

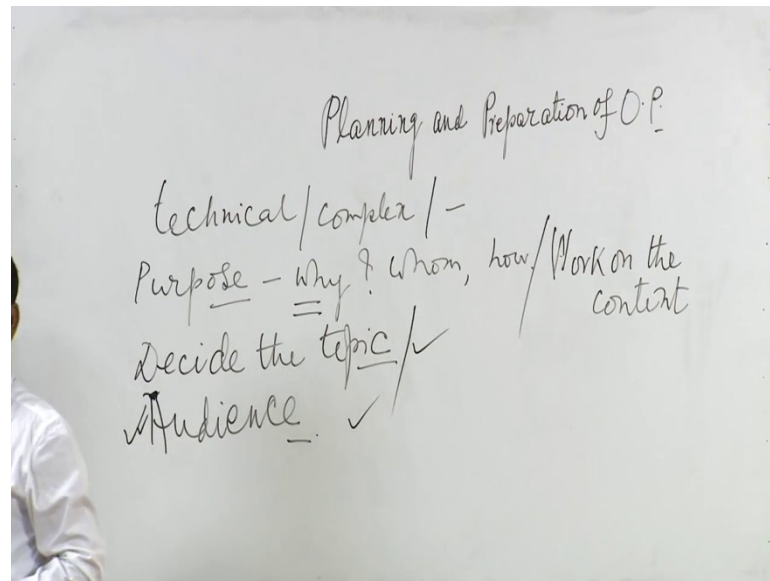
**Soft Skills**  
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**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

**Lecture - 50**  
**Oral Presentation: Planning & Preparation**

Welcome back friends to online lectures on Soft Skills and as you remember in the previous lecture, we talked about the patterns and methods of presentation. Now having known the patterns and methods, you are in a better situation so the time is to plan. In the previous lecture we talked about how depending upon the need and the demand of the audience you can select a proper pattern and then the proper method, but once you know the method and you know the pattern you actually will be eager to know how to prepare, you have information but then how to clothe that information because as a presenter you should think yourself as a tailor.

Now what a tailor does? He has the entire cloth, he cuts it into pieces and then depending upon the various parts he then finally, stitches it, but before that he actually takes your shape. So, as a presenter or as a speaker you also keeping in mind the pattern and the method. Now you decide how to plan and how to prepare because before you perform, it is the planning and the preparation that go a long way. There are certain requirements of oral presentation and as I have said earlier, an oral presentation can be given on a technical subject on a technical subject, on a complex subject. It has several complexities involved into it as compared to the speech, but before that you must know certain things. What are those?

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First is as I said earlier you must know the purpose. So, when we say purpose why, whom and how, is not it. So, who are you going to speak to, why you have been called? Of course, if you have been invited to deliver a talk and if you are an expert, naturally it is because of your expertise in a particular area that you are being called or invited to give a presentation. But then situations vary, demands vary and at times in your own group also among your friends also you have to give presentations, smaller presentations, presentations to small groups.

But then when you are invited, you actually get the topic from the people who have invited you or the host organization. But when you have to give your own presentation or you endeavour to give your own presentation you have to decide the topic. Now many people even do not know how to decide the topic. Sometimes you have been given a choice, especially in your colleges your instructor tells you to give a presentation and for that he does not give you the topic you have to decide the topic. Now deciding the topic is a difficult and a challenging task. How do you decide the topic? Usually because all of us want to speak and speak to the best of our knowledge and to the satisfaction of our audience members, so we feel we should be in a comfort zone and the comfort zone is speaking on a topic that you are familiar with. I have been saying in my previous lectures that people become nervous, speakers get nervous only either because they are not prepared or they are unaware of the subject matter or of the audience.

So, when you are going to deliver a presentation or a talk you decide the topic based upon your audience and then your own expertise or your familiarity with the topic and the subject will make your task easier. So, first task that you have to do is to understand the purpose why you are going to speak and who you are going to speak. So, based on that you will decide your own topic and then when you decide the topic it is of course, essential to understand your audience.

Now the question is----- audience analysis is very important. Majority of good presentations have failed only because the speakers have not been able to understand the background of their audience. So, you have another task that is to know your audience it is very difficult to know your audience, but then there are certain ways you can know your audience and we shall discuss that. So, once you know the audience and you know the topic, now you are going to do a lot of research about the topic---- gathering the information. But then suppose you are going to speak on a topic that is very technical in nature naturally you want people to understand because everyone wants that he should be understood and in order to be understood one has to prepare representation in such a way that at the end of the presentation or the talk the audience has a sort of feeling that he is carrying something home. I mean a pleasant feeling that he has heard it he has understood it.

