**Lesson 14 Academic Presentation I**

**Lesson objectives:**

·get to know what preparations should be made before delivering a presentation, esp. how to structure a presentation with the help of MINTO Pyramid principles

·get to know how a presentation is evaluated

·decide the topic for your presentation

·work out the outline of the body part

·understand some features of academic spoken English

**1.What to do? /Explain the instruction of presentation (5 minutes)**

**1.1** **Group work**: Two or three students will work as a group. Make sure everyone carries their own weight. Each team is supposed to rehearse well in advance. Make sure cooperation is necessary. You may ask:

·How can your group's material best be delivered?

·What presentation strengths do your group members have?

·What's the best way for everyone to come together to make sure those goals are met?

Note: If there is no clue how to deliver it, please refer to the video clipin the profileof lesson 14, *Collaborative Presentation Introduction.mp4*

**1.2** **Topic:** A topic related to your field of study is needed. Meantime make sure the topic is appropriate for the time limit and understandable to your instructor and all the rest of your classmates.

**1.3** **Time limit**: Five to six minutes for a group of 2, eight for a group of 3.

**1.4** **Number of words**: The recommended speaking rate for a public presentation is about 100 words per minute. Therefore, you should aim for 400-450 or 600-650 words for the presentation in case of a two-individual team or a three-individual team.

**1.5** **Audience**: Your instructor and classmates.

**1.6 grading:** (refer to part 3)

**2. How to do?/Eight key steps before making a presentation**

**Topic**

**2.1** **Choose a topic**

What is the thing you are interested in and you know better than most of the others?

**2.2 Analyze the audience**

You may want to find out the age, gender, background, expertise, language, etc. of the audience, as you will need this information when you compose your presentation. If you are going to a conference, you may obtain this information from the conference organizer.

Based on the audience information you have collected, try to answer the following questions:

·What has my audience known about this topic?

·What does my audience want to know about this topic / expect to get from me?

·How does the audience feel about this topic? (esp. a controversial topic)

**2.3 Narrow down your topic**

There is always much to talk about a certain topic, but you need to design your talk based on the following considerations:

·How much time do I have to make this presentation?

·What aspect of the topic best suits the need and interests of the audience?

·What aspect of the topic am I competent?

·Do I have the resources and time to develop the topic?

**structure**

**2.4** **Identify key points**

**2.5 Organize the materials in a logical way**

**\*\*\*How to Structure Information to Create a Compelling Presentation?**

Concise and convincing communication has never been more important than in today’s information-cluttered environment. With a massive information overload and shortening attention spans, sending a message across is more challenging than ever before.

These advances have a major impact on the way we present. To captivate the audience, we need to compose an exciting story with a logical structure that people can easily follow.

The Pyramid Principle developed by Barbara Minto from McKinsey explains how to logically structure information in our presentations and persuasively communicate with our audiences. (**MINTO Pyramid**)

Here are three key points:

1. Start with the answer first

2. Group and justify your supporting arguments

3. Assemble your recommendations into a logical structure

**Start with the answer first**

*Organize information into pyramid shape*

We have an innate need to organize information into structures. Even the ancient Greeks imagined the shapes of animals in the star constellations rather than just looking at them as random clusters of dots.

Research has shown that when we read, we automatically try to organize information into top-down pyramid shapes where conclusions are supported by arguments just as the top of the pyramid is supported by its core stones.

*Group similar ideas*

When building your information pyramid, start from the bottom much like when you build a real structure. List all the arguments that you plan to make and group them into clusters that support a similar conclusion. Then summarize each argument group with the statement one level above the group. Each statement represents the tip of a tiny pyramid.

Repeat the grouping process on the next level and the next and so forth until you build the entire pyramid. You’ll get one summary statement on the very top that will communicate the key message of your entire presentation.

**Group and justify your supporting arguments**

*Deduction*

Every statement that you make within your pyramid should trigger a question in your audience’s mind. To answer it, you need to provide them with reasonable arguments on the level below. And one of the ways is through deductive reasoning.

Deduction is the reasoning process of drawing a logical conclusion from general arguments. For instance: All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

However, when giving a recommendation to your audience, do it backwards.

Start with the conclusion and then present supporting statements (as in the example below). After all, the recommendation is what the audience is interested in the most.

*Induction*

Another way to draw a logical conclusion is by inductive reasoning that takes specific information and makes a broader generalization. The conclusion of an inductive argument is considered to be only probable, based upon the evidence given. However, a great advantage of using induction for argumentation is that the reader can easily follow it since the conclusion is clear from the beginning.

