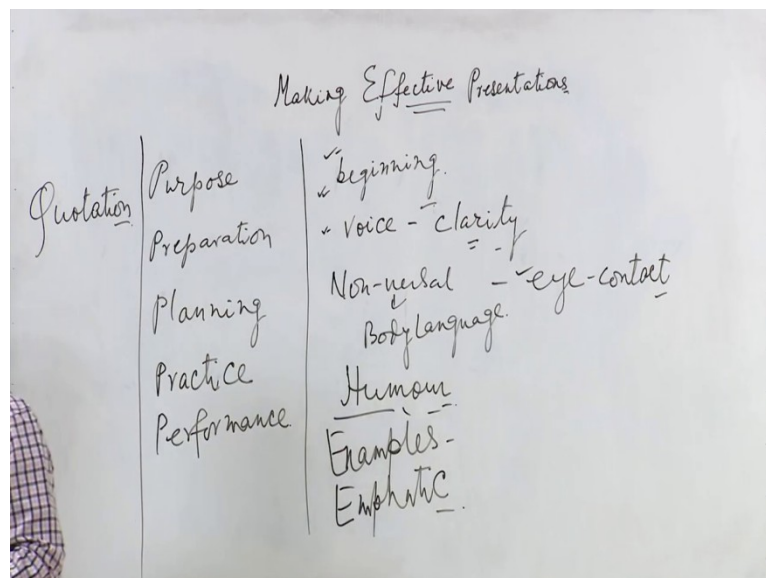


**Soft Skills**  
**Dr. Binod Mishra**  
**Department of Humanities & Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

**Lecture - 51**  
**Making Effective Presentations**

Good morning friends and welcome back to online lectures on Soft Skills. All of you remember that presently we are in advanced speaking skills section. We have already discussed the various nuances of preparing oral presentation and speeches. And in that connection the previous lecture talked about planning and preparation. As you all remember we have talked about the purpose, we have also talked about the preparation.

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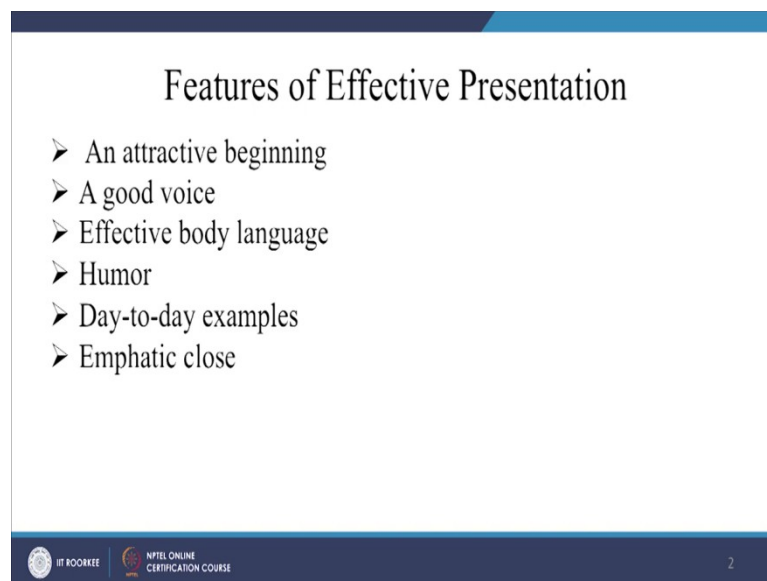
And we have talked about planning an oral presentation or a speech. And today we are going to touch upon two important ingredients----- one of them is practice and then finally, performance.

Now, having understood how to draft an oral presentation and keeping into consideration the various components, now is the time that we discuss how to practice and because before you give the final presentation, much is required that you gain confidence and confidence, which cannot be gained just in one day. It takes a lot of time, but since you have already understood how to draft the presentation, now you should know how to practice. And then once you have learned the art of practising then the final thing comes

that is giving the presentation or making the presentation. I mean the delivery of presentation, but how to make a presentation effective. While we discussed in the previous class that there are certain stages in a preparation, and those stages can be taken care of even when you are writing the presentation, but once you have done all that, let us try to understand what exactly can make your presentation effective. Why I say effective is--- not every presentation can be effective. You can listen to your presentation and then you can find that the presentation was not effective, because of one reason or the other. So, let us try to understand what are the various factors that can make our presentation effective.

The first is while we were planning, we had talked about the division of the presentation. I mean when you plan a presentation you also plan how to divide your presentation. You have the information, but you will divide them, and while dividing them you know better where to put the relevant information and in which section.

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So, the first important task in an effective presentation is a very effective beginning. Now when we talk about beginning, the question is how to begin a presentation. You see there are several ways to begin a presentation. If a presenter begins his presentation quite abruptly you would not like it. So, in order to make your presentation effective the first important thing is to make your beginning very effective, very captivating, very attractive. How to do that? Suppose you are speaking on a topic--- whatever topic you

have, but if you start with a question, because your first task is to capture the listeners' attention. And there are several ways either you can start with a question, or you can start with a story, you can also start with an anecdote or episode. You can also start with some startling facts for example, if we have to give a presentation, say, on confidence or nervousness the very first thing that you can say: There is one thing very common with all of us whether we are the new ones or the experienced ones, and that is when we have to deliver a presentation all of us come across one strange fear and this strange fear is called nervousness.

