens when a picture is stretched at such a large size that individual pixels (small single-coloured square display elements) are visible.
- However, be careful about copyright issues when using images. Ensure that you cite your sources even when you are using free images.

9. Originality

- Do not try to copy the content of slides (whether pictures or text) which have already been used elsewhere. In fact, you should also avoid using visuals (such as stock photos) which are recurring in presentations like the one in the box below. Also avoid using pictures which have watermarks.

Seldom use commonplace photos.

Photos including watermarks should not be used.

Source: http://www.slideshare.net/alexrister1/introduction-to-slide-design

3.5.2 Using Animation Effects

Most slideshow presentation software allow you to integrate special animation effects, such as text and visuals running across the screen. Below is a tutorial to guide you through the most commonly used animation effects.

1. Animation basics for your presentation

The commonly used animations effects are entrance and exit. Sound can be added to animation in order to enhance presentations. Remember to use these cautiously as many animations can distract viewers and make them not focus on the message you want to deliver.

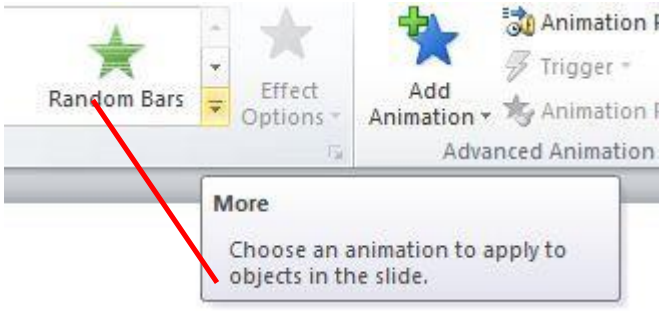
2. Apply entrance and exit animation effects[4]

To add animation to text or an object, do the following:

1. Click on the text or object to animate in order to select it

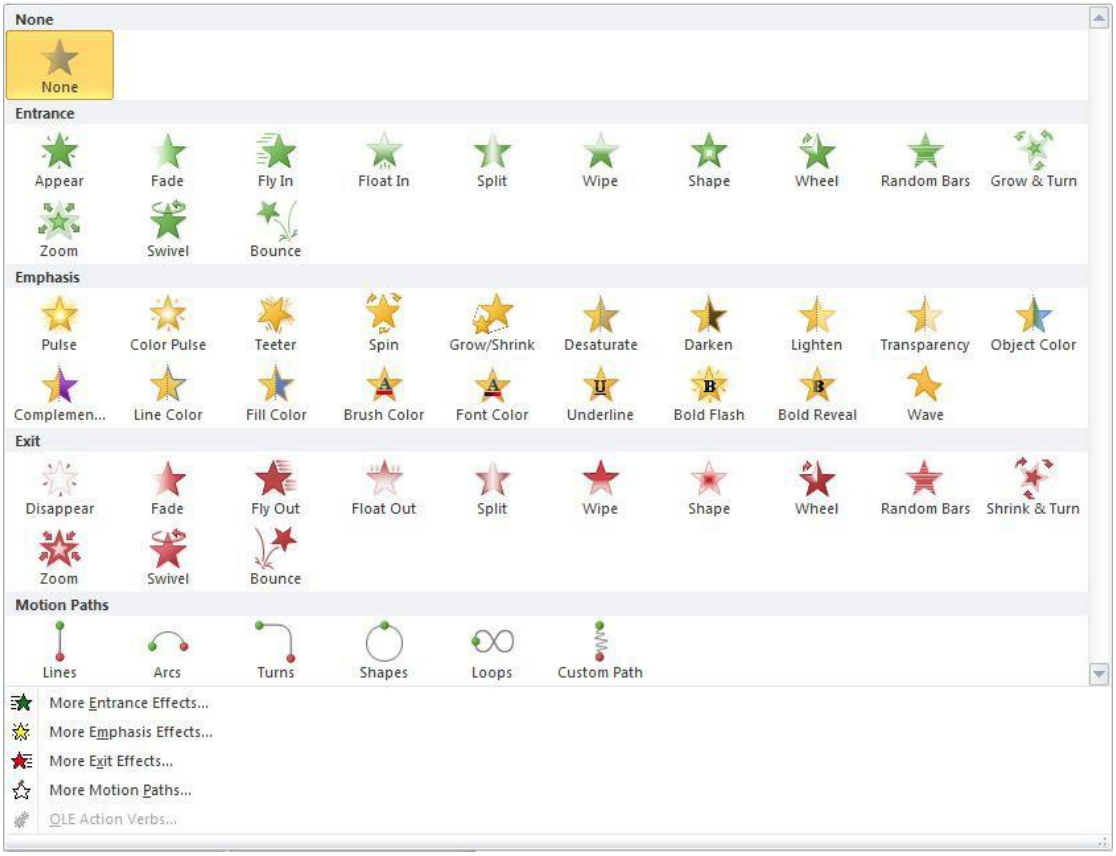
2. On the **Animations** tab, select an animation from the gallery

3. For more options click the More arrow



4 The following screenshots are from the PowerPoint programme. However, please bear in mind that other software may be used. The principles of use tend to remain the same though.

You will thus obtain the following:



The entrance effects icons are green, emphasis effects icons are yellow, and exit effects icons are red.

