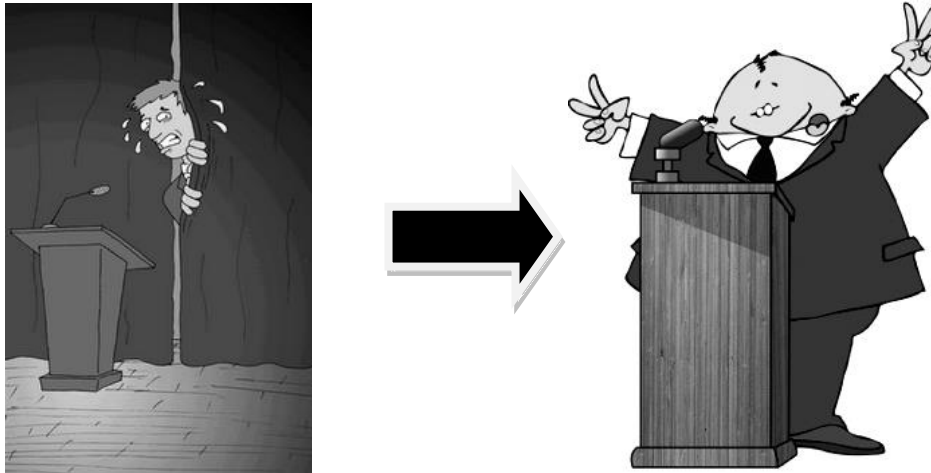


Unit 4 Oral Presentation Skills

1 PREPARE YOUR SPEECH!

1.1 Introduction

One of the greatest human fears is public speaking and it could often lead to “stage-fright.”



In order to reduce anxiety, much preparation work is needed for any presentation. Do your research and organize your content – it will serve you well. Always remember:

- **Know your material**
- **Rehearse**

Careful preparation and lots of practice are essential to becoming a better presenter. Preparation usually involves:

a. Planning your speech

- define your purpose
- analyse your audience and speaking situation

b. Putting your speech together

- identify main ideas
- research your topic thoroughly
- organise your data and write/edit your draft

c. Planning visual aids

- decide what type of visual aids to use
- design your visual aids
- rehearse using your visual aids

d. Rehearsing your speech and revising it

- practise delivering your speech
- practise handling questions

1.2 Planning Your Speech

Questions to ask yourself	Examples	MY IDEAS
1. What is the aim?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to buy my product • to adopt my solutions • to join the club • to give me a job 	
2. What is my title?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new iPad Nano • How to cut costs • The Clee Chess Club 	
3. Who am I speaking to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the benefits to the listeners of my speech? • Are these people the decision makers? • What do they know of the subject? • What aspects will they be interested in? • How does this change my approach? • What sort of questions will they ask me? • What are my answers? 	
4. What are the main points I want to make?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1, 2, 3 • first, second, third • point a, point b, point c 	
5. What do I want the audience to do after listening to my presentation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to buy my product • to accept my findings • to join the club • to give me a job 	

Adapted from C. STORZ and the English language teachers of the Institut national de télécommunications, EVRY FRANCE.

Why am I making this presentation?

You should have two purposes - a **general** purpose and a **specific** one.

- a. a general purpose:
 1. to inform, that is, to give an overview, to present, to summarize, to outline
 2. to discuss the current situation
 3. to explain how to do something or how something is done
- b. a specific purpose:
 1. what you want the audience to take away with them after listening to you
 2. what you want them to do
 3. what they should remember

Example: a company has a new product on the market. Its sales department decides to give a presentation to their customers on the product. The presentation has two purposes:

- The general purpose is to tell the audience about the features of this new product
- The specific purpose is to sell this new product

If you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve with your speech, you will have a better idea of the thought, feeling or action you want to get from your listeners.

Whom am I speaking to?

You need to know your audience before speaking to them so that you can adjust your presentation to meet their needs, interest and level of knowledge. You will then know how to relate to them and build a rapport with them.