Now when you give such a beginning to your presentation, the audience will not be attracted only, but they will feel interested in it. So, a beginning is very important and there are several nuances of beginning which we have also discussed when we are talking about making a piece of writing interesting or effective. So, because you know a good presentation or a good speech also attracts audience in the beginning. And that interest of the audience has to be sustained, but how do you do that? It is not only the beginning alone, but after beginning all you need to understand is your voice, which is very important, voice.

We have already talked about the voice and its various nuances when we were discussing the non-verbal communication. But then it is very important to mention here that a good voice is also important for an effective presentation. Now what is a good voice? Is it a voice that is very loud or is it one that is very soft? You actually have to understand that a good voice means a clear voice; I mean it should have a sort of clarity. You will find that there are many of us whose voices are not clear. And when we say clarity we also mean and this clarity depends upon various factors.

As beginners, you will find that you want to finish your task just as soon as possible, and that is why you become very fast. And when you become very fast, you are not able to say things clearly, because there are many things which are left. Either some of the words you eat them up or there are some words where you feel as if you are running or you are jumping. So, a good voice is very important, a good voice not only should have a sort of clarity, but it should also have a sort of, you know, many people are known for the quality of their voice. But then our voice is not in our control because it has got a divine quality and it is god gifted. But through continuous efforts and training, even if you have

a very subdued voice, you can make it clear. Because your main purpose is to make your crowd or make your audience understand what you intend to say.

So, suppose somebody has got a muffled voice, but if he tries hard he can speak things clearly. He can speak, he can articulate rather words clearly. And for that he needs to be a little slow. If he is fast, naturally half of his words will be lost. And then comes the nonverbal aspect. And where we talk about when we say nonverbal here our focus is on our body language. So, is body language also important in presentation? Yes, what do we mean by body language suppose as a speaker, I am speaking and I do not look at, you do not feel well, rather you may also have the impression that I am not able to face you. Because a good speaker is one who is able to face the crowd and who can because you have to establish a sort of rapport or you have to establish a sort of credibility with your audience as I said the other day one has to treat one's audience as friends and not as enemies. So, for that you need to look at the people. And when you look at the people you are gaining the confidence and your rapport with the audience is also strengthening.

Now there may be another question again which you youngsters may ask, how can I look continuously at the crowd? Or continuously at one section, you do not have to. Rather you can throughout. you have to have a sort of eye contact. This eye contact can provide you a sort of control over your audience. Many people especially the young especially the novice ones are not able to look at the people because they have different sorts of question. You will find that if some member of the audience looks at you, you start thinking of your own incapacities. So, this body language is very important. Are you able to stand firmly in front of the crowd, and even when you are delivering the lecture or delivering the talk, do you feel that you can make use of this space that is here. For example, here you can say see I am talking to you about I have my space, and I have a sort of autonomy as to how much should I move, but again if I move too fast or if I move too frequently that may not be liked by you. That is why you need to understand that body language has a very important role to play in an oral presentation or a speech.

Now, when we talk about body language, it is not only the eye contact rather the other parts of the body are also important for example, how a speaker compliments his own language with the help of his, say, hands, with the help of his limbs and all. So, how can he suppose somebody says one thing that all of you should remember is confidence plays a vital role in making communication or in making a presentation successful. So, you

will find that automatically your hands are in tune with, your body is in tune with the language or the message that you are providing. So, that is very important. Next is humour. You also need to understand how humour has an important role to play in an oral presentation. You remember that we have been discussing that oral presentations are specially given on a topic that is very technical in nature, and that at times may be very complex. For example, approach a person from the medical profession if you want to talk about say beautiful teeth or health of the teeth or whatsoever.

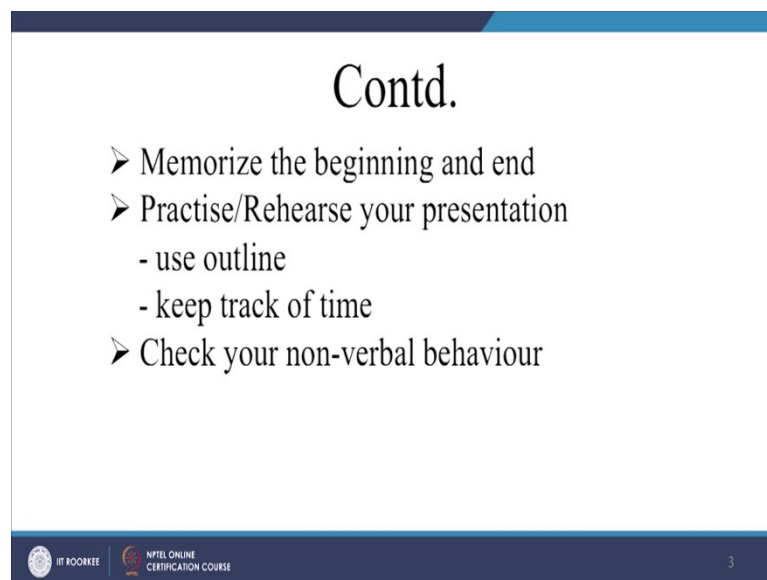
Naturally, all of us would not like because when he talks about something very technical, or he will use the medical terms and all the topic may become a bit abstruse and difficult. So, there he can make use of humour for example, he may say once you visit a dentist please ensure that you have to visit him regularly. Now this is a fact, but at the same time when we are representing it with the presentation, our inner speech it actually raises not only the curiosity level, but then it sustains throughout the attention of your reader, of your audience members. Again, when apart from humour you also should provide certain examples. You should give certain examples and these examples should be very familiar. If you are delivering a talk especially to the youngsters naturally you can give examples either from sports or from music or from movies or whatsoever, but when you are talking about say yoga, suppose you are giving a talk on yoga, naturally it is beneficial to everyone and there you have to bring a sort of mix of the example so that everyone likes it.