For corporate presentations, experts recommend the following simple animations: Appear, Fade, Wipe, Zoom, and Imagine.

Further reading for corporate presentations:

http://www.brainshark.com/Ideas-Blog/2012/March/PowerPoint-Animation-Tips-for-Business-Presentations.aspx

List and description of available animations:

- Appear – appears in final place, no movement ;

  Blinds – choose horizontal or vertical effect; divides slide element into strips and simultaneously reveals strips ;

- Box – slide element moves into final place with zoom sort of effect ;
- Checkerboard – divides slide element into boxes and simultaneously reveals boxes from left to right or top to bottom ;
- Dissolve – divides slide element into large number of dots that dissolve to reveal all dots in final place ;
- Flash Once – displays slide element using Appear effect then removes slide element from the display based on setting of slow, medium or fast; useful to simulate movement of objects sometimes ;
- Peek – Like the crawl effect, but the starting point is the side of the slide element that you choose to peek from ;
- Random Bars – Similar to the Blinds effect except the order that strips are displayed is random ;
- Split – splits the slide element into two halves and reveal the two halves from/to opposite starting points ;
- Stretch – takes slide element and expands it outwards from a starting point at the center line of the final point ;
- Strips – divides slide element into strips like Blinds effect except strips are revealed from one corner of the slide element to the opposite corner of the slide element ;
- Swivel – Rotates the slide element horizontally around a central axis three times and then stops in the final position ;
- Wipe – Select one of four non-diagonal directions and the slide element is then revealed

in that direction ;

- Zoom – zooms slide element into final position from either a spot centered on the final position or slightly less zoom depending on the settings you set ;

- Fly – choose side of screen or corner for slide element to start from and fly to final place ;

- Crawl – choose side of screen for slide element to start from and slowly moves to final place ;

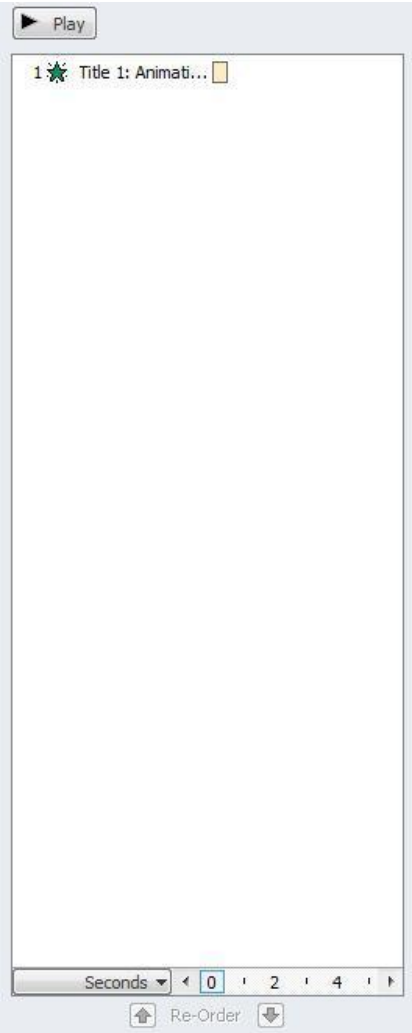
- Spiral – slide element moves in a circular motion starting point is above and to the left of the final point.
  Source: http://www.thinkoutsidetheslide.com/using-animation-and-slide-transition-effects-on-powerpoint-slides/

3. Applying sound effects to animated text and objects

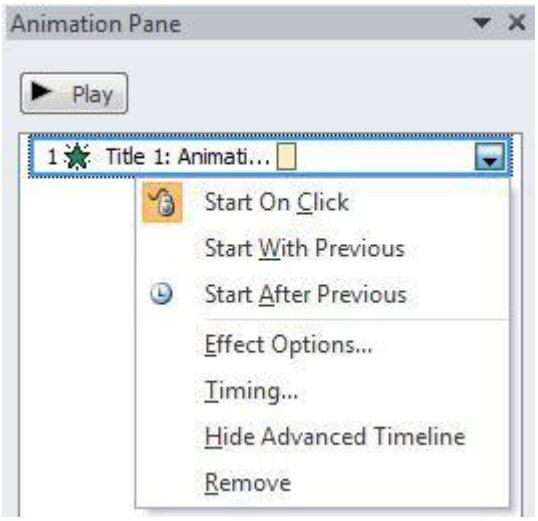
Animated objects can be enhanced by adding sounds. The following is an explanation of how to add sound to an animated element (either a text or an object).

1. On the Animations tab, in the Advanced Animation group, click Animation Pane.

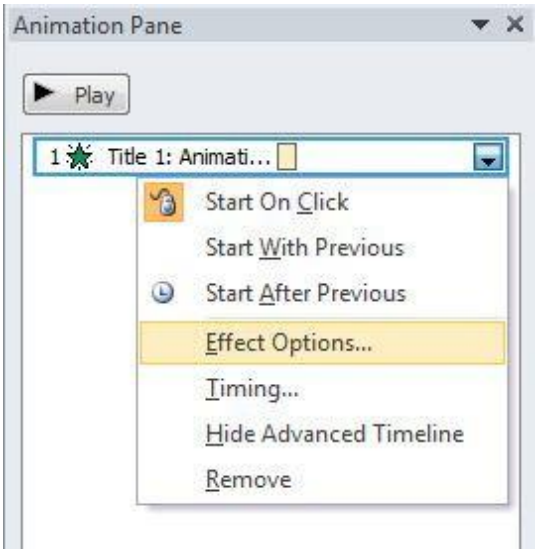
2. The Animation Pane opens on the right hand side of the screen and shows the order, type and duration of animation effects used to make text or objects dynamic.



