

Presentation skills

Effective presentation skills form a very important aspect of our communication. It can make or mar a communication situation. It is the formal, structured and systematic presentation of a message to an audience.

Kinds of presentations

1. **Monologue presentations:** In this the speaker speaks without any interruption till the end. The speaker clears the doubts of the audience at the end. The speaker plans the presentation in advance by collecting the relevant materials. This kind of presentation is mostly used in classroom situations. It leads the audience to get bored. Therefore good delivery skill is needed to retain the attention of the audience and to make it more interesting
2. **Guided presentations:** In this, the speaker presents the questions that both speaker and audience have agreed in advance. It acts as facilitator to help the audience with the expert knowledge. This type of presentation is very useful when the audience has knowledge of the subject.
3. **Sales presentations:** it is made to convince the audience for buying the products or services or accepting the new idea.

Types of speakers

1. **Cool zone speakers:** Skilled presenters belong to this category. The presentation is a structured one and facts are presented in an orderly manner and the pitch, volume, tone, delivery is all under control.
2. **Hot zone speakers:** Most political speakers belong to this category. Loud voice, dramatic body movement, voice inflections (voice keeps up and down), moves suddenly, shifting postures.
3. **Dull zone speakers:** They make the presentation a boring experience. Lack of pitch variation, nervous body languages. Poor eye contact, tremors in the voice, rushing often with matter hurriedly.

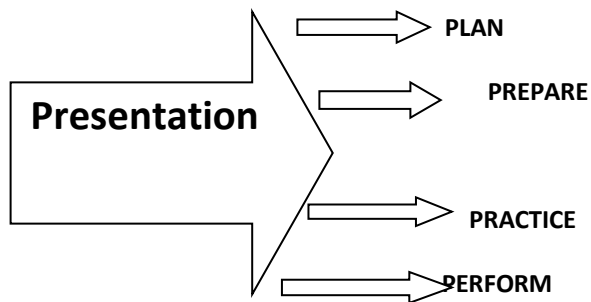
Method of presentation

1. **Manuscript:** It involves reading word for word from a prepared matter. So this method is not an effective one.
2. **Memorized presentation:** Many speakers are known to write and memories entire speeches. The great disadvantage is that, when the speaker forgets some important part of the script and trying to locate it in the script and spoils the entire effect of the presentation. It involves reciting word for word from memory.
3. **Extemporaneous presentation:** Effective speakers use this method. They carefully plan their speeches and then speak as if they were getting the ideas on the spur of the moment. It is planned with broad ideas but not written or memorized.

4. Impromptu: It is unexpected, sudden on the spot.

Planning out the presentation

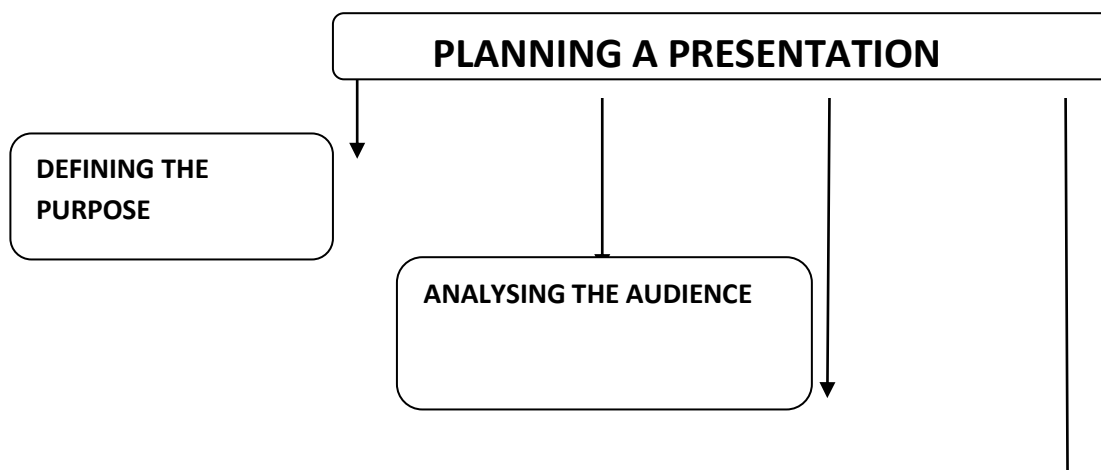
The basic elements needed for an effective presentation are