The inductive reasoning is, therefore, recommended for argumentation in the top parts of your information pyramid.

**2.6** **Write the outline/speech**(homework)

**2.7 Create slides** (detailed instruction will be offered in lesson 15)

**2.8 Rehearse**

**3. In what way is it evaluated?/How your preparation helps you to get a high mark?**

The following table shows how students’ presentation is graded this semester. (Total = 15) The highlighted part, delivery, is the focus while making the explanation of this table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| choosing the Topic | 3 | related to your discipline (state-of-the-art findings, worth-while knowledge to acquire, etc.)  appropriate for the time limit  arousing interest from and understandable for your audience |
| structure | 3 | complete in structure  Signposts and transitions to guide the audience |
| slides | 1 | simple, direct, and clear  used to assist you, not to replace you |
| delivery  (individually graded) | 4 | well-modulated voice  appropriate body language (eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and stance) |
| language  (individually graded) | 4 | the academic speaking style of presentation  appropriate vocabulary and sentence patterns for effective communication |

*Note: A complete structure is as follows:*

Introduction:

1. introduced the topic clearly

2. gained audience’s attention and interest

3. related the topic to the audience

Body:

1. main points made clearly

2. main points fully supported

3. organization well planned

Conclusion:

1. prepared the audience for ending

2. reinforced the thesis of the presentation

3. ended vividly

**4. Language features of academic presentation**

**Informality**

There are essentially three levels of formality: formal, relatively informal, and very informal. Academic speakers may choose to present in a relatively informal manner. This style of language adds friendliness and warmth, rendering the speaker more approachable and the audience more receptive to what is being said. Though relatively informal, academic speaking is different from everyday conversation. Colloquial words and expressions such as “stuff”, “ain’t”, “sort of”, “all right” are very informal and should thus be avoided.

**Ex.1** Read the following sentences and decide which are in written language and which are in spoken language.

You can see here, 35%of the group of managers classified as participative reached senior management status. ( )

An individualistic style appears to be closely associated with rapid career path progression, whereas a group or participative style, despite its evident attractiveness to all members of staff, is correlated with a relatively slow career progression. ( )

Although lip service is paid to the concept of participative management, their real perceptions of leadership qualities completely contradict this view. It can be further seen that such surveys......( )

So, we find there is a massive contradiction. Good managers are supposed to be participative - to make sure they consult and discuss. Good leaders are supposed to be strong individuals - able to make decision on their own. ( )

Then, please summarize the differences between written language and spoken language.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Written language | Spoken language |
| Long sentences | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sentences |
| Complex vocabulary | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ vocabulary |
| Complex arguments | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ arguments |
| Impersonal style  Passive tense  Impersonal pronouns | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ style  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tense  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ pronouns  Reference to the audience  Everyday language (slang and everyday expressions) |

**Ex.2** Match the more formal verbs with their less formal (spoken) equivalents.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Formal  to acquire  to reduce  to access  to appreciate  to capture  to deteriorate  to implement  to rationalize  to remunerate  to withdraw | Informal  a. to put into action  b. to pull out  c. to get worse  d. to buy  e. to pay  f. to cut down  g. to get into  h. to take  i. to understand  j. to make simpler |

**Ex.3** Based on the rules given in the above table, please change the text into more natural spoken English.

1. Introduction

The subject of this paper is a cost-benefit analysis of introducing job sharing. The aim is to provide the necessary information for a decision to be made within the next two months. The subject will be looked at under the following headings: financial implications, working practices and social effects.

2. Financial implications

A detailed study of personal and associated costs has been carried out. From a payroll point of view, 10% of staff choosing to job share will mean no actual increase in direct salary costs. However, there will be additional costs incurred in the administration of salaries.

1. **Homework assignments**

Please read the 2 attachments and complete the outline of your presentation by filling in the template given below. Submit a paper copy of your outline to your instructor before you start presenting in week 16.

**Outline Template**

***Topic***:

***My Audience***:

***Specific Purpose***:

**Introduction**

***Attention-getter***:

***Establish Speaker Credibility***:

***Thesis statement***:

***Preview of subtopics***:

# *(TRANSITION)* :

**Body**

***I.*  *First main point:***

***Evidence:***

A. She was the major heir in father’s will.

B. She hated stepmother.

1. She refused to have meals together.

2. She addressed her “Mrs. Borden”.

# *(TRANSITION)*

***II.* *First main point:***

***Evidence:***

1. She was alone in the house.
2. The front door was triple-locked.
3. Nobody had got in through the backdoor.

# *(TRANSITION)*

**III. *First main point:***

***Evidence:***

# *(TRANSITION)*

**Conclusion**

**\*\*Thank the audience**

**\*\*Invite questions**

**Attachment 1:**

**Sample Speech Outline**

Title: **What is a Migraine and how does it affect people?**

Time: 8 minutes

I. Introduction

(**Topic**) Today, I am going to tell you what a migraine headache is and how it affects the people who get them.