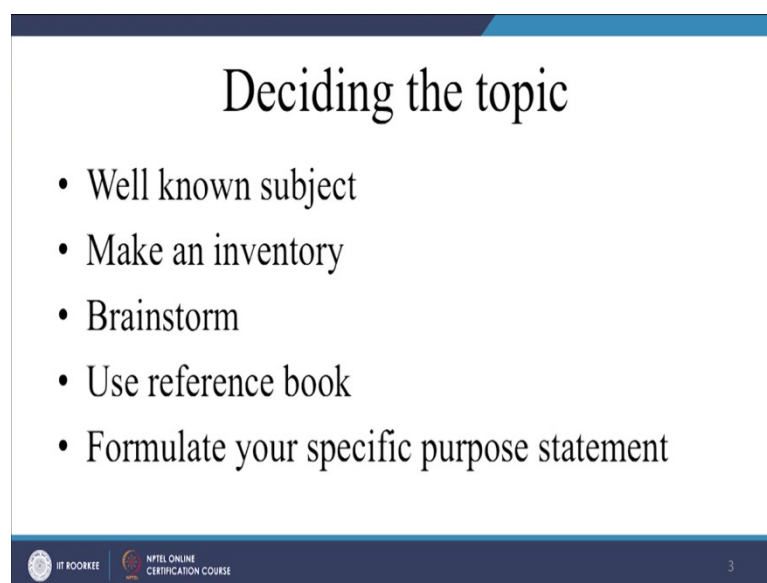
You see, people forget things very easily but then if there is something unusual they remember, likewise if there is something exceptional they will remember. So, you want to give a presentation and you want to end the presentation in such a manner that the audience feels that it was worth listening to and they carry something back. So, in order to make your presentation easier, make your presentation convincing. If it is on a difficult subject, you do not want to use only words or you do not want to pack your presentation only with information, but you also want that it should have some graphic details in the form of aids, in the form of visual aids because pictures help audience understand things better.

And then when you are preparing the presentation or planning the presentation, when you have done all that, you actually find out that you are clear about your purpose you are also clear about your topic. Now you also want to know your audience and then you decide that you will do all these things, meaning thereby how and what information to be put into your presentation and how to present that information because your main task is

to present the information, is not it? So, when you are going to present the information you want that they should understand and they will understand better if you can think apart from the uses of words, some pictures, some visual aids because that will make their task easier. And when you have done all that then you have a sort of presentation plan.

Now, we shall discuss things one by one. First is---- most of us often get confused when we have to decide a topic. Now it is very simple.

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## Deciding the topic

- Well known subject
- Make an inventory
- Brainstorm
- Use reference book
- Formulate your specific purpose statement

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Think that you are going to give a presentation in the following week and since you want that your presentation should be successful, naturally you would love to speak on a subject that you are familiar with, why? Because that will not make you nervous, that will make you more comfortable.

So, first is to decide a topic. Majority of us have a preference to go for a topic which is well known, well known to whom not to the audience, but well known to you. If it is well known to the audience in advance, what is the need of giving a presentation. But then it also has a positive side and the positive side is if the audience had some information say for example, you are going to give a presentation on the use of modern day cell phones you will find that a good amount of people know about the uses of cell phones, but then out of those pieces of information if there is something special that you want to add to perhaps it will satiate, it will actually help them understand things better.

So, when you are going to speak on a well known subject, task is easier, but with this well known subject you are actually to add some new information because that will make your presentation interesting. Now every now and then because you may have several occasions to deliver a talk or a speech, it is better because you know you should not wait for the time to come as I said in the previous lecture that at times you may have to give a sort of presentation which is impromptu.

Now, at that time you will not be able to prepare. So, it is better to prepare beforehand. You know when you are in school days/ college days right from those days based on your interests. Based on your preference keep updating yourself, fine and how do you do that? When you update yourself you update yourself according to your own interest somebody is very much interested in cricket is not it, somebody is very much interested in music, and somebody is very much interested in psychological things.

Now, what one wants to do is---- one should keep a sort of inventory where certain new things he can preserve as a record which will help him when the time comes. So, if you make an inventory and there are several topics, topics of your interest, you will have no problem even when you are invited to give an impromptu presentation.

But, then at times, you can also brainstorm. How do you brainstorm when you know about your audience then you start thinking about their tastes, you will start thinking about their habits, you start thinking about their interest beliefs, faiths whatsoever. Now you can brainstorm yourself which topic will be more interesting, what will make them more interested in my talk what is that special area or what is that special virtue in me with the help of what I will be able to control my crowd. So, that will make the task easier.