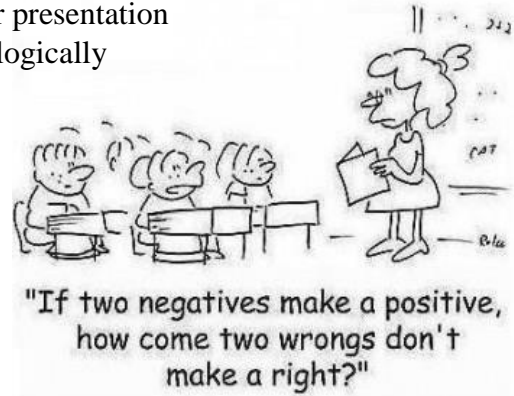
	Audience feature	What do you need to do?
1	number of people - small or large group	
2	age range - children, youths, middle-aged or the elderly adults	
3	general interests - is your audience interested in your topic?	
4	knowledge level – how much do they know about your topic?	
5	social/educational background – ethnic group, cultural/religious background, education level, marital status etc	
6	occupation - executives, professionals, self-employed, low/high skilled	
7	attitude to subject: supportive and want to know more OR hostile/defensive and resistant	



Based on the above audience analysis, you can decide and select an appropriate strategy that would engage the audience. There are generally three:

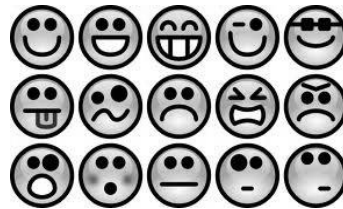
a. Logical strategy

- Think through and organise your content carefully and well
- Choose the right words
- Support your arguments with facts and statistics, and cite the sources of your information to lend further credibility to your presentation
- Discuss opposing views and challenge them logically
- Avoid emotional language



b. Emotional strategy

- Personalize the benefits of the idea or product that you are presenting
- Appeal to the audience's personal needs for good health, safety, appreciation and recognition
- Use descriptions of your personal experiences, comparison or contrast, and quotations to win over your audience



c. Speaker strategy

If you have credibility (ie you are experienced, well-versed in subject), your audience may accept your message because they trust you and believe what you say. To achieve this type of credibility, you need to develop and possess the following characteristics:

- Competence (knowledgeable in subject)
- Trustworthiness and sincerity (you want to help/benefit audience)
- Poise and confidence (well-prepared and steady)
- Enthusiasm (believe in the message you want to deliver)



1.3 Putting Your Speech Together

After you have planned your speech, you will need to:



Identify your main ideas

- Put your main ideas in a logical order and in a way that is easy to understand.
- Remember that your audience has only one chance to hear your ideas.
- Check carefully to see that your main ideas link together
- Ensure that they cover all the areas that you want your audience to hear

Research your topic thoroughly

- Find and investigate facts, evidence and supporting documentation before expressing your opinions to anyone else
- Otherwise, you will lose the confidence of the audience and consequently their attention. You will also be vulnerable to criticism and lose credibility
- Your research can be based on various sources such as books, journals, internet materials, surveys and interviews with experts on the topic. Remember to cite your sources!



Organise your content and write/edit your draft

A good speech has four parts – greeting, introduction, body, and summary or conclusion:



Greeting

- Always greet VIPs first in order of ranking
- If there are no VIPs, use a simple greeting like “Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.”
- Then introduce yourself briefly
- If it’s a team presentation, remember to introduce your team members (learn to pronounce their names properly)

An Introduction.....

- is brief and concise
- prepares your audience for what you are going to say
- creates interest

You should:

- make the purpose of your presentation CLEAR
- relate your topic to the audience
- include a preview of the main points and a background OR a framework for your audience

Important!!!! To capture the attention of your audience, USE one of the following strategies:

- pose a question
- make a startling statement or interesting fact (make sure it is correct information)
- use a humorous story or anecdote relevant to the topic

Do not:

- Laugh at your own joke / funny story especially if nobody laughs – just move on
- Repeat nor explain joke if nobody laughs – you will only make it worse



Topic	Give a suitable question / fact / statement / story / anecdote to capture attention
How can we manage stress?	
Let's stop smoking!!	
Keeping our public toilets clean	



The Body.....is the central part of your presentation.

You should:

- Organise your ideas under appropriate headings or subheadings as in a written report
- Add interesting incidents that the audience will enjoy hearing
- Support your main points with:
 - Facts (state the source)
 - Statistics (state the source)
 - Illustrations (cite reference)
 - Examples (cite reference)
 - personal experiences (most interesting way of engaging audience – may not hold as much credibility as statistics, but may add weight to message)

Do not!!

