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**Review of DIT Services Presentation**

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**Abstract:**

In this paper, we will review the presentation given by our group on the services available to the students of the Dublin Institute of Technology. We will review our goals for our group and for the audience and discuss whether those goals were met. There is a critique of our groups’ presentation which discusses our performance in the presentation, what we did right, what we wrong and how we could improve for the next time. Similar to the critique of our group, there is a critique of another group, but using our prospective as an outsider, giving us a truer but perhaps harsher critique. Finally we look at the relevance of our presentations topic to our audience and on the relevance of presentation and related skills and why they are important.

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**GROUP GOALS**

As a first point when starting our work on the assignment we set the list of goals divided into two main categories: power point presentation goals and verbal presentation goals. It was a really good practice to set our goals before actually starting our work on presentation as they highlighted the most important elements and helped us to avoid common mistakes. Our assignment was to inform students about services offered by Dublin Institute of Technology. While working on this project, except of knowledge we gained, we learned how to work as a team and by presenting our work to the public we learned self-confidence.

PowerPoint presentation goals:

Our main goal was to create power point presentation that will be clear and easy to understand to our audience.

We started with research for each Dublin Institute of Technology Service. Good research is essential to complete coverage with necessary, relevant information and examples. As a next step we had to pick up only the substantial information describing DIT Services to avoid overloading our slides with less important details. Correct order of bullet points and many related to them pictures was also very important for better understanding and to keep our audience interested in presented topics. Each bullet point supposed to be related to the topic on each slide with taking into account not to exceed five bullet points per slide. At the end of each presented DIT service we placed slide containing important contact details. From more technical point of view we decided to use dark blue background, not use fonts smaller than 24points and use capital letters for topic names to increase clarity of our presentation. As each member of our group had to create separate power point presentation for his DIT Services and we had to assembly everything together, it is reasonable to take care of consistency of final project including fonts, backgrounds and order of presented services.

As a summary of our power point presentation goals, we were able to meet only few of them. Unfortunately we found difficulties with couple of form details like: background colour which supposed to be brighter, fonts, consistency wasn’t ideal as well. There were no conclusions summing our points and few problems with showing information in clear way. Basing on our experience gained during presentation and feedback given by few students and teacher we can see what we did wrong and make corrections to our next assignment.

Verbal presentation goals:

Our main goal for verbal part of presentation was to present DIT services in clear and interesting way to our audience, supported with many examples. Very important thing was that presented by us topics had to be covered by solid knowledge in case of extra questions. Introducing ourselves and giving a short description of what we’re going to present are always good to start with. Another important thing for our group was to stand in rightplace ideally on the side of the screen to avoid twisting your head to 180 degrees in case we wanted to look at presented slides. However we should try to stand facing our audience at all time. Loud speaking was important so all students could hear us clearly and without special effort, especially those seating in back rows. We also agreed that the changing slides had to be well synchronized with what we were talking about. It is very inappropriate to read your presentation for most of the time, avoiding that was one of our main goals. We also wanted to support our presentation with as many as possible examples and interesting facts.

In case of verbal part of presentation we also weren’t able to meet all of our goals. We struggled with keeping right position facing the audience. We also had problems with organizing our ideas and concepts and integrating our research with presentation. Our group work wasn’t too good what cost us many problems and mistakes. It was very valuable lesson for us all which exposed all our weakness but also shown us our strong sides and how to make our presentation better next time. One of the key points of making our presentation better is good communication within our team members always focusing on the fact that this is a team effort and not and working individually on group assignment isn’t going to work well.

**AUDIENCE GOALS**

Not knowing your audience is a common mistake many people make it for a various reason and because of this mistake, a lot of presentation could fail. We are sure this is a very important thing that people have to keep in their mind before starting working on their presentation. It is important to note that the general audience for a program may be very different from the target audience for your educational outreach, and the way in which these two audiences use the program can vary significantly. For example, the general viewer watching the *NOVA* program "Galileo's Battle for the Heavens" will have a different purpose from the high school science student who is looking at challenges of scientific discovery; or from the high school Western history student who is examining the power of the church; or from the principal who is trying to get teachers to think differently. Since the general audience and the target audience for your educational outreach may vary, the goals for overall series and for your educational outreach may vary as well.