And when you have a well known subject and you know everyday things are changing, every day new knowledge is creeping in. So, if you have an inventory and you also try to add something new to your inventory that will actually help you. So, it is always better when you decide a topic, you should also visit a library. Nowadays majority of people have an access to Internet and if they can use it in a very effective manner they can also get new things, but then when they get new things they should try to analyze it not only from their point of view, but also from the point of view of the audience members.

So, one should also keep a reference book or one should also visit library in order to update himself and to provide certain new pieces of information so that his topic his content gets fresh and it appears that it is not a stale topic, but something new has been added. It is always said that audience members do not love only new things, if it is a mix of the new and the old perhaps you are going to play your part better because when you have some familiarity with the subject for audience members then the receptivity increases.

So, as an audience members you want to know more because man has also a thirst for knowledge, not only for water, but then man wants to update and through these presentations and speeches he wants to enrich himself. So, when you have decided the topic, you have to formulate your specific purpose statement. Now what I mean by purpose statement ask yourself that what will happen if I give a presentation on such and such topic what is my specific purpose am I going to add something new to their knowledge or am I going to persuade them to a new task or am I going to inform them of some new developments or some new trends. So, once you decide your specific purpose, your task will become easier.

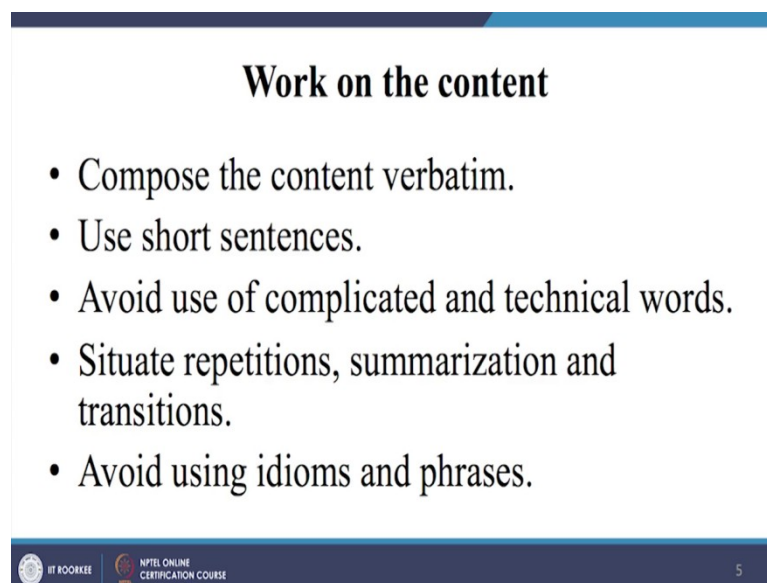
So, the first task that you have to accomplish is to know your purpose, is to decide your topic and then you will always know your audience and once you know your audience's, age, background, education, faith, gender because at times you never know unless and until people tell. You never know who are these audience members, sometimes there will be young people only, sometimes there will be a mix of the young and the adult, sometimes there will be a mix of people who have got different backgrounds, different faiths, people from the rural population from the urban ones, people who are factory employees, people who are from different sections of the society. So, all these things will help you a lot not only in formulating your purpose, but also making your task easier because the way you want to perform or accomplish you will have to think from the audience point of view. It should actually benefit the crowd, it should actually have some advantage to them otherwise why should they come to listen to us.

Now once you have decided the topic, you have also decided your specific purpose knowing well the background of your audience and you have collected the information with the help of several facilities available nowadays. Now the best thing that you can do is to work on your content part. Work on the content part. Dear friends, if you have a

good voice it is okay, good voice singers have, but if they have to give a presentation they will actually feel shy.

So, as a speaker having a good voice is okay, but having a good content is even better. So now, you have collected the information and based on that information you have to work on the content. What do we mean when we say--- work on the content. I used one word that your talk or your presentation should be audience specific, audience specific. Now what do we mean by audience specific.