- Put more than five ideas in your presentation - a typical listener's attention span is limited
- simply read from your notes – it reduces eye-contact, alienates audience and makes you sound unnatural and monotonous

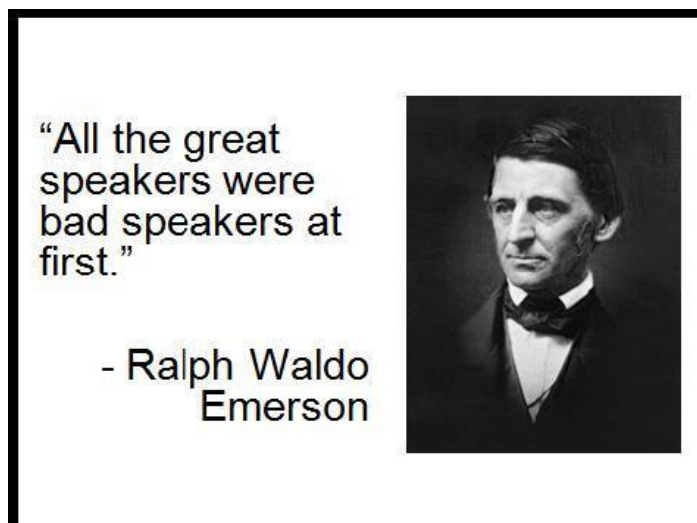


Summary/Conclusion....

- is short overview of the main points
- reinforces your main ideas
- gives your audience a second chance to hear main ideas presented earlier

DO:

- let your audience know that you are about to finish your presentation
- use words such as “in closing,” “in conclusion” or “one last point” to signal the ending
- make an impression by making your conclusion memorable
- you may use a quotation, a catchy remark OR a relevant anecdote which best emphasizes what you want to convey



In a nutshell....

1. Know your material

- Pick a topic that you have interest in
- Know more about it than what you have put into your speech (audience may ask questions to know more)
- Use humour and personal stories
- Use conversational language – that way you won't easily forget what to say. So do not read off a script or memorise word for word

2. Practice. Practice! Practice!!

- Rehearse out loud with all equipment (eg visual aids) you plan on using
- Revise as necessary
- Work to control filler words (eg ah, like, so, right, basically, ok)
- Practice, pause and breathe
- Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected

3. Know the audience

- Greet and chat with some of the audience members as they arrive
- It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers

4. Know the room

- Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids

5. Relax

- Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves.
- Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything.
- Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm

6. Visualize yourself giving your speech

- Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident
- Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence

7. Realize that people want you to succeed

- Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They're rooting for you.

8. Don't apologize

...for any nervousness or problem – the audience probably never noticed it.

9. Concentrate on the message – not the medium

- Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.

10. Gain experience

- Your speech should represent *you* — as an authority and as a person
- Experience builds CONFIDENCE - the key to effective speaking

2 DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

2.1 How to to deliver your speech with enthusiasm and interest:

Voice quality

- Every person has his or her tone and quality of voice. It may be husky, soft, loud or even well-modulated.
- A person can also create an impression by using his voice alone. Even without looking at a person, you may know that a person is confident and strong or meek and shaky just by listening to his voice.
- This is especially important in job interviews and public speeches. You need to impress the crowd with the way you convey your messages to them.
- Open your mouth widely and relax your muscles by keeping your mouth and jaw loose. You can do this by breathing in as you would do before yawning. With your mouth more open, you are allowing the sound to resonate onto your mouth.
- Your tongue should be moved forward but not to the point of sticking it out. Just allow it to come in contact with the back of your lower teeth. This prevents your tongue from being in the way of your throat.
- Try to relax your throat to avoid tiring the neck and tongue muscles. Make sure to force the air out of your lungs rather than your throat.



Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/2894202>

Pitch

- Is a measure of how high or low your voice sounds
- Variety in pitch is necessary. Arising inflection is used when we want to ask questions. We can also inflect our voices to emphasize key points. Not using variations may make you a monotonous speaker.
- Inflection helps you maintain audience interest and get your message across
- Avoid dramatic, upward shifts in pitch or ones on the final word of a sentence unless asking a question

Rate

- Is the speed at which you speak
- You should speak at a comfortable, moderate speed. 100 words/minute or between 80 and 160 words per minute
- Speedier talkers prevent listeners from absorbing the ideas and making connections between points
- Speak in shorter sentences
- To vary your rate, you can change the length of natural pauses and change the rate at which you speak syllables and words within phrases

Pauses

- Are used to add emphasis and meaning to selected phrases and sentences
- Can be inserted to allow audience members a moment to think about an idea, to indicate a shift to a new idea, to a new section of your speech, or to heighten audience anticipation of your next idea
- Avoid the temptation to fill any silences with verbal pauses; they annoy listeners and hurt your credibility
- Start each thought on a new line to remind yourself to pause at the end of a line

Volume

- Is the loudness or softness of your voice.
- Adapt your volume level to the audience and room size. Speaking to 50 people with a microphone would demand more volume than when you speak to only five.
- Overcome background noise and reach every listener in the room
- Open your mouth as you speak and use all of your breath to send your words out to the audience