And then as we said, beginning is very important, but at the same time when you are going to close as I had told you the other day that before you close you should provide some sort of sign post. You will do that, but when you are going to close the last part of the presentation has to be very emphatic. By emphatic I mean when you started out with something and when you come to the end of your presentation you should present it in such a manner that by the end whatever you wanted to say that appears to be a sort of restatement or it should give them an impression that you have it. You have been able to drive home your point very well. So, these are the features of effective presentation.

Now, again there are certain things as I said when we were talking about the patterns of presentation and the methods of presentation. The very first thing that all of you could have found very interesting was a presentation that was memorized. But remember that if you have memorized your presentation you are bound to forget, but in order to make

your presentation effective dear friends when you are going to talk about the beginning and the end. And because a beginning, which starts with a beautiful quote that may be appreciated. So, at least remember the beginning and the end of the presentation. I mean the beginning lines have to be really beautifully combined. I have had an experience when one of my friends who was to deliver representation and had decided that he will start with a quote, but when he started delivering the presentation only he could give half of the quote and the other half he forgot.

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Contd.

- Memorize the beginning and end
- Practise/Rehearse your presentation
  - use outline
  - keep track of time
- Check your non-verbal behaviour

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Now this actually puts you in a very embarrassing situation. So, at least when you are going to practice it, that is why I am giving too much emphasis on practising the presentation. So, when you are practicing your presentation please see to it that you memorize if you are providing a quotation. So, please see that the quotation has to be remembered full. Moreover, you can also if you are putting a quote you should also know the name of the person whom you are quoting.

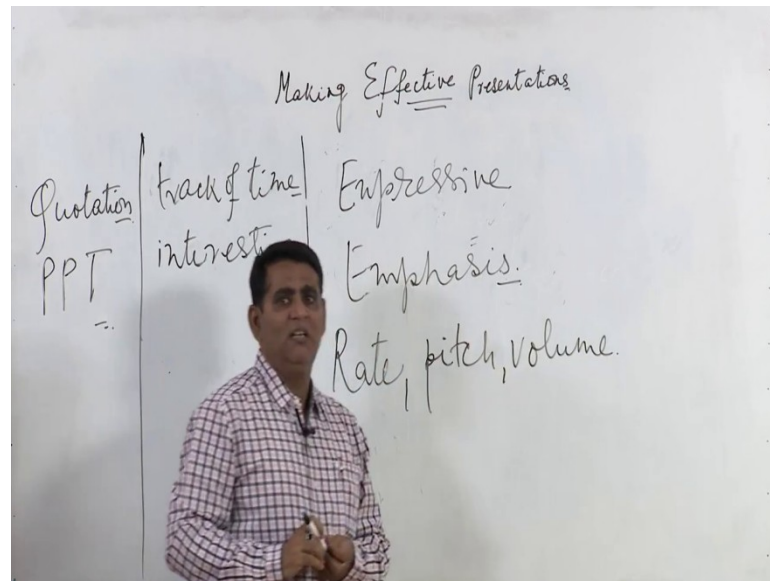
So these things can be done only during rehearsals, rehearse your presentation. Practice your presentation, you have written your presentation no doubt, but then that presentation has to be rehearsed and you know if you rehearse your presentation, you are bound to remember a lot of things even if you may not be able to memorize every bit of the presentation, but you will have a sort of confidence that you can even speak provided

you are clear about your language and all. Moreover you can also as a preparation you should provide a final outline of your presentation. Because as I said the other day no one wants that a speaker should read word for word when he is giving a presentation. Now it is of course, in an age where people love to have PPT presentations, but even in such presentations, one has to be too much aware of why because at times this PPT presentation becomes very dull and morose. Since many speakers cannot create sync with the power point slides and what happens in certain cases you may also come across that people are simply reading from the slides. Now reading from the slides and reading from the manuscript is one and the same thing.

So, it is better even if you are giving an oral presentation with the help of power point or PPT, you should understand how you and you can have a control only when you have practiced. So, it is better PPT can also work as a sort of outline. Many people even are not clear about what to write on their slides you cannot write everything on this slide otherwise what is your own role, my dear friends. So, you should simply write the points which are essential. Even when you are writing the points, please see that you are not going to clutter, you are not going to clutter everything by writing everything on these slides. Otherwise people would not like it.

Nowadays we are living in an age where animation works a lot. People bring all sorts of musicality in it, but the real music of thought is not there. So, what you need to do is you need to have limited number of points on every slide. Not that you are going to clutter it up by writing everything. Moreover in order to make your presentation effective because if a person speaks too much once again the audience feels weary and they get impatient. That is why you have been provided with the time. So, keep track of time, track of time is very important. And that is why this timing, as I said, in the previous class that, when you are writing the presentation please of course, prepare more materials.

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But when you practice it, you should practice it with the help of your clock or watch and you should see how much time you are able to speak. If it is too much, then you can curtail some points. Nowadays you are having the facility of cell phones where you can record your own presentation and you can see it for yourselves. That will give you a better confidence and you can when a person analyzes himself, he finds where he or she is wrong and where the improvements are essential.

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## Contd.

- Record your presentation.
- Seek honest feedback from friends.
- Review to check whether your presentation is interesting.
- Make self-analysis.