(A**ttention-getter**) How many people in this class get headaches? Raise your hand. How many of you get them so severe that they disrupt what you are doing at the time? Those of you who raised your hand to either of those questions could suffer from migraines. I’ve suffered from them since I was in the seventh grade. I still get them quite a bit.

(**Thesis statement**) Migraines can become so severe that they disrupt our daily life.

(**Preview**) Things you need to know about migraines are what they are and their symptoms, what causes them, and how sufferers deal with them on a daily basis.

Transition\*\*\*The first among these points is what a migraine is and what the symptoms are.

II. Body

1. (**First main point**) What is a migraine?
   * 1. A migraine is a throbbing headache that is usually one sided but can be two sided. The throbbing is usually accompanied by nausea, sensitivity to light, sound, and smells, sleep disruption, and depression (National Migraine Association – “NMA”).
2. When I get a migraine the slightest movements send my head banging and I usually get the sensitivity to light and sounds with a little nausea.
3. Think of how you feel when you walk from a dark room to the outside where it’s really sunny. You react by closing your eyes because of that instant of pain while your eyes adjust. Now think of that 10 times worse.
   * 1. There are two main types of migraines.

a. One type of migraine is what is called the classic Migraine.

i. The main symptom with this type of migraine is that people get an aura. The aura is usually seen 10 to 30 minutes before your headache. They are usually flashing lights, zigzag lines, or spots of light.

ii. There can be speech difficulty, confusion, weakness in the arms or legs.

b. The other type of migraine is the common migraine. This migraine is just like the classic without the aura.

i. This is the most common kind of migraine.

ii. Mental fuzziness, mood changes, and fatigue are usually experienced the day or so before the headache starts.

c. Both a classic and a common migraine can hit you as often as several times a week or as far apart as a few times a year. They can last anywhere from a few hours to one or two days. Migraines happen more often in women then in men and can develop from age five to thirty-five.

Transition\*\*\* Now that we know what a migraine is and what the symptoms are we can start to understand what helps to cause them.

1. (**Second main point**) The actual cause of migraines is unknown.
   * 1. Evidence has shown that it could be changes in blood vessels, chemicals, and in your nerves in your brain that cause migraines (NMA).
     2. The main theory is that evidence seems to support is that it’s the dilation and constricting of blood vessels (NMA).
        1. During the time before the headache starts the blood vessels in the brain get smaller and allow less blood to flow through.
        2. When the headache begins is when your blood vessels become dilated and more blood flows through. This stretching is what caused the headaches.
        3. Serotonin is thought to be a main cause of migraines.
     3. There are some triggers that doctors have been able to identify that cause migraines.

a. Such things as depression, stress, lack of food and sleep, hormone changes, weather changes, certain foods and beverages, and bright lights.

b. When I was first diagnosed with migraines they had me keep a food diary of everything I ate and when I got headaches.

Transition\*\*\* Now we know what a migraine is and what causes them. As you can see ignoring these types of headaches isn’t going to help them go away. They can disrupt your work and home life if they aren’t taken care of.

1. (**Third main point**) How migraines affect the people who get them?
   * 1. Migraines can cause the sufferer to miss anywhere from a few hours of work to a day or more. This cuts in to their productivity. They typically have downward spiraling incomes.
        1. A recent study by American Academy of Pain Medicine states that 150 million workdays per year are lost to migraines.
        2. The annual cost to an industry and the health care system amounts to 5 to 17 billion dollars.
        3. Many migraine sufferers in the work place are mistaken for drug addicts or alcoholics because when they are experiencing a migraine they may wear sunglasses indoors, make frequent trips to the bathroom, leave early or stay late, and have slurred speech.

Transition\*\*\* Now we know what a migraine is, what can cause a migraine, and how they affect people’s life.

III. Conclusion

1. (**Summary**) A migraine isn’t a common headache, causes of migraines are still not completely known, and having migraines can interfere with your productivity and reputation in the workplace.
2. (**Thesis statement**) After hearing about migraines, I hope you understand and anticipate the impact migraine pain can have on others in your life. This goes a long way in helping to prevent or repair any problems that may arise. (**Closing remark**) **Clear communication is key.**

***Thank the audience***

***Invite questions.***

Adapted from: [www.studymode.com/essays/Sample-Of-Outline-1599029.html](http://www.studymode.com/essays/Sample-Of-Outline-1599029.html)

**Attachment 2: Writing up a presentation**

**Header :**

This part usually includes components like the title, general purpose, specific purpose, central idea and organizational pattern.

