

Platform Skills

How to optimize the physical aspects of presenting well.



Introduction



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Fostering Engagement



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Summary

Introduction

How we say it is as important as what we say.

No matter how many times you've done it, presenting provides a rush of adrenaline. The stakes are often high. Appearing confident makes the audience comfortable and makes it easier for them to pay attention.

In this lesson, you will learn:

- How to posture yourself
- Verbal and non-verbal techniques
- Ways to engage your audience
- How to prepare yourself, physically, to present

CONTINUE

Posture



Stand to Present

It's okay to sit when you're in conversation with a prospect, but when presenting content, always stand. It signals that you are in control of the presentation and puts the room at ease.

DO:

- Stand in place. It helps to imagine you're on a milk crate.
- Use the space in front of you, above the waist and below the face, for hand gestures.
- Face your audience straight on.

DON'T:

- Pace or continually move around the room
- Lock your knees

CONTINUE

Verbal Communication

The more comfortable you sound, the easier it is for the audience to pay attention.

And the best way to sound comfortable is to actually *be* comfortable. This is where a little preparation can go a long way. When you know your material well, you're easier to listen to. When you show up a few minutes early to settle in before presenting, that helps, too.

DO:

- Slow down. Try to deliver a presentation at 80 to 90% of the speed you normally speak. This will also help you remove the "um"s and "ah"s that interrupt your flow.
- Speak up. Be a little bit louder than you think you need to be. The room will adapt.
- Use speaker notes to help you hit important points and to help you remember where you are and what comes next.

DON'T:

- Read – especially the words on screen – instead, prepare your material ahead of time and know your talk track well
- Take the emotion out of your voice, emotion signals to the audience to pay attention to what you're saying



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Non-Verbal Communication



Nonverbal communication accounts for more than half your message.

Studies have proven that what we say to each other only matters a little. How we say it is what's really communicated.

DO:

- Make eye contact with audience members.
- Smile when appropriate.
- Nod and give other indications that you're listening when someone else is speaking.

DON'T:

- Suppress or try to hide facial reactions
- Stare

CONTINUE

Fostering Engagement



The best presentation is a conversation.

When prospect teams hear from their own colleagues, it can be a powerful signal to their primitive brains. It causes them to pay more attention and helps build consensus around your solution.

DO:

- Allow yourself to be interrupted. Encourage it, in fact.
- When you see someone react to something you're saying, pause and ask them to share what's on their mind.
- Call people by name to bring them into the conversation. If you need to, make a seating chart when you arrive.
- Ask specific, open-ended questions.

DON'T:

- Expect any engagement if you simply ask *Any questions?* at the end of your presentation
- Start with the highest-level person in the room, try to get everyone else involved first, if possible

CONTINUE

Preparation

Nobody ever complained that they were "way too prepared" for a big presentation.

But that doesn't mean we don't try to cut corners. Remember, you are accountable for the outcome of every moment of truth with a prospect. Commit to preparing accordingly, when you can.

DO:

- Practice your presentation 7 to 10 times, even if just in your mind. (Pro tip: out loud is better!)
- Take a brief walk right before you present, if possible. That light amount of activity can help your body get rid of [cortisol](#), a chemical that works against you when presenting.
- Drink lots of water before you present, especially for longer presentations.

DON'T:

- Drink a lot of caffeine right before you present
- Skip practice



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Summary

How we deliver a presentation is important.

And while some of this material is a reminder, it's a good one to have. Too often, presenters believe that these things don't matter. But then wonder why they can't establish the trusted consultant relationship they desire with new prospects.

You have completed this course. You may close the window.