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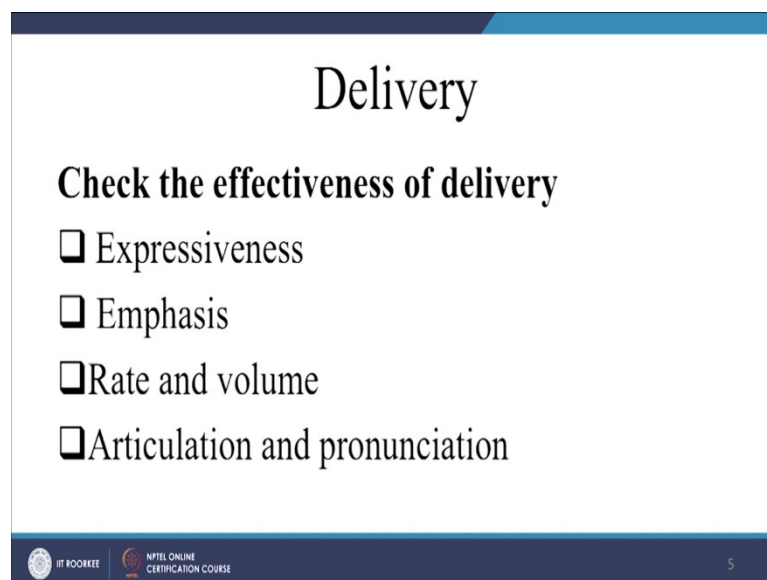
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So, please keep track of time when you are delivering the presentation. And if you are recording your presentation now it is since you have the facility of recording it and watching it later. So, you can also look at your own body language whether your body language is positive or not whether when you are maintaining an eye contact you are looking only at a particular segment of the crowd or you are looking at all of them by dividing your eye attention from one part to the another. So, that is very important. And when you are reviewing your own presentation or making self analysis, you can also see whether your presentation is interesting or not. That is why when you are going to practice your presentation you will you know no one is able to understand unless and until somebody says, but if you do not have friends who do not want to give you some time to listen to your presentation, it is better you do it yourself.

And listen to your own voice listen to your own voice and be your own critic. I mean when you look at your own presentation from a critical point of view, I think you will have a better feedback. Moreover, give some small presentations in some small groups with your friends and tell them to give you the honest feedback because that will help you.

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Now, comes the delivery part. When you are finally delivering the presentation, what is it that is essential? Are you able to express, does your voice have the quality of expressiveness? By expressiveness I mean not only the voice, but then whatever you

want to say-- is it coming clearly, are you expressive and expressive not only from the point of view of your voice, but from the point of view of your body also. You know well that our body speaks in this regard I will once again repeat what Sigmund Freud had said and it is worth quoting here. He says--- "He who has eyes to see and ears to listen can convince that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he is chatting with his fingertips betrayal seems to (Refer Time: 23:50) ooze out of him at every pore." Meaning is--- however, hard you try when as a speaker you stand before the audience your entire body speaks. There is no moment when your body does not speak. That is why when you are silent throughout, people get to know that there is something wrong. Your body gives the indications it has so many indicators. So, please check the effectiveness of your delivery and the expressiveness whether your presentation expresses or not.

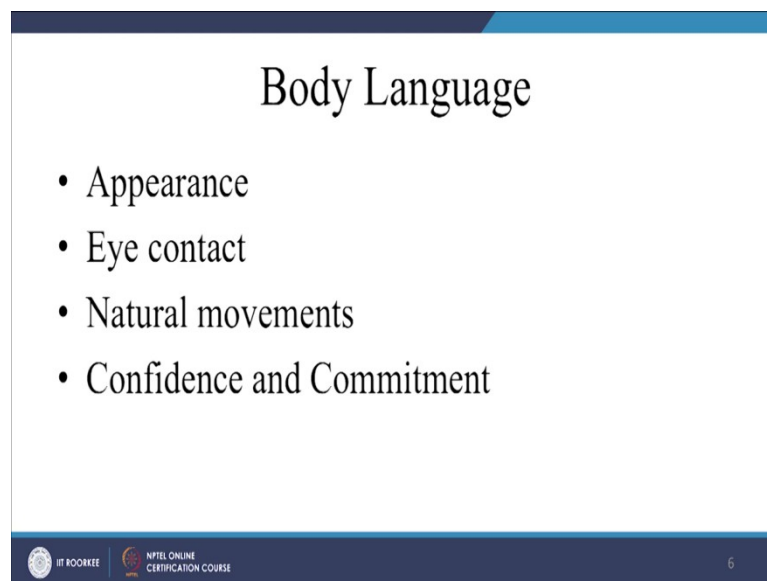
Whether you have been able to provide the proper emphasis in terms of voice, in terms of division of a word, in terms of division of letters into syllables into words, and have you been able to cut them accordingly. Have you got the experience of cutting your thoughts and then presenting it so that your audience members can understand? Again when you are speaking you should also take into consideration your rate. What should be the rate? How many words per minute? Now there is a lot of debate among people, but then there are many speakers who are very fast, but if you also become very fast again you will have the problem of running short of ideas after certain amount of time.

Many speakers often say that it appears to me that I am very slow, but remember it is actually a sort of advantage to your audience members, because when you are at a moderate rate meaning there by you speak 120 to 130 words per minute, your audience members, they find it better than to speak 180 words per minute. Again the other thing is the volume. Are you audible, I mean this also you can take care of when you are practicing your presentation? That is why expert speakers often say, am I audible. And for you can actually modulate regulate by looking at the crowd and the number and also the acoustic facility in the hall or in the room from where you are speaking.