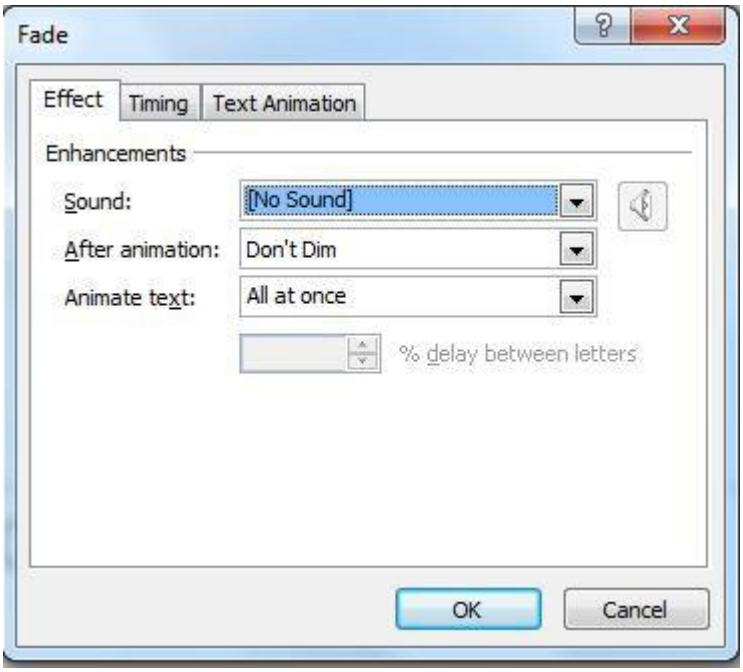
3. Click on the animation where sound should be added, click the down arrow and then click Effect Options.



Choose Effect Options



You will obtain the following:



You may thus choose the sound that suits the presentation.

Even though it sounds nice to make use of audio, be careful while using this type of enhancement. If you are speaking at the same time, it may be confusing for the audience. It may prove to be annoying if there are too many animations and if there is a sound attached to each animation. It is also crucial to have the needed logistics while using sounds in presentations.

4. Transition effects

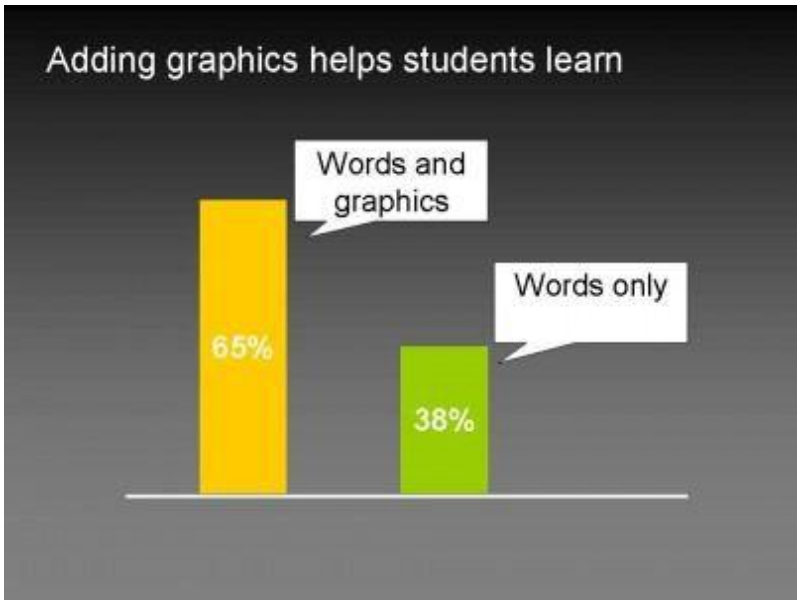
A slide transition is the motion of a slide when one disappears and another one appears. When the Transition tab is clicked, the following options are available for slide transitions :

Remember that too many transitions may distract your audience.

The same slide transition should be used throughout the show but if you want to emphasise on a specific slide, then you may consider changing the transition between two slides. Otherwise, the use of varied transitions for all slides appear as an amateur presentation. Transitions are better placed in between slides once the presentation outline is finalised.

Slide Transition Effects consist of the following: Blinds, Box, Checkerboard, Dissolve, Random, Split, Strips, Cover, Cut, Fade Uncover and Wipe.

5. Screen capture / copying from another software



Source: http://www.speakingaboutpresenting.com/design/powerpoint-design-recommended-tips/

If we consider the above statement we find that users learn better with the use of words and graphics. In the same way, you may use graphics to enhance your presentations. Charts can be copied from a spread sheet program into a presentation software by using the copy paste commands.

If you want to illustrate what is happening on your screen you can make use of the Print Screen key.