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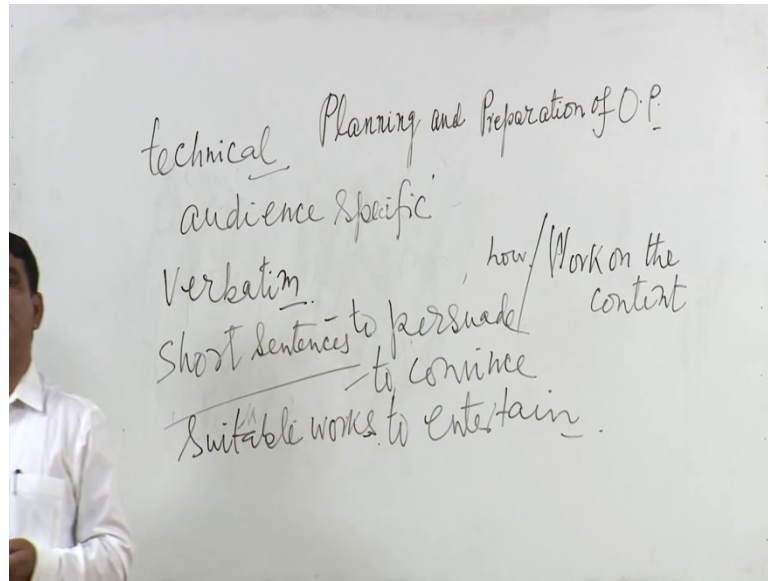
**Work on the content**

- Compose the content verbatim.
- Use short sentences.
- Avoid use of complicated and technical words.
- Situate repetitions, summarization and transitions.
- Avoid using idioms and phrases.

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Meaning thereby it should benefit the audience and how can it benefit because you have the piece of information ready with you and you have to speak. It is not that actually a piece of writing they will read, had it been the case you could have given them the handout and they could have gone back to their homes, but then you are a speaker and you have to speak. So, when you speak you have to decide how I can make my talk effective. So, the content has to be prepared and depending upon the method that you are adopting suppose you are adopting the method of reading from the manuscript naturally you will prepare it verbatim.

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What do I mean by verbatim? Word for word; so prepare the content initially you do not have to think about your delivery part, but think about this selection of the language think about the selection of how it will be presented also think about the impact that it will have on the crowd.

So, compose the content word by word. Now when you are working on the draft of your presentation or talk, you are writing it but remember the specific purpose is to persuade or to convince, to convince or at times to entertain. Now keeping into consideration all these three you have to decide that my content has to be served what you know if the food has been prepared well. Now food has all the ingredients in it.

But if it is not served properly it does not have any taste. So, in order to provide that test you have to while you are making a content you have to think of the various measures what are these various measures if you write because you are writing now, when you are writing you are to think that this will be spoken if the sentence is very long and if it is spoken what will happen? The audience members will not be that interested because audience members as I said in the previous lecture they want you to talk to them. they want you to be conversational even though it is not a conversation.

So, pick select sentences that speak. So, when I say sentences that speak I do not mean lengthy words, long winded words, difficult words, words that they do not know the meaning of because audience members do not carry always you know a dictionary or a



thesaurus. Nowadays of course, many audience members have the mobile phones, but do you want them to look at the words in the mobile in order to understand that, no. So, because it is right my dear friend, you are in front of the audience they want to listen to you and they want to interpret there they are working faster fine they are working faster than you. So, they are trying to extract. So, prepare your content in such a manner that these sentences speak and the sentences can speak only when there are short sentences short sentences and moreover even in the short sentences suitable words.

Now while you are drafting your presentation or your speech, select the words which are suitable and depending upon the topic you have to select you have to decide upon the suitability of the words. So, choose short sentences because short sentences are beneficial not only from their point of view, but from your point of view after all you are speaking do you not read need some relief when you are speaking if a sentence is wrong you do not get a breathing space and do you not need the breathing space you need breathing space. So, if the sentence is short not only does it speak to the audience, but it also provides you it gives you energy it gives you time to stop and think, to stop and continue to pause and to deliver.

Now here a caution is do not use very complicated sentences, by complicated sentences I mean use of difficult jargons (Refer Time: 23:38), use of clichés we have talked about when we were doing writing section that if somebody uses long winded sesquipedalian words circumlocutions naturally audience will not love that they will love simple words presented simply.