Because we had to present the DIT services available for students, and our audience consisted just of DIT students, we had to be very specific on what we said and make sure that we reached all points proposed. Before our presentation we had to determine the needs of our audience and make whatever we could to make those tasks seem effortless, because students are not interested in any services if they have to pay a lot or seem to be very difficult to access them. We consider if we didn't know our target audience, intimately and specifically, all of our materials would be shooting in the dark.

The most important audience goal was to find out more interesting things about our institution and all services available for them during their time here. The audience want to know especially what are the services from this institution, how can they access those services and where can they find all of this.

The fact that we were the first team who did the presentation made many students be interested in what we did, firstly because they could get an idea of how to make their presentation using some of our skills and secondly they could avoid the mistakes we did.

The audience is also taught how to use communication skills and working as a team. We tried to be very accurate in what we did to make sure our ideas were easy to understand for them.

At the end of our presentation students were more informed about DIT services. They were thought how to use the majority of services available in the institution, where they can find them and witch one suits them the best. Also in the previous paragraphs I explained how the audience achieved some of our skills which made their way to presentation easier by avoiding our mistakes.

**GROUP PRESENTATION SELF-CRITIQUE**

For our groups presentation on the services available at DIT we did many things we did right (research, presenting) and wrong (PowerPoint) and there was things we could of or should have changed.

First we will talk about what we did right. Our public speaking despite the fact we didn’t practice or none of us had ever done something like that before was very good there was the odd case of reading from the screen and cue cards but apart from that every member of the team done well when it came to speaking in front of everyone. We had a good use of humour to keep the crowd interested and we knew a lot of the facts without looking at the screen or cue cards.

Our research was also very good especially one team members research on the libraries across DIT and we are sure most of the audience didn’t know the libraries had that much to offer (our lecturer didn’t anyway)

We also tried to keep the audience involved as much as possible we did this in different ways like asking them what clubs and/ or societies they joined and giving away mars bars (which everyone seemed happy with) we also used the bars as a way to find out how much the audience knew at the end of it, all they had to do was tell us a fact about the DIT services and they got a bar easy.

Of course there were things that we did wrong the most damaging was our PowerPoint. From the very start we had it wrong as we had a dark background but we were giving a chance to change it. The PowerPoint was also too text heavy on some slides, some having too many bullet points and some with just massive chunks of text. We also should off got together and edited the slides as some didn’t match up e.g. some bullet points used dots others used arrows.

There was also some misinterpreted information, there were a few slides about apprentices in DIT but DIT doesn’t provide any services for apprentices FAS do DIT just held classes.

So in the end there are a few things we would off done differently if we where to do it again. We would have had more group meetings so we could practised and edited the PowerPoint together so we could avoid the text heavy slides.

**CRITIQUE OF ANOTHER GROUP**

Businesses nowadays value great presentation skills. Presentation skills are a key part in the world today, without good presentation skills businesses would not be able to pitch or market the product they wish to sell.

The presentation on learning styles was a bad presentation, the groups’ presentation skills were very good but they fell apart with what they were actually asked to do. They group was asked to go into detail on a learning style called honey and Mumford technique’s, they did not supply enough research on this particular topic.

The presentation did not have enough pictures; it is proven that students remember more than half the pictures than text in a presentation. They did not seem to have a lot pictures relative to the presentation. The group used a dark background which didn’t help people when it came to paying attention to the screen as it was difficult to read because of the dark background. The group did not edit the presentation together as we could see that the font varied in certain slides.