- Once you use the PrtScn key from the keyboard, what appears on your screen is copied and placed in the clipboard.
- You may choose to paste it as it is directly in the presentation software
- Or you may decide to select part of the image. Then you should launch Paint[5] software from the Accessories Tab.
- Paste the saved image.
- Click on the Selection tool from the left hand side toolbox.
- Make your selection.
- Then paste your selection in the presentation software.

5 The software Paint is here used as an example. Please bear in mind that other software may be used for editing pictures (e.g. GIMP, PixelMator, etc.).

Activity 1

The Marketing Officer of an IT company submitted a report on sales results to his manager and was asked to give a 10-minute presentation to management in one week's time.

On being given this assignment, he arranged for laptop and RGB projector to be installed in the conference room of the company. As he had some complex data to present, he prepared a score of slides with graphs, charts and tables.

On the set date, he arrived in the conference room right on time. He felt confident that the presentation would be successful as he had carefully rehearsed his speech.

After a short introduction, he connected his laptop to the projector. He realised that the device was not working. Fortunately, an attendant quickly helped him by immediately replacing the equipment.

The Marketing Officer then carried on with his presentation and ran rapidly through all the slides. In the end, he was satisfied that he had not exceeded the time allocated and that he had succeeded in presenting all the visual data.

According to you, how successful has the Marketing Officer been in his use of presentation aids?

* NB

Work out this activity before turning the page.

Answer to Activity 1

The Marketing Officer made a few mistakes in his presentation:

- He prepared too many slides for the time allocated (20 slides for 10 minutes). There is a risk that his visual aids were therefore the core of the presentation. They were not used as a supporting tool for the speech.

- He did not check the equipment beforehand such that time was wasted for the replacement of the material. He should have arrived in the conference room well before the time scheduled (not 'right on time') to be able to test the material and the visual aids.

- As a result of this technical problem, he had to run though the slides rapidly and most probably adopted a pace that was too 'rapid'. Instead, it may have been advisable to skip some of the less important slides to keep a good rate of speech. This is typically someone who was overwhelmed by the visual data!

3.6 A FEW POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Presentation aids are meant to be used as tools that **support**, not replace speech. You should therefore plan what you wish to say first so that your aids will complement your words.

- They require planning and forethought. The typographic and visual design, the technicalities involved in the use of the visual aids, their integration into the presentation are some of the important aspects to be considered.

- A dull speech will still be dull even if there are attractive visuals!

UNIT 4 MAKING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

Unit Structure

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- **4.9.1 Managing Audience Attention**
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4.11 Beyond Effective Presentations: Being an Inspirational Manager

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4.0 OVERVIEW

In this Unit, we consider what it takes to make an effective and professional presentation, especially from a managerial perspective; we also look at tips and advice that can make a big difference between an 'okay' presentation and a really impressive one, all the while managing the human side relating to stress and anxiety of public speaking.

4.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this Unit, you should be able to:

1. Identify and put to use the key elements of an effective presentation.
2. Know how to present with the audience in mind.
3. Plan, design and deliver a structured presentation.
4. Manage presentation-related stress and anxiety.
5. Enhance your managerial potential through presentations.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

There are as many types of presentations as there are types of meetings and conversations. As a manager, we make a presentation every time we talk or share any kind of information, with one or more individuals. However, all managers are required at some point to make some critically important presentations that require preparation and careful design and powerful delivery. Being able to deliver a stunning presentation has become increasingly important in the development of a successful managerial career (Hargie, Dickson, & Tourish, (2004). Often, it will even be determining in being hired as a manager! Subsequent promotion has also often been founded on the ability to catch the eye of those who matter, and for more junior employees, the ability to make a strong impression through a well-prepared and delivered briefing or report is a prime opportunity in getting noticed by 'higher-ups'. Unfortunately, it would appear that the general standard of presentations and public speaking tends not to be very high. We have all seen them – poor presentations. The ones where the PowerPoint slides were unreadable, the presenter stood

facing the screen and read each slide as it was displayed and there was no clear message or point to the time spent. These presentations are frustrating to watch, but more importantly, cost organisations a huge amount of money.

But it need not be this way for you. Having the capacity to make a successful presentation is not an innate gift, but the skills can be learnt and refined.

The first thing to know is that good presentations take into consideration five broad parameters: location, size of audience, time, nature of audience, and presentation aids. These will be developed in the sections that follow.

4.3 WHAT IS A GOOD PRESENTER LIKE?

Following is a list of must-have traits of successful presenters. Provide an explanation for each. Can you think of at least one person who has these qualities? Consider how you can develop these traits in yourself. Insert a personal strategy for each.

- ☺ **Poised**

  _____

  _____

- ☺ **Competent**

  _____

  _____

- ☺ **Trustworthy**

  _____

  _____

- ☺ **Committed**

_____

_____

- ☺ **Dynamic**

_____

_____

- ☺ **Sincere**

_____

_____

- ☺ **Respectful**

_____

_____

- ☺ **Attractive**

_____

_____

4.4 PREPARING THE PRESENTATION

4.5.1 Key Items in Presentation Preparation

The key items forming the basis for preparation of a presentation are listed below, and are developed subsequently.