1. Title: should be specific and indicate the topic the speaker addresses.
2. Audience analysis (refer to 2.2)
3. General purpose of academic presentation

a. **To inform**: a speech that informs, explains or clarifies information for the audience.

b. **To persuade**: a speech that persuades, intends to change audience’s opinion to your position or move them to action.

Example:

Camille wants to persuade her audience to buy a beauty product she created, she informs the audience about the benefits of using her product. She also includes a few entertaining anecdotes describing how she formulated her creation and recruited volunteers to try it. Nevertheless, her primary purpose is persuasion because she hopes to sell her product.

1. Specific purpose

After we have chosen a topic and a general purpose, we must limit our choices to determine the specific purpose of the presentation.

The SP is often given in the following patterns:

My purpose is to inform my audience about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

My purpose is to persuade my audience to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

My purpose is to entertain the audience with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Introduction:**

The introduction is a very powerful part to capture the audience’s attention and leave them a first impression. An introduction typically includes the following components:

1. Welcome the audience

Apart from simple greetings such as “Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,” you can also express pleasure and honor by saying, for example, “I’m honored to be here with you this morning.” This helps to break the ice and create a warm ambience.

1. Introduce yourself and your topic

If the audience does not know who you are, then you are expected to go beyond simply saying “My name is …, and I am going to talk about …” You will also have to establish your credibility to talk on the given topic by stating your credentials, such as [relevant](https://www.boundless.com/communications/organizing-and-outlining-speech/introduction-12/establishing-credibility/#key_term_glossary_relevant) degrees, certifications, testimonials, recommendations, work experience, volunteering experience, and informally, other types of personal experience. But remember, self-introduction should be very brief and relevant to the topic under discussion.

1. Use an attention-getter

Attention-getters are devices used at the beginning of a presentation to entice the audience to continue listening. Some useful attention-getters include the following:

* Asking a thought-provoking question

E.g. *Have you ever thought about how computers will evolve over the next 100 years?*

* Citing a quotation from someone authoritative in the field

E.g. *Hippocrates, the “father of medicine”, once said, “It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.”*

* Referring to an unusual event or fact

E.g. *Human babies come to the world more vulnerable than most other creatures in the world. But over the next year, they transform from the most helpless of creatures into the most capable, the only primate who walks on two legs.*

* Providing significant statistics

E.g. *According to the International Organization for Migration, the number of people displaced by rising sea levels will be as high as 200,000,000 by 2050.*

* Using suitable humor

E.g. *Creativity means thinking out of the box. Orville Wright did not have a pilot’s license when he took to the air.*

* Asking the audience to imagine

E.g. *What is a smart home? Imagine calling your smart kitchen to get dinner started when you are ready to go home. Imagine using your cell phone to set the temperature to a comfortable level before you reach home. Imagine receiving a text message or an email in case of a gas leak or a fire in your house.*

The choice of a particular attention-getter depends on what type of audience you have. Jokes and questions are suitable for a friendly audience; stories and quotations work well for neutral audience; startling and audience-related statements can stimulate uninterested listeners.

Note: Teachers may not have time to go through these examples in class, may ask students to read for themselves the handout “attention-getters” in which these examples are provided.

1. Introduce your thesis statement

A thesis statement is usually a statement of one or two sentences that lets the audience know what you plan to say in your speech. It is a guidepost for you to make sure that the main points you are developing prove or support the thesis.

A good thesis statement needs to provide essential information:

• What is my limited topic?

• What do I plan to say about this limited topic?

• What do I hope to accomplish with this speech?

\*\*\*The difference between a specific purpose statement in the header and a thesis statement in the introduction: the former contains the intent and goals of a speech while the latter tends to state the central idea. The purpose statement is usually not as specific as the thesis. A thesis statement specifies the purpose and the subject of a speech.