PLANNING

An oral presentation is the formal, structured and systematic presentation of a message to an audience and it involves conveying a lot of information in a limited time. Before planning the presentation one should be aware of the

- ✓ Audience
- ✓ Stimulate the interest of the audience
- ✓ Create interactions with the audience
- ✓ Know the purpose of the presentation
- ✓ Analyses the occasion
- ✓ Select an interesting topic



ANALYSING THE OCCASION

CHOOSING A SUITABLE TITLE

Defining the purpose

The purpose for the presentation should be clearly stated to the audience. The presenter should clearly identify between the general purpose and specific purpose of the presentation.

Analyzing the Audience

Audience analysis is an integral part of the process of oral presentation. It includes identifying audience characteristics, analyzing audience needs and expectations and identifying factors for getting and maintaining audience attention. The presenter should plan according to the needs and expectations of the audience. The presenter can relate the presentation to the expectation of the audience only when he recognise the factors needed by the audience. Plan should also concentrate on how to adapt to the carrying moods of the listeners and how to tap their curiosity, interest and motivation.

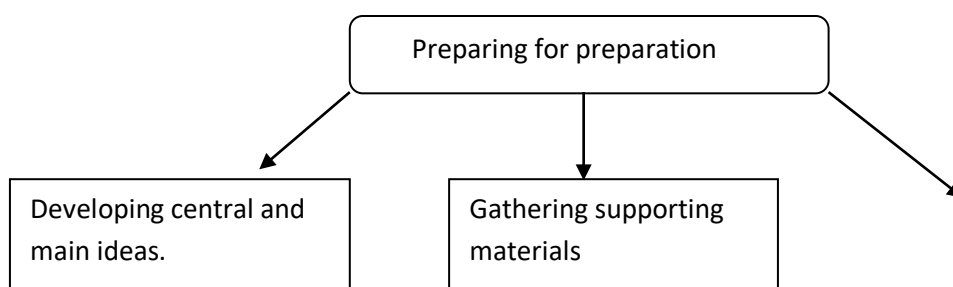
Analyze the Occasion.

The occasion on which the presentation is to be made should be analysed in order to understand the nature of the event. Several aspects of the event like its background the people involved, the organizations or associations linked to the event and so on need to be considered.

Choosing a suitable title

The title of the presentation gives the audience the first glimpse of the presentation and they form their first impressions. A vague, misleading , and fussy title may confuse the audience.

PREPARING THE PRESENTATION.



Developing Central and main ideas

The central and main idea of a presentation means the core or the main concept of the presentation. It may be a one sentence summary of the presentation . It should also focus on the content of the speech and the specific language to be spoken.

Gathering supporting Materials

One of the most difficult aspects of preparing a presentation is gathering relevant supporting information. While gathering supporting information a systematic approach should be adopted. While collecting the necessary information the presenter should recall all details needed for the presentation. Sources for collection of details include internet, library ,personal interview, colleagues and special interest group.

Planning Visual Aids

Using appropriate visual aids will increase the effectiveness of presentations. They serve as a speech note and give confidence while we present. Visual aids also help us to focus on the theme of the presentation and increase the interest of the audience.

Organizing the presentation

When the main idea and the central idea have been developed and the supporting materials has been gathered with the visual aids, we have to organize all the essential in order. Importance should be given to the Introduction and Conclusion. The body of the conclusion should contain appropriate details but not excessive data.

PRACTICE

Rehearsing the presentation

“Practice makes a man Perfect”. A proper rehearsal is important for a clear and confident presentation. Rehearsal should be planned and conducted properly and systematically. Steps for proper rehearsal.