- Identifying the aim and clarifying the objectives of the presentation
- Being audience-oriented
- The topic: content and structure of the presentation

- Delivery
- Presentation tools

4.5 THE AUDIENCE

Finding out about the audience is probably the first step in the preparation process. Researching the audience can be as simple as getting the list of participants with their profiles from the event organiser. In any case, you must do your best to gather the following information before the presentation – or, at worst, gather it as you go along.

- Their **profile** – age, sex, occupation, position in the organisation.
- Their **interest** and **priorities** in attending the presentation.

  Once you know your audience's interests, your have an understanding of how to gain and maintain their attention. What you want is to keep them motivated during your presentation.
- Their **knowledge**. You will need to have differential approaches with respect to the savvyness of your audience. The same topic cannot be presented in the same way to a group of beginners as to a group of veterans.
- Their **skills**. It may happen that an audience has skills and techniques that improve their ability to absorb the information you wish to cover. A knowledge of their skills level will enable you to better prepare for a more successful presentation.
- **Personalities**. Some people are receptive to new information, new ideas, and to change, many others are not. Personality has a role to play in determining who people respect, who they are willing to listen to and to agree with. By knowing something about the personalities present in your audience, you can prepare to gain as much acceptance and approval as possible.
- **Dynamics** and **culture**

  Every group has a characteristic pattern of behaviour that reflects the power structure within the group, their values, and norms. If you want your presentation to be well-received, the dynamics which regulate the audience is an important factor to consider.

4.6 CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION

Being "in command of your brief" is a prerequisite to effective delivery of a message. A thorough knowledge of your topic places you in good stead as *the* person to be making this presentation. Start by understanding that you'll spend a lot more time preparing than you will speaking. As a general rule, invest three hours of preparation for a half-hour speech, a six to one ratio. When you've become a highly experienced speaker, you may be able to cut preparation time considerably in some cases, but until then, don't skimp.

As for structure, it is useful to think of a presentation as comprising an introduction**, a main** body**, and a** conclusion**.**

4.6.1 The Introductory Phase of the Presentation

As ever, the importance of creating favourable 'first impressions' is stressed here. The introduction should make maximum impact, something of a 'big bang', and as far away from faltering or indecisive as possible. Notice how successful presenters often start off with an 'attention grabber', such as:

- using humour – provided it is relevant to the speech
- recounting a fascinating story or anecdote
- making a startling prediction
- reciting a catchy quotation from a respected source.

In addition to catching the attention of the audience and establishing the relevance and importance of the material at the outset, an introduction serves to set the scene for what is to follow and provides a framework for organising the content.

4.6.2 The Main Body of the Presentation

Proper researching of the topic will automatically reveal the key points to be included in the presentation, as well as how to organise them. The preferred structure thus depends mostly on the nature of the material and the purpose to which it is put.

4.6.3 The Conclusion of the Presentation

An audience tends to retain more of what was said at the beginning and the ending of a talk. The conclusion, then, offers a real opportunity to put forth something that will be taken away, remembered and used to change attitudes or action. It is wise to think about how to end on a strong note, such as a succinct summary content, and *not wise* to merely finish on the last question from the audience, or on the last point on your last slide. In short, do not finish your presentation abruptly or unexpectedly. The following tactics should be seriously considered in planning the conclusion phase:

- a review and summary of key points
- pulling together loose ends, if any
- reaffirming the conclusion and its importance
- suggest or clarify any follow-up action
- flagging by saying "… and now, for the last point"
- disengaging by thanking the group for their attention and co-operation.

4.6.4 Alternative Strategies for Organising Content

1. *Topical arrangement*

   The topic is analysed into related ideas and sub-topics. The order in which these are covered is typically shaped by either moving from the known to the unknown or from the simple to the complex.

2. *Chronological sequence*

   The key elements of the material are ordered in relation to a timeline, such as steps in a supply chain, or the history of a product.

3. *Logical sequence*

   Either move from general principles to a customised application of relevance to the group (deductive sequence), or, use an inductive sequence and move from specific case presentation to derivation of broad principles or theories that are to be applied.

4. *Causal pattern*

   The material is ordered in terms of cause-to-effect relationships, explaining events to the audience, and why they came about this way.

5. *Problem – solution*

   Here the presentation is structured in two sections: a sketch of the nature of the problem or issue, followed by the solution.

6. *Motivated sequence*

   This is for a presentation that seeks to change attitudes, beliefs or practices. The sequence is as follows: gain attention, establish need outline how that need can be satisfied, helping the audience to visualise the satisfied need, and finally stating what has to be done to achieve that state.

4.7 DELIVERY

Because we are intent on making our presentations as attractive, interesting and understandable as possible, and because it is important that we do not feel as if we are going into the lion's den, it is wise to give some thought and work to the delivery styles and techniques available to us.

