## Thinking About Different Audiences

Presenting to different audiences in teh creative industry requires tailoring your communication approach and visual presentation to meet the specific needs, preferences, and expectations of each audience group. A mistake many designers make in preparing a presentation is not properly considering their audiences and their needs. This can mean they start the presentation at the point they think is important and then they simply dump data in all directions. Then as they talk, their messages get lost in a fog of facts. Because of a lack of structure the audience has to work very hard to unearth the point of the talk and understand the data being fired at them. In most cases an audience is not prepared to work this hard. In some presentation scenarios an audience may not even know why they should listen in the first place.



Fig 1. Unsplash (n.d.) Know your audience when presenting, especially if it’s to more than one person

Here are some strategies for effectively presenting to diverse audiences in design:

* **Know and understand your audience**, for example, their background, expertise level, interests, familiarity with design terminology, job role, preferences, etc.
* **Use language and tone that resonate with your audience** and avoid jargon or technical terms that may be unfamiliar or confusing to them.
* **Highlight relevant benefits and value propositions** that are most relevant and compelling to your audience, for example, how your designs address the project’s objectives.
* **Provide context and explanation** for your design decisions, methodologies, and creative process to help your audience understand the rationale behind your work.
* **Use a range of visuals** such as images, illustrations, charts, and infographics that resonate with your audience and convey information and key messages effectively.
* **Customise the presentation format and structure** of your presentation to align with the preferences and expectations of your audience. For example, business stakeholders may prefer concise summaries, while colleagues (other creative practitioners) may appreciate in-depth discussions and visual demonstrations.
* **Anticipate concerns and questions** that your audience may have and address them proactively during your presentation.
* **Encourage audience engagement and participation** by inviting questions, feedback, and discussion throughout your presentation.



Fig 2. Pexels (n.d.) Size consideration: Presenting to an individual is different than a group



Fig 3. Unsplash (n.d.) Format consideration: Presenting in person is different to doing so remotely online

By tailoring your presentation approach and content to the specific needs and preferences of your audience, you can effectively communicate your creative ideas, build rapport and trust, and ultimately achieve your desired outcomes in presentations.

### Presenting your Work to Peers

When presenitng your work, the context and audience will determine the style and tone you adopt. You will have to exercise judgement in terms of pitch and the degree of risk that is appropriate.

Questions to consider:

* Who are you presenting to?
* What was the brief you were given?
* How have you responded to the brief?
* What are the key design merits of your solution?
* What elements of your solution are you unsure of, or need direction on?

### Presenting your Solutions to Clients

The ability to convey the effectiveness of your creative solutions to the client is an invaluable design skill. A great solution poorly delivered, is a missed opportunity. If you don’t express your confidence in the idea, then the client probably won’t be convinced. Clients are often overly cautious about ideas that seem unconventional or ‘out there,’ and their lack of vision or experience can stifle what you are creating. Therefore, look for ways to guide and assure them that it’s the best solution to the design problem at hand.



Fig 4. Pexels (n.d.) Presenting to a client

Presentation considerations:

* Refer back to the aims of the project and the brief you were given.
* What were the objectives outlined in the brief? How does your solution address these?
* Do you anticipate any fears or doubts the client may have, how could you offset these?
* How does your solution help address their business goals, or create new opportunities?
* Align with, or differentiate from, key competitors.

### Presenting your work in interviews

For designers applying for a job, much of an interview can involve looking through and discussing your portfolio of creative and technical work. Your work should speak for itself, but it also helps to provide context for the projects and use the opportunity to show the depth of your process behind the finished solution.



Fig 5. Unsplash (n.d.) Interview scenario

Presentation considerations:

* Provide an outline of the project brief so the prospective employer has context.
* Mention some key approaches or techniques in your process. This shows you have strategically thought about the solutions.
* Promote the merits of the design solution. Be confident but be mindful of coming across as arrogant. In this situation you are also making an overall impression of yourself as a person.

## Notes on Presenting as a Team

An additional aspect to presentations that you need to consider is whether you’re presenting alone or as part of a team of designers. Creative presentations are often executed in teams, especially when working on larger projects. The key for these presentations to be effective is to plan and execute it so that it comes across as authentic and cohesive.

Considerations:

* **Plan together as a team:** Presentation content and delivery plans should be developed together so each person is on board with the approach.
* **Assign specific roles:** Ensure each team member has a clearly defined role and related responsibilities.
* **Think collaboration, not competition:** Support, don’t undermine each other. To do this, you could expand on something a team member has said in a presentation, but don’t repeat it exactly - this undermines them.
* **Rehearse in advance:** Every team member should be present.
* **For unrehearsed parts such as a Q&A:** If one person is being favoured for questions, then they should redirect to help involve the whole team.