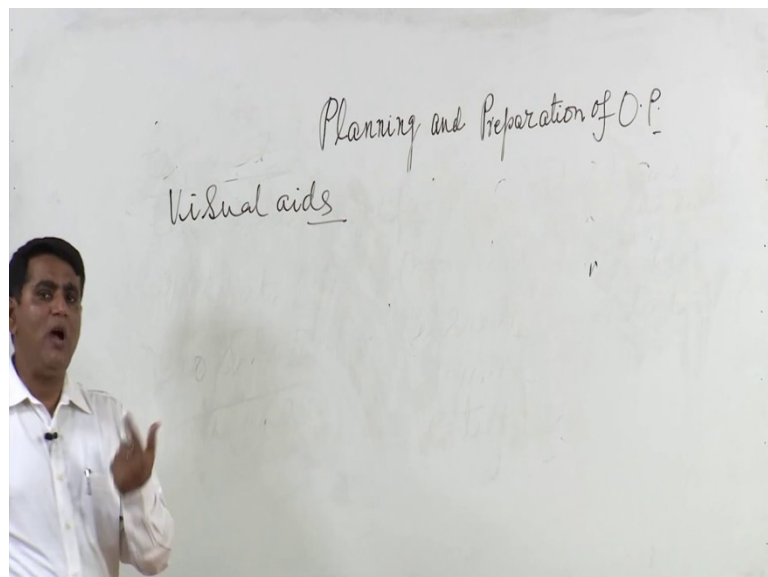
So, do not use too many technical words when you are drafting because you know much lies in this preparation. What you prepare you are going to deliver. So, while preparing please avoid that. Moreover, when you are speaking there is a flexibility, flexibility in the sense that you want to be understood and for that allow, allow some repetitions. If you remember these speeches of some great people like Martin Luther king one of his famous of speeches **I have a dream** fine. Now the question is he repeats I have a dream, I have a dream, and the dream is fulfilled, the question is when you are making use of repetitions they actually appear, they occur like restatements and they help.

So, you are advised to make use of repetitions and that you can situate only when you are writing because when you are writing, again I will say you are writing you are actually

writing with a view to speaking. So, keeping that into mind keeping that into your consciousness please situate repetitions, summarizations and again think that if the same speech is spoken if the written words and it is spoken what impact it will have. So, that will allow you some time where you feel oh no here I actually want some transition here I want to bring a sort of sift and sift you can bring through wise, but here that is sift you can bring through words. Moreover it is not only the question of technical words, but then you should also avoid the uses of idioms and phrases you know we Indians we are actually using English, English is our second language and that is why many of us translate some of the idioms and phrases it may pose difficulty to a person who is not habituated to these phrases. So, it is better to avoid the use of these idioms and phrases. Rather it is better if you can concentrate or if you can think of some substitute words in place of these phrases, in place of these idioms.

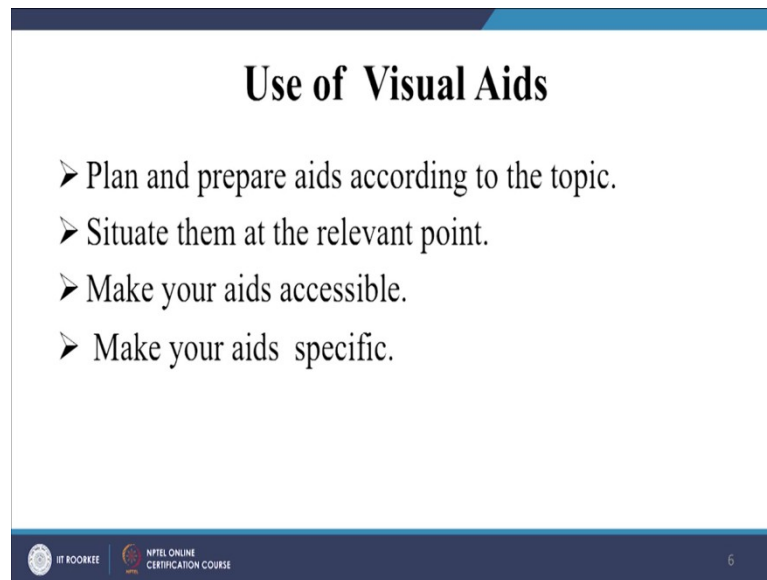
Now having said that, let us also think I mean because we are in the preparatory stage, we are in the planning stage. So, while planning, let us think that once we have written the speech it is better to revise, but before revising and since it is a technical subject do not you want that some people might find it difficult to understand. So, it is better to make use of audio visuals or visual aids visual aids.

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Now you have to select and you are the best judge.

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## Use of Visual Aids

- Plan and prepare aids according to the topic.
- Situate them at the relevant point.
- Make your aids accessible.
- Make your aids specific.