We know that we do not have to be born with the gift of public speaking to be able to design and make good presentations, and so improving our delivery style is one skill area that we should work on, along the following lines:

- Good grasp of language
  - Use language that the audience understands.
  - Avoid jargon if it is not shared by all the audience.
- Appropriate delivery pace
  - Resist the temptation to speak too quickly.
  - Do not leave so many gaps that the audience gets bored.
- Appropriate use of visual aids
  - Visual aids are only there to help, not to distract.
  - Master the use of your chosen tools.
  - Do not overdo the use of presentation tools.
- Use of sub-summaries, signposting and links
  - Pause at transitional points to briefly summarise (especially where complex or abstract ideas are concerned).
  - Explain how each chunk of material links with the previous and next part, and into a meaningful whole.
- Emphasis of key points
  - Prepare so that you know which points are more important than others, and emphasise these during delivery.
  - List main points, repeat a concept, idea, etc.
  - Use non-verbal communication to emphasise.
  - Use voice tone, volume, and speed of delivery to put essential points across.
- Verbal fluency
  - Do not be obsessed about not being a fantastic speaker.
  - Practise and rehearse to ensure you do not fill your sentences with “uhms”, “ers”, “you know”, “like”, “sort of”, which are highly distracting.
  - Develop self-confidence to finish all sentences.
  - Do not ramble.
  - Remain concentrated at all times to avoid false starts and disconnected ideas.

- Precision
  - Always be precise in what you have to say: avoid vague and indefinite speaking.
  - Never consciously set up a smokescreen of hazy points to hide your poor preparation or lack of knowledge on the topic.
- Dynamism
  - The dynamism and enthusiasm of powerful speakers are palpable, and their effect on their audience is undeniable. Try to emulate a speaker who shows this kind of commitment to his or her speech.
  - Close the distance periodically with people in the audience to increase closeness and empathy.
  - Align your body language with your content to reinforce your message.
  - Internalise your own message so as to be personally committed to it.
- Stimuli to reduce boredom and increase active participation
  - Introduce variety with graphs, audio or video props.
  - Encourage discussion at some point.
  - Get the audience to work briefly on an exercise.

- Appropriate use of examples
  - All illustrations must be rooted in the audience's skill, knowledge or context, so that they act as a bridge between what is being presented and what the audience knows.
- Immediacy
  - Be a real presence for the audience.
  - Rather than sweep the audience with a wide gaze, try to establish eye contact with individuals for short spells.
  - If appropriate, refer to individuals by name.
  - If appropriate, use the type of language and forms of expression which resonate with those of the group.
- Avoiding distractions
  - Don't pace around the room or the front of the room.

- Don't fiddle with a pen/marker/pointer.
- Always check out the facilities and equipment before the presentation so that you are perfectly comfortable with how they work.

➢ Appearance

- Try and cultivate a natural, relaxed appearance.
- Be dressed and groomed according to what our presentation aims dictate, not your personal dress quirks.
- THINK and WORK on looking uncontrived. Rehearse and intellectualise as often as you can as a continuous process of self-improvement.

Activity 1

Using a maximum of items from the above list, make a superficial assessment of your lecturers this semester. Write up a candid but kind list of "areas for improvement" for each, to help them improve (not become perfect!)

4.8 VISUAL AIDS (PRESENTATION TOOLS)

Presentation tools are extremely helpful to presenters who know how to use them but can be sources of disaster to those who do not. As the saying goes, *"the bad carpenter blames his tools",* so the responsibility is on YOU, the presenter, to effectively design your presentation and make the best use of your tools. Especially in the use of PowerPoint, too many people use it as a magical crutch that will somehow substitute for proper preparation of a presentation.

4.8.3 Available Presentation Tools

Some available tools are:

- **Folders, binders**

  Whether or not you have graphs and charts in your presentation, it is extremely helpful and excellent impression management to photocopy pages of key information and clip them together as handouts. For a really important event, you can create a longer-lasting folder with a few additional pieces of information, for greater impact.

- **Handouts**

  Give summary handouts only, at the end of the presentation, or your audience will read ahead instead of listening to you; use handouts only for the very detailed points that are too complex to put on a slide; use PowerPoint handouts that have spaces to encourage your audience to take notes (but make the handout contents vague and in outline form)

- **Wall boards, flip charts**

  - **Microphones**

    Unless your voice is usually soft, you will not ordinarily need a microphone when giving a presentation to a small group or in a small room. However, if you know that the group is large or the room is very spacious, demand a microphone, and preferably a small wireless one.

  - **Videos**

    Certain information like a corporate video, a demonstration, or a short film, must be shown on screen using a VCR. With an audience of more than 20 or 30, a bigger or giant screen will be necessary (ensure the picture quality is acceptable to you).

  - **Overhead projectors**

    Time-tested devices for displaying visuals to a (usually large) audience, slides require some organisation and careful handling on the part of the presenter. Firstly, you must get all your slides in the proper presentation sequence and know exactly where you will place the slides before and after projection. You must also watch for font type and size (normally no less than 18 point) and spacing for maximum visibility by all of your audience.

  - **Computer display projection**

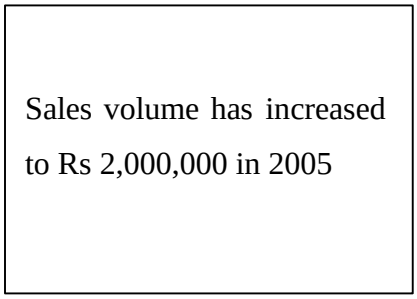
    Especially since the advent of Microsoft PowerPoint, the use of the computer to directly display data and any other information from presentation files, giving presentations that are impressive as well as effective has become very popular. Using the computer for presentations is extremely easy, practical, non-fussy and creates a powerful impression.

As a general rule, use the technology that serves your purpose: neither too low-tech, nor too much technology (which can overpower the presentation).