So, adjust your volume according to the expectations of the crowd. Now again you may ask how should you know that our audience members feel difficulty, here your eyes will give you are a very good observer my dear friend when you cast a glance at your audience, you can find that if they are unable to understand or unable to listen you will

find some scratches on their face provided you are a very good face reader, but that will come with experience that cannot come now in the early stage. So, have a proper rate of volume and have your pitch movements. Now by pitch movements I say that there is some amount of fastness, some amount of loudness, there are situations where you need to raise your voice there are times when you need to bring it down which we call intonation. Fine, not every sentence can be spoken with the same amplitude and you know when you are speaking because you are putting your emotions.

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And every word that you are speaking has got some meaning, because meaning lies not only with the words, but also with the speakers. And you being a very good speaker, since you have selected good words for your speech or presentation you know better. So, how you throw it that is very important, moreover try your level best to be as articulate as possible.

Again, one thing in addition to are all these I want to add is your appearance, you know most of most of us when we go for the presentation should check whether we have the right appearance. By appearance, I do not mean your face. Faces may be good, faces may be bad, faces may have different colors, but my appearance, I mean the sort of dress that you are wearing the sort of decor (Refer Time: 28:56) that you have brought, the sort of bearing that you have brought meaning, thereby you should try to maintain a sort of formality which can be reflected through your appearance. Proper haircut, proper facial

expressions, proper dress, proper way of movements---- all these are a part of your appearance. Not that you are carrying something like earrings and cell phones and all you should remember and these are there are certain mannerisms which one speaker should always be aware of, which are people would not like. So, have a good appearance, you see if you are physically at your best, by physically being best, means if you are well dressed half of the confidence will come to you.

So, have the confidence and even before dressing you look at yourselves whether you are looking presentable. That is what I mean by a good appearance, because if you look presentable and you know it will be very easy for you to develop a sort of rapport with the crowd. And once you have developed the rapport with the crowd, commitment and confidence well start oozing out of you. Again in oral presentations, as I said the other day, because if it is of a complex nature, naturally you will bring some visual aids, but then as you had while preparing you had situated the aids.

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### Use of Visual Aids

- Integrate the aid with your presentation.
- Use it when you reach the relevant point.
- Make your aids accessible.
- Interpret the aids.
- Stand on one side and use the point.

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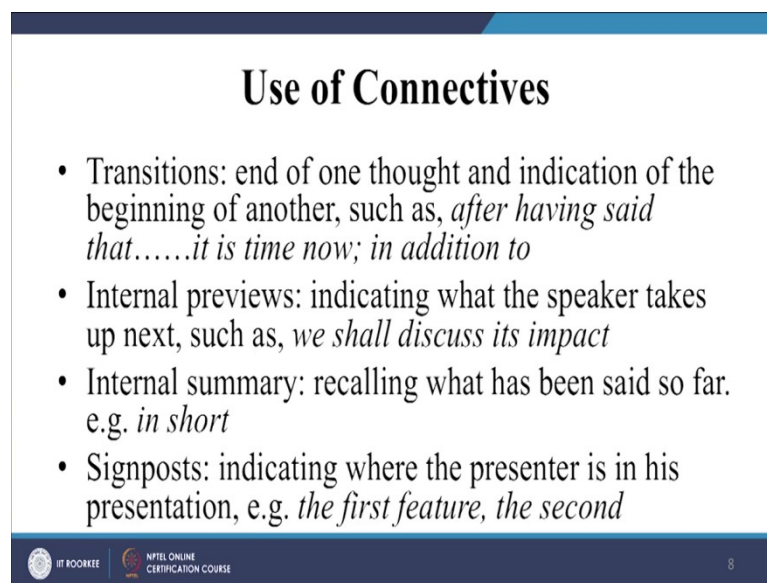
But when you are going to deliver the presentation, now it is time you understood where you are pointing to, nowadays you have got the pointers. And all if you are giving an oral presentation. So, when you are pointing when you are discussing a particular segment or a particular section you need to understand how to integrate.

So, integrate the aids when you reach the relevant point. Please make it possible and you will find that when you are pointing it out, then the audience members will also look at,

but then it has to be crafted in such a manner that it does not appear to be irrelevant. And when you are using the aids, please interpret the aids, whatever you are using sometimes we have seen many people in earlier days when they use to, So something through OHP, or overhead transparencies they used to stand in and between the transparency and the crowd and that used to be failure. So, you need to understand that you are not between the aids and are the people I mean the members the audience members.

Moreover, again you have prepared your presentation with utmost dexterity and care. And you are supposed not to speak everything just as verbal fireworks, and in order while we write we have punctuation, but when we speak, we have connectives. For example, you see after this I will be using connectives and you will realize how I am making the task easier.