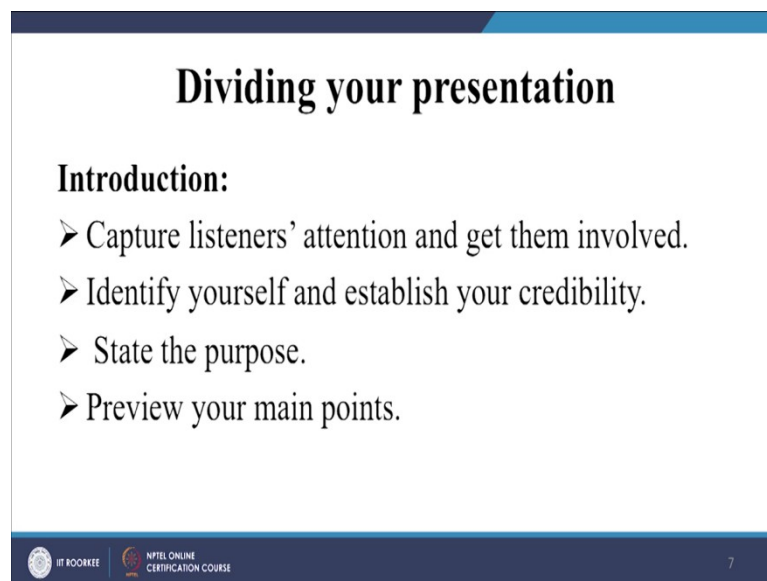
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And you should know where you are going to situate these aids because when you are delivering the talk, you do not have the time to bring the aids. So, when you are writing the speech or the writing the oral presentation, you situate them and many expert speakers actually write in their outline that use of this aid, use of that aid, that actually and you know while you are doing that half the battle is already won because you know this raises your confidence level and if you are able to understand where you are going to situate these aids at a relevant point, it makes the task easier. Moreover, while selecting the aids do not go for catchy aids or sometimes some of the aids may attract you, but think it from the point of view of the audience whether the audience will be able to interpret.

So, the relevance of the aid is justified only when the audience members are able to understand. So, make your aids accessible, I mean your audience members should be in a position to understand them and these aids have to be very specific. Now when you have done all this, you have situated the aids, you have decided the topic you have written the content. Now is the time you have the information. So, now, is the time you have to decide you have to plan how your presentation can be divided because every presentation or every speech will have three parts a beginning, a middle and an end; a beginning middle and end.

Now you have to decide and when you decide actually, you have to divide your presentation. The presentation may appear to be long, but divide it and while you are going to divide it, you know the amount of time that has been provided to you. So, the first part the introduction or the beginning. Now think much about the introduction there are several ways to give a good introduction because half of these speakers they captivate their crowd only in the beginning the very first sentence that they speak so they win their crowd. So, you have to capture your listener's attention and get them involved.

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## Dividing your presentation

**Introduction:**

- Capture listeners' attention and get them involved.
- Identify yourself and establish your credibility.
- State the purpose.
- Preview your main points.

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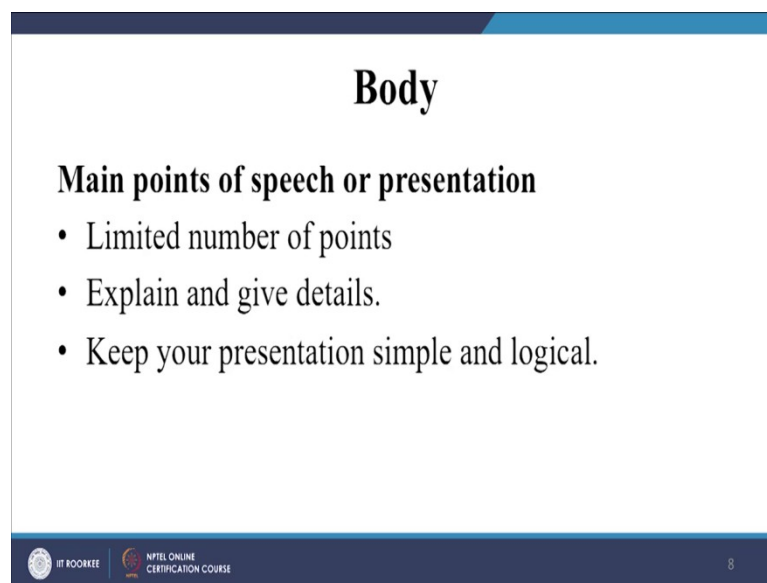
Now in order to do that there are several ways--- you can begin with a quote, you can begin with an anecdote, you can begin with a story, there are several ways we shall we shall discuss in the lectures to follow also how you can depending upon the suitability of the topic. So, you have to in the introduction you have to capture your listener's attention and then just after the introduction you have to straightway go through the body of the talk. So, first task for you is what sort of introduction will you choose? Because if a presentation is of 20 minutes or 30 minutes, the introduction has to be at least. Suppose, if it is 20 minutes presentation you have to spend only 2 minutes on your introduction.