4.8.2 Using Slides

- **Message title and supporting detail**

  An effective visual aid includes both the main message and supporting detail. The following slide is ineffective in that it could have given more detail at once glance:

  …and could easily have been presented as a graph of sales volume increases over, say, the last four years.

- **Using Slides: Easy readability**

  Being audience-oriented is also about aiming to get the audience to think "what an interesting point", and not "what wonderful graphics". So, keep the clutter out of your slides, and do not overdo the design and effects. "Chartjunk" is any decoration that does not add meaning to your message, and so must be removed.

  Avoid:

  - Gratuitous (unnecessary) design elements such as shading, cross-hatching, etc
  - Using a key or legend, which distracts the viewer as s/he is tempted to look back and forth. Better to place a label right on the area concerned.
  - Using more than ten lines in a single slide
  - Using overly complex diagrams
  - Using too many colours. Instead, choose one colour consistently. (Blue is said to be the colour of business) either for the background or shadings.

- Using pale or washed-out looking colours like yellow or orange. Instead, use dark colours that are easier on the viewers' eyes.

- **Using Slides: Clear words and letters**

Even if the slide as a whole is easy to read, you must check that your words are also easy to read.

- Trim down words to key words and phrases only
- Never give long sentences (or worse, paragraphs!)
- Use effective lettering: large enough for people at the back of the room to read.
- Avoid using all capital letters.

This is twelve-point type. It is too small for any overhead projection.

This is eighteen-point type. Its is the minimum for a small-sized audience of about 20 people.

THIS IS THIRTY-SIX-POINT TYPE. USE THIS FOR LARGE-GROUP PRESENTATIONS.

4.9 MANAGING AUDIENCE ATTENTION AND INTERACTION

4.9.1 Managing Audience Attention

Unless the material and your personality are both stimulating in and of themselves, most presentations can benefit from some props that grab the audience's eye, ear, mind or heart. Managing distraction and concentration can be as simple as:

- Using one or more 'attention grabbers' such as bringing in an unexpected object, firing a toy gun, bringing out a poster, and other devices
- Organising the presentation into 'bite-size' portions, each with beginnings, middles, and endings. High-concentration bits must last no longer than 20 minutes, and even adults can rarely sit still and listen for more than an hour.
- Provide moments when the audience can relax, stretch their legs reflect, re-group and prepare for the next moment of complexity and concentration. A break may be between five and fifteen minutes' duration.

4.9.2 Increasing Audience Interaction

An audience can occasionally become glassy-eyed or restive, and you can use special tactics to open up the presentation to participation by the audience:

- Ask questions; Every five or ten minutes, turn one of your statements into a question to the audience.
- Pre-plan a list of items that the audience has to contribute to, either fully or partly.
- Ask someone to explain his or her point by taking the stage in front of the room for five minutes.
- Use group activities, buzz groups, and games to get the audience to express and energise themselves.
- Offer a challenge: dare the audience to find an alternative theory or plan of action; most people are highly motivated by challenge.

4.9.3 Managing the Q & A Period

It is useful to create the appropriate mental framework among your audience by informing them right at the outset that there will be a question time at the end of the presentation.

- Motivate the audience to put questions by actually asking them "Who has the first question?"
- Look at the person asking the question, and repeat it, especially if there is a large audience or if you need a moment to think. By repeating the question, you also ensure you understood what the person asked, and that other listeners hear and understand the question.
- Do not continue looking at the person once you start to answer the question. Avoid asking for approval of your answer, such as by saying "Does that answer your question?"
- Continue to focus on the whole audience - remember that you are still in a public speaking situation and that the whole audience should hear your answer—not just the person who asked the question.
- Continue to stand where you are equally distant from all members of your audience. Avoid the temptation to move directly to the person who asked the question, because this makes the rest of the audience feel visually left out.
- Keep your answer concise and to the point. Don't give another speech. The audience will be bored if you take too long to answer a question. In addition, possibly the only person interested in the answer is the one who asked the question! If you can answer with a "yes" or "no," then do so. This keeps the tempo moving and will help keep the audience's attention.
- Do not adopt a defensive attitude. Think of questions as a compliment that your audience is interested enough to want clarifications, amplifications, and justifications.
- Don't answer a loaded question directly, but defuse it before you answer. Before answering a question such as, "What is the point of all this if there is no money?", defuse it by saying, "I understand your frustration with the recent cost-cutting exercise", then answer that question. You only get into arguments when you allow

yourself to answer the loaded question. If the person is not satisfied with the changing of the question's wording, tell him or her that you will be glad to talk about it after the question and answer period and move quickly to the next question.