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**Use of Connectives**

- Transitions: end of one thought and indication of the beginning of another, such as, *after having said that.....it is time now; in addition to*
- Internal previews: indicating what the speaker takes up next, such as, *we shall discuss its impact*
- Internal summary: recalling what has been said so far. e.g. *in short*
- Signposts: indicating where the presenter is in his presentation, e.g. *the first feature, the second*

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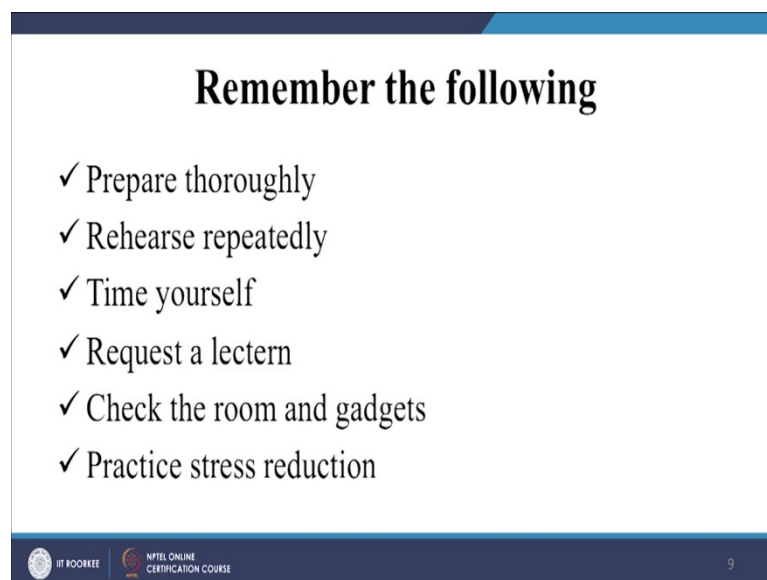
Having said that, let me also tell you my dear friends, that connectives have a very important role to play. While connectives tell the audience that you are moving from one unit of thought to the other, they also tell them where you are in the midst of the presentation.

In addition you should also realize that these connectives are of different categories some of them are transitions while the others are internal previews there are internal summaries also. In short, I want to say that these signposts which actually signify sometimes the number, sometimes the procedure, sometimes the category, sometimes the

development and at other times they also allow you and they actually give you a sort of liberty to understand the location of your presentation. So, hence this use of connectives and that you will be using you know, carefully if you plan it in your preparation stage you can also deliver it and you can deliver it deliberately. Good speakers deliver it deliberately. So, that and you know what the audience members are waiting because if the presentation or the speech becomes a longer the audience members are again waiting for a transition or waiting for a signpost, and they expect when will this gentleman say before I close or towards the end and last but not the least and finally, now what are all these, these are all connectives my dear friend and these connectives will make the task of the audience members easier because the entire presentation is connected and they are connected with the help of connectives.

Now, when you keep all these things into consideration, I understand that your presentation is going to be effective. But then you should also remember certain things which I provide you as tips. First is---- if you feel that you have to give a very fruitful presentation, again I will repeat the same that I had said yesterday preparation is the best antidote.

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**Remember the following**

- ✓ Prepare thoroughly
- ✓ Rehearse repeatedly
- ✓ Time yourself
- ✓ Request a lectern
- ✓ Check the room and gadgets
- ✓ Practice stress reduction

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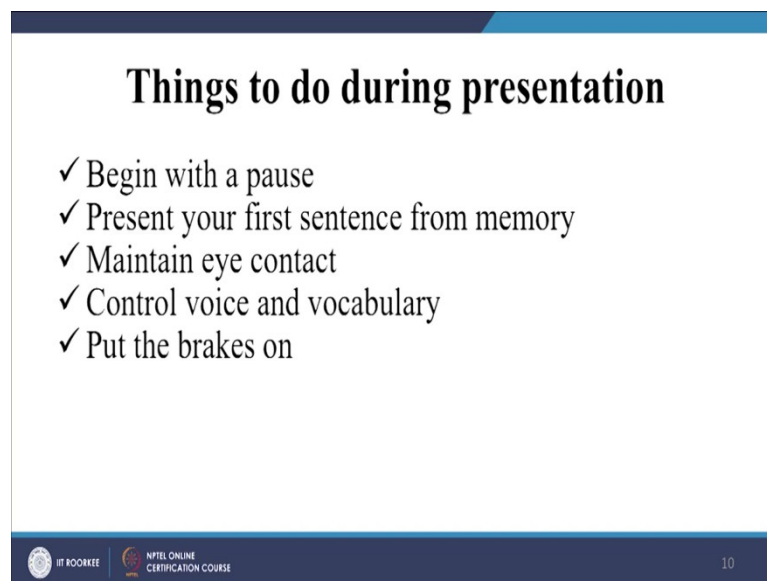
So, prepare thoroughly, prepare your presentation thoroughly, but with preparation practice it. Practice repeatedly. Also time yourself either where you want with the help of the cell phone or with the help of a clock whatsoever, and it is better nowadays

because audience members are looking at you and no idea there are lectern which actually hide your nervousness and hide your uneasiness.

So, if you feel you can request for a lectern, you should also know the sort of distance you should maintain between the microphone and yourself. Because sometimes it has happened that people go so close to the microphone that when they speak their voice appears to be bursting. So, if a little bit of space is there between your lips and the microphone the voices will come very clearly. Of course, nowadays we have collar microphones and different sorts of facilities available so, but then you need to understand how. There is no need to shout there is no need to speak too loud because your microphone is very sensitive and it is taking everything.

Sometimes, it is even you know celebrated speakers---- they also feel some amount of nervousness, but then especially for the beginners they should practice some stress busters and in stress busters what they can do is--- they could desensitize themselves meaning there by they should tell themselves that I am really very important that is why they have called me I mean tell yourself certain good things visualize good things. And when you are going to begin the presentation do not begin in a hurry rather begin with a pause.