Plan he rehearsal

Rehearsal should be planned well in advance giving sufficient time between the rehearsal and the actual presentation. It is an opportunity to review and revise the presentation.

#Rehearse before a Live Audience

Rehearsal should be held before a live audience (friends, colleagues) , so that they can analyse and provide suggestion on our presentation.

Timing

One should rehearse with timing. The speaker may be tempted to talk too quickly during the presentation. To be an effective speaker one should speak slowly and pause appropriately between important points.

#Recreate the Presentation Environment

Rehearsal is essential in order to experience the actual presentation. The main purpose of rehearsal is to help learn to make the presentation with confidence and in natural and spontaneous way.

PERFORM

Steps to improve stage fright

Concentrate on the three Ps Planning, Preparation, and Practice

When through concentration is given for planning preparation and practice the presenter will have confidence to deliver his presentation. "Practice makes a man perfect" A well rehearsed presentation will eradicate the concept of stage fright.

Set realistic goals

It is always important to set objectives that are realistic goals so that it would not create nervousness. In fact the normal stress of the speaking situation is heightened by unrealistic ambitions.

Avoid negative thoughts

A positive thought will generate positive energy. Always try to feel confident about your plan and preparation and have faith in yourself that everything is fine.

Begin the presentation with a pause

Beginning the presentation is accompanied by feelings of excitement and nervousness. This can be controlled by taking a few moments to make one self comfortable. The speaker should maintain the speed limit of his presentation

Speak slowly

People who are new for presentation often feel nervous and speak too fast which expose their nervousness. Even the audience will not be able to follow properly. So it is essential to speak slowly and take appropriate pause.

Learn and practice stress reduction techniques.

Stress reduction techniques like deep breathing, mental relaxation and progressive relaxation will help in reducing stage fright.

Factors aiding effective presentation

1. Use of audio visual aids: It helps to arrest the attention of the listeners. It clarifies the speaker's ideas, makes the presentation more illuminating as well as interesting and relatively permanent impact on the minds of listeners. The visual aids like diagrams, charts, pictures, over head projectors, LCD projectors, video tapes, white boards, flip charts, and handouts.

2. Body language

Posture: stand up straight; hold your head high, keep shoulders straight, feet slightly apart, one foot slightly in front of other. Standing straight posture helps to breathe well, reduces tension, and activates our mind.

Gestures: appropriate use of hands, body movements, and facial expressions hold an audience's attention.

Eye contact: A speaker who looked more at the audience is judged as better informed, more experienced, more honest and friendliest than who delivers the speech with less eye contact. The audience also feels that speaker is talking to them. It connects the speaker directly to the listener.

Hands: One palm holding the other is a relaxed, confident position. An open body gestures integrates well with an open body language.

Facial expression: It conveys the feelings of the presenter, as well as their depth knowledge. Beginning with a smile eases the tension and helps to create good rapport with the audience.

3. Quality of voice: Vivid voice is likely to have greater impact upon the audience. The presenter has to use the intonation with proper emphasis and stress at the right point to convey the spirit of the message to be delivered. Voice modulation sustains interest of the audience and avoids monotony.

4. Physical mannerisms to avoid: playing with pens, pointers, or papers; jingling money in pockets; fiddling with hair; avoiding eye contact, putting face down, showing awkward structures, talking too fast, not speaking in clear and audible voice.

The three elements which have its impact on an audience are: 1. Content - 55%

2. Tone of voice - 7% 3. Body language - 38%

Audience management: An effective presentation is always listener centric. The objective of a presentation is to make the message understood and remembered. If the audience fails to understand the presentation, it seems to be failure

Audience feedback determines the success of the presentation. To get feedback, the members of the audience can be surveyed while speaking and the body language cues can indicate to the speaker if they are attentive or confused

Conclusion: At the end, the presenter has to say the gist of his presentation and encourages the audience to ask questions.