- Sometimes, there are people in the audience who do not have a question, but still want to intervene, by making an extended comment—or a speech. Watch the person's speaking rate, and when he or she takes a moment for a breath, interrupt with "Thanks for your comment….Next question?" Look to the other side of the room and the long-winded speaker is not sure whether you interrupted him or whether you really thought he or she was finished. Do not allow the person to continue with the "speech" because it will deprive other members of the audience of the opportunity to ask questions.
- Always maintain control of the speaking situation. When you allow participation from the audience, there are risks of losing control. Anticipate the unexpected. Plan ahead as much as possible. Look at your content and think about likely questions the audience will ask.
- Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know," and move on to the next question (You may add that you will be glad to get back to them with an answer at a later time).
- Work hard not to lose your temper with someone who is trying to make you look bad by the question asked. Be direct and frank with an individual if you think his or her question is not relevant, and say so firmly but courteously. Your response might be, "Actually, that question doesn't the fit the context of our discussion.", or "what an interesting point. It's a pity we don't have time to discuss it".
- Invite "show-offs" (who want to talk) to talk after the presentation, or limit their time.
- Ask "hotshots" (who ask loaded questions) how they would answer the question.
- Answer in general terms – or refuse to answer – a gossip questioner who asks a personal question.
- Direct your answer back to your communication objective if you have a questioner who puts a question that focuses on his or her interests only.

4.10 MANAGING STRESS AND ANXIETY

It is totally natural to be nervous. However, dysfunctional anxiety must be managed, especially in the knowledge that we may be part of the group of people who suffer from severe apprehension at the mere thought of communicating formally in public. The **three** most important steps that we can take to overcome presentation apprehension are:

1. Find out how to present effectively.
   Read up, practise, do exercises, whatever it takes to ensure that you have the resources to put on a competent 'show'.

2. Learn to present in a relaxed way.

   See Box 7.0 below

3. Be constructive and positive.

   STOP talking yourself down into believing that you will make a mess of the presentation. Replace negative ruminations with positive thoughts.

Box 7.0 Anticipating your presentation

You need to anticipate your presentation mentally, physically, and logistically.

☺ **Mental preparation**

We are most nervous at the opening, and some at the closing, of our presentations. As such, part of your preparation will be to memorise your opening and closing -- three or four sentences each. Even if you cover your key points from notes, knowing your opening and closing by heart lets you start and end fluently, connecting with your audience when you are most nervous.

Find a private spot, where you can spend 10 to 15 minutes undisturbed. Wave your hands in the air. Relax your jaw, and shake your head from side to side. Shake your legs one at a time. Now take a few slow, very deep breaths with your eyes closed, releasing all tension with each out-take of breath.

☺ **Preparing the logistics**

Go to the room where you'll be speaking as early as possible so you can get comfortable in the environment. If you will be speaking from a stage, go early in the morning when no one is there and make friends with the stage. Walk around the area where you will be speaking, so the first time there is not when you deliver your talk. Then, during your presentation, you can concentrate on your audience, not your environment.

☺ **Make physical and eye contact**

Especially for small meetings, do go around shaking hands and making eye contact with every person in attendance. For larger meetings, meet and shake hands with people in the front row at least, and some of the people as they are coming in the door. Connect with them personally, so they'll be rooting for your success. We as speakers are rarely nervous about individuals, only when faced with the thought of an audience. Once you've met the audience or at least some of them, they become less scary.

4.11 BEYOND EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS: BEING AN INSPIRATIONAL MANAGER

Once again, first impressions ….are all-important. Especially in a management position, you may never get a second chance to make that grand first impression. As a leader, or potential one, a presentation offers a unique opportunity to show that you have the skill it takes to influence and make a powerful impact on people. The following suggestions can be useful in establishing your name as an inspirational, visionary, charismatic, manager or would-be manager:-

- Connect emotionally with the audience, so that your presentation responds to their inner needs.
- Believe in what you are saying, so that you establish trust with the audience.
- Observe presenters who exude charisma and develop your *persona* around his or her traits.
- Strive to develop good attitudes: a smiling face, an easygoing demeanour, and a warm heart at all times.
- Check that you are NOT any of the following, otherwise you will be disliked and distrusted: haughty, overbearing, pompous, cold, impatient, shy, anxious, insensitive, uncompromising, superior, aggressive.
- Maintain a relaxed posture while sitting, but an erect body posture while standing.
- Avoid any show of defensiveness: you will establish yourself as someone of relatively little power.
- Never avert your face or your eyes from individuals addressing you.
- Roam the audience widely and spot the people who are agreeing with you: nodding, smiling; make eye contact with these individuals and keep coming back to them throughout the presentation, to amplify its impact and your self-confidence.
- Tell a simple joke to share a laugh with the audience early in the presentation, and several times within it.
- Let your ultimate goal always be to leave the audience with a course of action they are motivated to pursue. After all, it's what happens "after" we leave the stage that matters most.

- Do NOT be a HTLP (High-Tech, Low-Performance) speaker. The H.T.L.P. Speaker loves to put on a show! The H.T.L.P's presentation is littered from beginning to end with eye-popping effects and a fantastic frenzy of flashy, colourful PowerPoint visuals.

Activity 3

You have made your presentation, but how could you increase your effectiveness as a presenter by following up on your presentation? (Hint: start by considering what your objectives were).

4.12 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe the difference between a presentation and a speech
2. What are six traits of successful presenters? Describe each briefly.
3. What is an effective approach for organizing the content of a presentation?
4. List the 13 scoring rubrics for effective delivery style.
5. What audience points must you bear in mind in using PowerPoint as a presentation tool?
6. What are the ways of dealing with difficult questions from the audience?
7. Why is nonverbal communication an important factor in presentations?
8. How would you encourage a reluctant audience to be more interactive?
9. What key aspects of slide preparation and presentation must not be forgotten?