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### Things to do during presentation

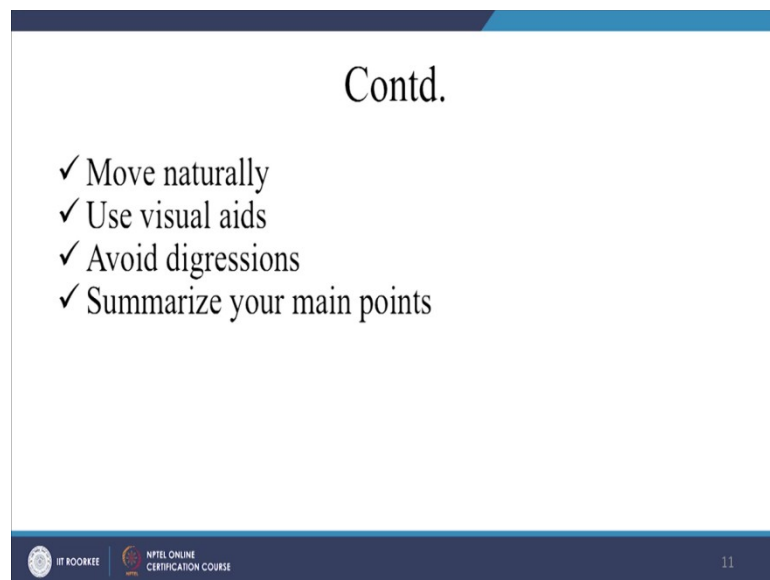
- ✓ Begin with a pause
- ✓ Present your first sentence from memory
- ✓ Maintain eye contact
- ✓ Control voice and vocabulary
- ✓ Put the brakes on

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Speak the first sentence from the memory. Maintain eye contact, have a control over your voice and vocabulary and if, at times, you fail that you are being very fast think

about the crowd. Think about the audience members and have a sort of empathy put some brakes on your speed and then there is no need especially you will find that those who are the new ones they confine themselves only to the lectern so that their uneasiness may not be watched. But experts are effective speakers they also move.

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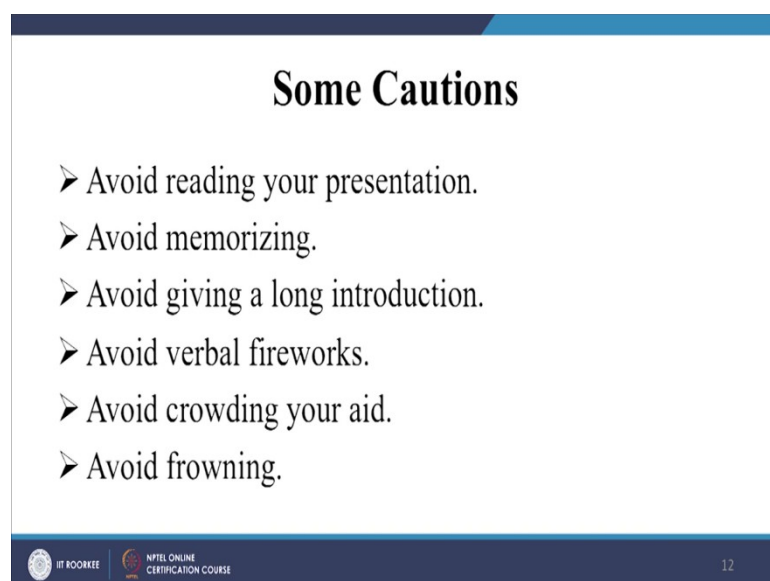
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- ✓ Move naturally
- ✓ Use visual aids
- ✓ Avoid digressions
- ✓ Summarize your main points

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So, practice movements and when you move, it should appear that you are moving very naturally, it is not an imposed sort of moving or it is not artificial.

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### Some Cautions

- Avoid reading your presentation.
- Avoid memorizing.
- Avoid giving a long introduction.
- Avoid verbal fireworks.
- Avoid crowding your aid.
- Avoid frowning.

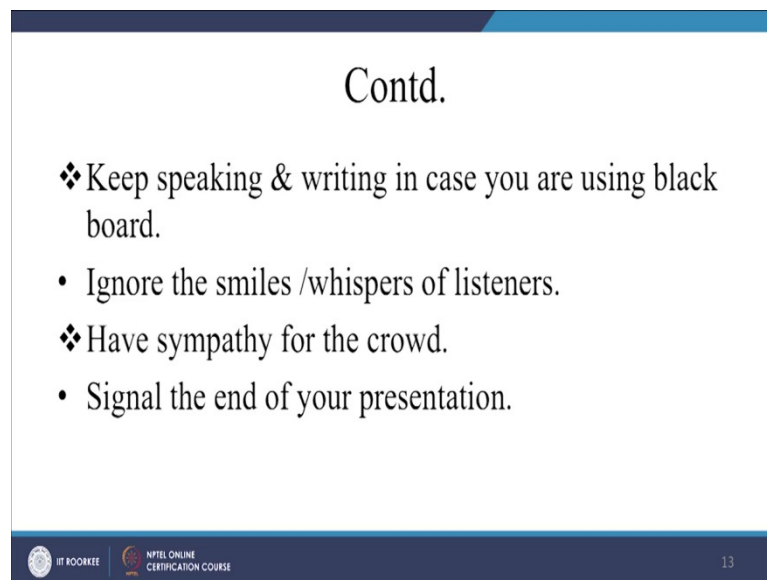
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Sometimes, these smiles and the whispers of the crowd may appear like a sort of intimidation or like a sort of impediment, but you can just while them away, you can just forget about them, on the other hand you should think that they are perhaps appreciating you and finally, when you feel that the time is indicating or you are perhaps nearing and even if you forget it is better to summarize your main points. And if you do all this, I think you are in a better situation, but then you, in order to be an effective speaker or effective presenter, please do not read the presentation. Either with your notes or with your power point slides do not memorize the presentation because if you memorize you will forget. Do not give a long introduction, do not speak as if you are going to discharge bullets in the form of words, and do not make your crowds too much cluttered avoid frowning I mean if somebody looks at you should respond to that look. Not that you are trying to save yourself.