Many people in order to make their introduction captivating actually make it longer and a longer introduction is not suitable. There are many ways, you know, for example, if you remember Pandit Nehru giving that speech when India got freedom and that speech is very famous **Tryst with destiny**. So, how he begins? Likewise there are many such

instances where the first sentence appears to be very fresh very captivating very attractive. So, you have to capture your listener's attention and get them involved and you are going to create your credibility or your rapport just in the beginning.

And once you have talked about the introduction, you straightway talk about the purpose of your speech and in the introduction also please preview the main points because the audience members they are actually waiting they want to know what you are going to talk about. So, a little bit of background information will make your task easier. Once the introduction is given well, because you have been able to captivate the crowd only in the introduction or only in the beginning, now you are to develop the body of the speech. So, the first part of your speech or presentation will be introduction then you will straightway come to the body.

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**Body**

**Main points of speech or presentation**

- Limited number of points
- Explain and give details.
- Keep your presentation simple and logical.

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Now, the body of this speech is actually the heart of the matter, it is the heart of the matter. Now how much time should you allot to the body? In the introduction you have gained your crowd and you are now going to engage the crowd and you can engage them and can continue with the crowd and you can create an interest not by speaking too much, not by giving them too much, but while you are dividing it you are writing your presentation let there be limited number of points. Do not have so many points to follow, you know, even audience members they feel bored, they feel burdened.

So, it is better to restrict yourself to two or three points, but then explain those points. It has been seen nowadays that with the abundance of technical gadgets. Many people forget the fact that the audience members are there before them and what they do is they bring so many points and in the flood of their points, the audience members feel like sinking. So, it is better to confine yourself or restrict yourself to limited number of points. But these points have to be developed these points have to be presented explained while explaining also think about the reasons. I mean the supporting materials whatever you are saying that has to be some supporting materials.

And another thing that you will keep into consideration while you are planning your presentation is that let your presentation be simple and logical. It should actually be stepwise because if it is a technical one an oral presentation is most often technical one. So, any thread in it, if it is not systematic the audience will feel like running away or if you simply skip because you have a task to perform you have brought a lot of information you want to skip rather you want to run, nobody wants, no audience members would love to see that the speaker is running with these points rather they would want that you should go systematically, logically in a simple manner so that things that you want to explain become clear to them. And once you have done the body part of your presentation, it is not only the introduction and the body which is important, but you have one more chance and that is the conclusive part of your presentation, the end of your presentation.

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## Conclusion

- A Logical inference
- Recapitulation of the main points
- Call for action
- Don't end limply
- Encourage questions

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Now what should be there in the conclusion of your presentation? The conclusion of your presentation should be based on what you have discussed in the body. So, you should create such a situation that it appears a very systematic conclusion, it is actually a sort of inference, it is the inference drawn out of the discussion that you have made in the body and if it is logically arranged you will find the audience members feel better. Moreover, when you are writing the conclusion, please see that the conclusion also has to have a sort of restatement because as I said at the end of the presentation or the speech the audience members should have something that they can carry back home and they can remember only when you bring certain restatements recapitulation all that you have said throughout the presentation if you are going to summarize the audience members will feel very happy.

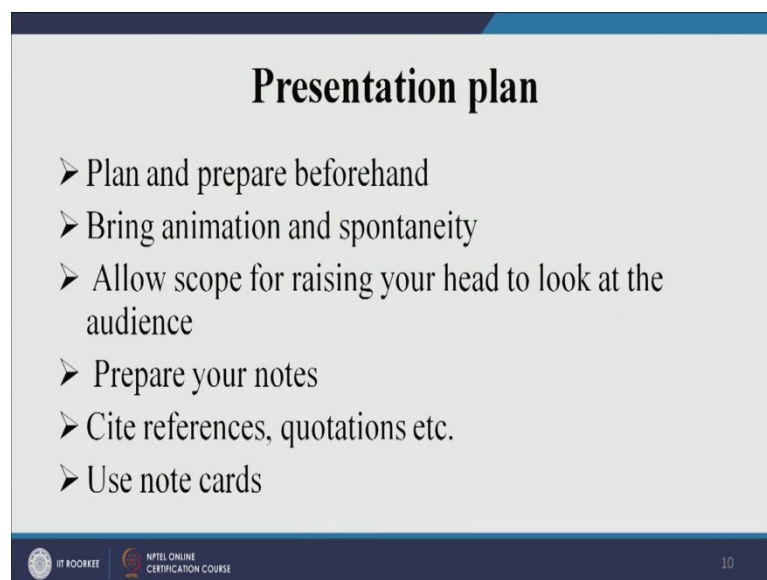
Moreover, if your presentation is based on a problem solution one, then naturally towards the end of the presentation it should appear in such a manner that it is a call for action, I mean it is a sort of action which the audience members should also feel that this presentation was worth listening to. It has often been seen that if you have worked a lot in the introduction by the time you go to your conclusion you actually become distraught, you become very tired. And you start ending it very limply. Let there be no end which appears to be very sudden, do not let your audience feel that the conclusion is very sudden, it should rather be systematic, it should not be abrupt rather it should be natural. And you know good speakers--- what they do with the help of the transitions they always when they are going to end their talk they say and to conclude let me say that if we think it is very rational manner keeping into consideration the problem of the audience and also the problem of the speaker it becomes mandatory for us to conclude in such a fashion that this presentation finally, has brought to light the different responsibilities a speaker has to be conscious of.