**Ex.** Analyze the following examples to see in which way they are different.

|  |
| --- |
| Example1:  SP: To persuade my audience to be an organ donor and to act upon their decision to donate.  TS：The need is constantly growing for organ donors and it is very simple to be an organ donor when one dies.  Example 2:  SP: To inform my audience about the benefits of practicing yoga.  TS: Practicing yoga can relieve stress and fatigue, and contribute to a healthy body and peaceful mind. |
| Can you tell which statement is SP, which is TS?  ( ): To inform my audience that disasters can cause tremendous loss to us.  ( ): Disasters lead to casualties, damage to properties and high pressure on hospitals, health resources and media.  Exercise 2:  ( ) : To inform my audience how to choose green food.  ( ): There are three things you can do to choose green food. |

1. Preview your main points

Once you have introduced the thesis statement of your presentation, provide an overview of the main points. You do not need to elaborate on the minute details. Just tell the audience briefly what main points you intend to cover, such as:

* *I will first talk about what big data is, then I will explain where big data comes from, and in the end I will discuss how we should deal with the big data challenge.*
* *In the next half an hour, I'll be focusing on three aspects of …, … and…*

\*\*\*Sample Introduction

**(Welcome)** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honor to speak to you today. // **(Self-introduction)** My name is…from…where I am responsible for …//**(Topic)** Today, I would like to talk to you about 4G technology and the impact it will have on businesses. //**(Attention-getter)** According to a global study by EE, the largest mobile network provider in the UK, over 76 per cent of the businesses surveyed agree that 4G has helped their companies innovate, and 47 per cent say 4G has saved their company money, with one small US-based construction company claiming this amounts to over $1,000 per day. But this is just the beginning. //**(Thesis)** As the workforce becomes more mobile, the faster 4G technology can provide plenty of benefits and opportunities for businesses. //**(preview)** By presenting an overview of productivity gains, sales growth, and customer service improvement, I hope to give you a better understanding of the business benefits of 4G.

**Body:** (refer to 2.4-2.5)

The key to developing the body paragraphs is to use [supporting details](http://study.com/academy/lesson/supporting-details-definition-examples-lesson.html) as we discuss the main points. In other words, we need to be specific in the explanations of the points so that we’re not feeding audience vague, fuzzy ideas, but rather, clear, well-supported points.

When developing the main points in the body, you can use the following simple format:

1. State the first main point

Support it with evidence

1. State the second main point

Support it with evidence

1. State the third main point

Support it with evidence

Various types of supporting materials can be used as evidence in the body part:

* Definitions
* Quotations
* Statistics
* Explanations
* Descriptions
* Examples
* Stories
* Audiovisuals

**Conclusion:**

As the last words a speaker shares with the audience, the conclusion may determine how they will remember the presentation. A good conclusion should include four important steps.

1. Summarize the main points

Remind the audience of the main points in a clear and concise manner. Use either a single well-formed sentence for all the points or one sentence for each point. Do not bring in any new points or further examples at this stage.

1. Restate the thesis statement

Reiterate the thesis statement and emphasize one last time the core message. If the original thesis contained a question, answer the question conclusively. This brings closure to the presentation and focuses the audience on the take-home message.

1. Make a closing remark

Give a final thought that closes the presentation with impact, something that makes the audience think and that is relevant to the speech. There are various ways to make this closing remark:

1. Using a new attention getter: the same devices for grabbing attention can be used as the ones in the Introduction
2. Linking back to your introduction is an easy way to make your speech seem more polished and well. Returning to the Attention Getter in the introduction is one of them: use the attention getter in the Introduction again but with a new meaning or insight.

E.g. “As Abraham Lincoln once said, ‘a house divided against itself cannot stand.’”(Introduction)

“In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln’s quote concerning a house divided is especially important in our current time. We can no longer expect to run a country effectively when we are fighting over trivial and meaningless issues. Until politicians realize this, we will never be able to make any changes in the world.”

1. Motivate the audience to act, esp. in a persuasive speech.

E.g. “Things don’t have to stay this way. If what I have said about domestic violence has moved you, donate your time or money to the local domestic violence shelter, and help make things a little better.”

E.g. “Now that you know a little bit about the macrobiotic life forms in our pond, why not go to gogreen.com to learn ways to take advantages of their fertilization properties.”

1. Looking to the future
2. Thank the audience
3. Ask for questions

\*\*\*Sample conclusion

Now, let’s sum up. ║ **(Summary)** A migraine isn’t a common headache, causes of migraines are still not completely known, and having interfere with people’s productivity and reputation in **(Thesis)** After hearing about migraines, I hope you understand the effects a migraine can have on some people’s lives. ║ **(Closing remark)** There may be still a long way to go before we find the causes and treatments for this extremely annoying headache. Hopefully, we won’t have to wait for too long. ║ **(Thanks)** That’s it for my talk today and thank you for your attention. ║ **(Asking for questions)** Any questions, please?