The group did not plan this presentation well as could be seen when they were presenting it. It was clear to see that the group had not but time aside to practice what they were going to say during the presentation. It was clear also that they didn’t practice as they would look from the cards in their hands to the screen and to the group trying to figure out what they were going to say next. The group need to paraphrase what they had written in PowerPoint and not just read straight from the slide.

The presentation needed self-reflective exercises and more links so that the audience could take in what they had learned and also in their own time check out the links to increase their knowledge on learning styles and also to find out what learning style they had.

The biggest fault that the presentation had that it did not meet the required time limit that was a minimum of 25 minutes long; the groups didn’t have enough information on learning styles.

The group good points was that as individuals they were all very good public speakers and they kept the attention of the audience as best they could for the short time they had, the information the group had might not have been right, but the information that they had given was very usual to the audience and they would have learned something new about their own leaning styles.

**RELEVANCE OF TOPIC**

Our topic, the services available to students in the Dublin Institute of Technology, had particular relevance to our audience of first year students in DIT who are only 5 weeks into their first semester. This audience would have the most to gain from our presentation as they are for the most part, ignorant of the wide array of services available to them as DIT students. By informing students of the services available to them, it allows them to make use of these services and use them to reach their goals and ultimately maximise their potential in college, whether academic or otherwise. For students who are struggling, they will be pointed in the direction of help and support.

**RELEVANCE OF PRESENTATION AND RELATED SKILLS**

Presentation skills and other skills related to presenting are essential skills in the world of work and in the world of education today. Whether you’re a captain of industry presenting your profits for the quarter or a college student giving a presentation to your peers, being able to present information in a simple, efficient and memorable way is paramount to your success in your field. There are many different mediums for a presentation, from a completely oral presentation or using visual aids such as charts. With the age of the Personal Computer, PowerPoint presentations have become the standard issue of presentations. There are several different factors which will determine the success of a presentation; the oration skills of the speaker, the charisma and the authority of the speaker, the graphic design skills behind the visual aids and the planning behind the presentation e.g. does the presenter know his audience, have they rehearsed, etc.

The difference between a successful presentation and an unsuccessful one usually relates to how effective the speaker was. An effective public speaker will exude confidence and show passion. Confidence is shown through tone of voice, body language and a myriad of other ways. Research has shown that almost 90% of communication is non-verbal [1]. This shows the importance of having a confident body language as a speaker who is confident will command more respect from an audience and the audience is more likely to remember the information. Someone with a confident body language will have their feet firmly planted on the ground, good posture, a firm tone of voice, make eye contact with the audience and will be clear with their hand gestures i.e. no fidgeting. While some are born with a natural aptitude for speaking, speaking is a skill that can be learned. According to research done by the National Institute of Mental Health in the United States, 74% of people suffer from some form of glossophobia[2], also known as “stage fright”. Studies have shown that the best way to overcome a fear is to repeatedly face it [3], so start practicing!

Secondary to the speaker, there are the visual aids of the presentation. As mentioned above, the PowerPoint presentation is the current preferred method for the medium of a presentation. Let us take the template of a PowerPoint slideshow and show how to design it in a way that it enhances a presentation rather than detract from it.

1. The presentation must have a structure. This means having an introduction, outline slides which define the goals of the presentation, what the main points of information are, etc., and a conclusion to sum up your points.
2. For the actual content of the slides use short bullet points, with a max of about 6 points per slide. Do not use blocks of text.
3. Pictures and images are especially important as they stay in the mind of an audience for longer. You should have at least one image on every slide.
4. For the background, light colours should be used in conjunction with a suitable dark coloured text.
5. Everything should be clear i.e. large font, high resolution images, everything visible and not clustered

To summarise, the strength of a presentation comes primarily from the speaker and their skills in presentation, which is backed up and enhanced by their visual aids, created using their graphic design skills. Someone who can combine these skills when giving a presentation, while following the guidelines above, will be far more effective in bringing their idea across to an audience.

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