If you are you using some other medium say for example, if you are if I am using here the blackboard you know that should not confine me only to use the blackboard or not to speak rather keep writing and speaking.

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Contd.

- ❖ Keep speaking & writing in case you are using black board.
- Ignore the smiles /whispers of listeners.
- ❖ Have sympathy for the crowd.
- Signal the end of your presentation.

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And ignore their smiles, have sympathy and before you are going to close, give them a sort of signal as I can give you. So, friends having said all those things about an effective presentation, I actually want to go satisfied, with an impression that my listeners are in a better frame of mind, and they are ready to deliver the presentation. So, let me wind up,

but before I wind up, let me tell you that you should remember all the tips that I have told you because when you stand once again you should stand by keeping one foot ahead of other.

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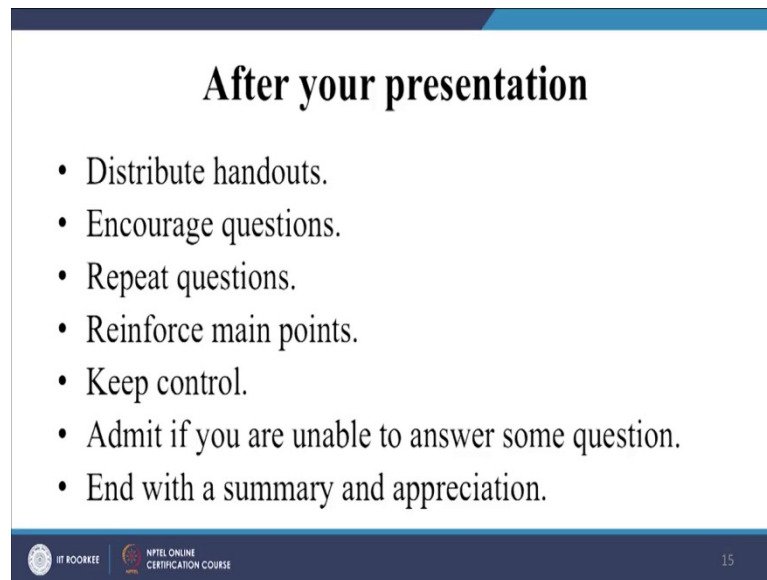
**Do remember the following**

- Keep one foot ahead of another.
- Keep weight on one heel.
- Try in front of a mirror.
- Be and appear at ease.
- Walk sprightly, and feel relaxed.
- Avoid fidgeting.

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And if you are going to practice, during practice sessions make use of your mirror. Appear confident, avoid fidgeting. If you are walking walk sprightly feel relaxed. And once your presentation is over if you have some handouts please give them the handouts, please also stay there for there may be some questions and you should always be prepared to answer those questions.

(Refer Slide Time: 40:42)



## After your presentation

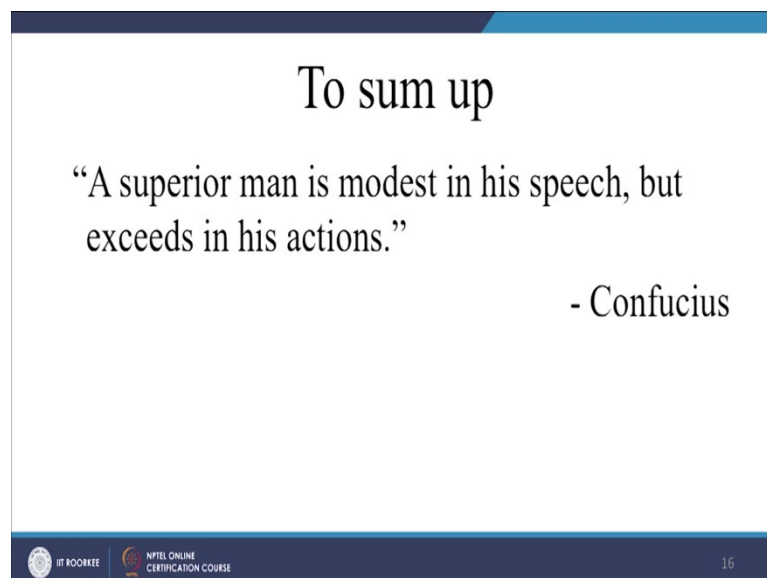
- Distribute handouts.
- Encourage questions.
- Repeat questions.
- Reinforce main points.
- Keep control.
- Admit if you are unable to answer some question.
- End with a summary and appreciation.

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But then if you are not able to answer some of the questions, do not get into a panic. You can always tell them that we can discuss this question when in leisure, and end with a sort of summary and appreciation.

So, let me also wind up my presentation by quoting Confucius, who says, ‘a superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in his action.’

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## To sum up

“A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.”

- Confucius

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Let us all be modest in our speech, but when we act, when we deliver let us deliver to the satisfaction of all so that you feel that the preparation you made for the presentation

really gave a good result. And the audience members by spending their time will have rich dividends. Thank you very much. In the next class we shall be talking about speeches on various occasions, we have to deliver different speeches.

Till then, thank you very much. Have a good time.