My concern is that when you are going to conclude your presentation it should appear that you are restating, you are giving them something that they will realize and it should not be abrupt. Many people you might have heard saying-- now only to sum up my presentation let me tell you and towards the end let me also tell you. So, these are I mean you have to indicate you have to signal the end of your presentation, but remember even if you have done a very good presentation, presented a good presentation remember that audience members may have question. So, towards the end if somebody asks the

question you should not feel shy or you should not feel sorry, rather you should encourage questions, because if you answer these questions you are a person who has got all these pieces of information that you have said and the questions are based on that. So, you should also be ready for the questions.

Now you may ask one question while writing the presentation how can I think of the question, my dear friends, you can always anticipate questions. I have always been saying visualize the crowd before you and having written your speech or presentation think that these questions may be there some of them may have these curiosities. So, if you have all these things, if you have prepared all these things I think you never will have a presentation that will be poor because all presentations if prepared carefully and all presentations if seen from the point of view of the audience will lead to be a successful presentation. Now, you should also have a sort of presentation plan. So, in presentation plan you should think about planning everything beforehand and because you are preparing naturally everything will be beforehand and also think of bringing the spontaneity and animation, I mean encouragement. So, how will you bring while you are writing how will you bring this.

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## Presentation plan

- Plan and prepare beforehand
- Bring animation and spontaneity
- Allow scope for raising your head to look at the audience
- Prepare your notes
- Cite references, quotations etc.
- Use note cards

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Of course, the voice is there, but this is at the time of the delivery, but while you are writing, the selection of your words, the choice of your words will allow you to create animation. Again, if you are reading your presentations and if you feel because on a



technical subject, of course, you will be reading your presentation, allow some space. So, that you can lift your eye and look at the audience because audience members want to be looked at and it is better that you prepare your notes, but when you prepare your notes see that everything that you have written there is visible. And from time to time you should also refer to, you should also give certain references, certain justifications of what you are talking and that can be made possible by situating certain good quotations, certain good lines, certain good experiences, certain good citations and all and it has also been seen that careful presenters they make use of note cards in order that if they forget something you know one word or one say even letter that can remind them of what they have to say.

My dear friends, if you have a better presentation plan, all these things have to be done when you are writing. So, do not make your presentation very long though I have been saying that you should have more material than required, but more material than required means that you also should have the liberty and the flexibility that you can skip. It is here that your cleverness and that your planning will work. It is better not to make your presentation very dull and morose by making it only a reading material. Remember that it is a spoken material though it is a text and if you plan a proper beginning and proper ending not by giving a long introduction and by situating signposts or transfer stations the audience will feel better and your presentation will be appreciated. After all what are we working for we simply want to have some appreciation from the crowd because we have taken a lot care in preparing the presentation and once you have planned and prepared the presentation, now the time comes that you want to deliver the presentation. And this delivering the presentation depends upon how you have practised.

My dear friends, today we have talked about the planning, pattern, presentation methods and also the preparation in the next class we shall be telling you how you can practice your presentation so that at the time of the delivery you do not have butterflies in your stomach and you can stand face the crowd and play your part well. Because all of us understand that our prime responsibility is to fulfill the tasks and once we have been given this task to speak to the crowd it will be fulfilled only when our audience members at the end of the presentation go satisfied. There is nothing better than satisfaction and I hope you will also keep all these things into consideration and will be able to satisfy your

crowd. But before satisfying your crowd make yourself confident and get ready for practice or rehearsal which you are going to do in the next class.

Thank you very much, have a nice day.