Pronunciation

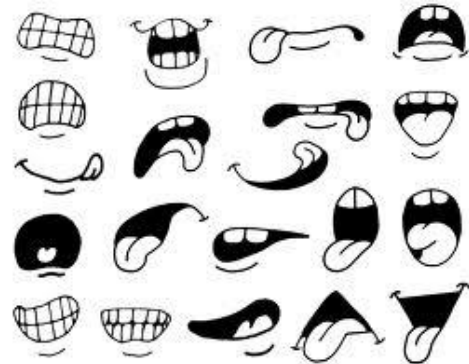
- Is the ability to say each word correctly by making the proper sounds and accenting the correct syllable
- Consult a recent dictionary when you are not sure of the pronunciation of some words, or ask your friends or lecturers.
- Use on-line dictionaries to check the pronunciation of unfamiliar words.
- Correct pronunciation is invisible, but incorrect pronunciation can damage your credibility

Articulation

- Is the ability to correctly form the sounds of each word (making vowel sounds and consonant sounds clearly and distinctly as you speak)
- If you substitute one consonant for another, slush your s's, or drop some vowels or consonants, your audience may not be able to understand you clearly

Transitions

- Tie your ideas together to help your audience to see the relationships between these ideas
- Use transitional phrases/words such as 'first', 'next', 'coming to the next point' and 'furthermore' throughout your talk.



Accent

- Is the pattern of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that's used in a particular region, culture or dialect
- Listeners may have trouble understanding what you are saying if they are unfamiliar with your accent
- You may want to soften it so that you can get your message across

Variety

- Refers to changes related to pauses, rate, pitch, and volume
- Your audience will stay alert when your voice isn't predictable. They won't know what's coming next and they'll want to find out
- Variety adds a personality and an immediacy to your words that can bring you closer to your audience. It makes your speech sound more like a spirited conversation

<http://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/resources/tipsheets/delivery/verbalementsofdelivery.pdf>

2.2 How to convey confidence through your non-verbal behaviour

Your speech is well-written, meticulously researched and powerful - so don't distract your audience from the words with thoughtless nonverbal behavior. Actions really do speak louder than words. Your goal is to keep the audience focused on your ideas, rather than wondering what you're doing with your body ~ Scott Roberts

Dress Appropriately - first impressions matter

- Your appearance is the first thing your audience will notice.
- Your appearance should match the topic, occasion, and the audience's expectations.
- If you are speaking to an informal group, wearing formal attire is more likely to make you look out of touch than professional. You'll be distancing yourself from your audience. Dress just a little more formally than your audience.
- Wear attire that will help you blend in, so that your speech can stand out.
- Accessories should not outshine the message. Select a tasteful outfit in which jewelry, clothes, and hairstyle do not distract the audience. If appearance draws too much attention, the audience is not listening to the message
- Think of comfort when you are choosing your attire. It doesn't help your confidence if you are uncomfortable.

Groom - personal hygiene sends a message about your self-respect

- Make sure you appear neat, tidy and clean
- Pay attention to teeth, fingernails, stains on clothes and hands
- Makeup should be natural and clean



Facial expressions - show enthusiasm and vitality

- You must not only feel but show your interest in your ideas. Sincerity is important.
- Your enthusiasm must reflect your sincere belief in your ideas and a sincere desire to share them with your audience.
- Facial expressions should be natural unless you are driving a point home.
- They should match the words spoken.
- You can smile to break the ice and dispel nervous tension (especially in the beginning of the speech and/or before beginning to speak)

Eye contact

- Maintain good eye contact with your audience. This suggests to them that you are confident.
- Look to the left and right and down the centre of the room. This will tell the whole audience that they are all included in the speech.
- The most effective way to connect with an audience is to make strong eye contact with several individuals. Find a friendly face in the center of the audience and on either side - look each in the eye periodically. Do not stare.
- Do not simply read from your outline.
- Use note cards if necessary but always remember to look up at your audience.



Gestures - movements of the hands, arms, head and shoulders

- Hand and arm gestures are used for several reasons – to emphasize, to point, to reject or to describe. They should be used with care
- Vary gestures as using the same action repeatedly can bore the audience.
- Avoid continuous gestures as overusing gestures can weaken the impact. Less is more - it's better not to gesture enough than to flail your arms too much and turn your gestures into a spectacle.



- Gestures should be deliberate, spontaneous, and natural.
- If hand gestures don't come naturally to you, plot out where to use them before you begin your speech and keep your arms relaxed at all other times.
- Open arms is good indicator of someone who is relaxed and not tense. Even if you are anxious, practice speaking with arms at your sides to convey a calm attitude.
- Have your hands wide open and apart. This show sincerity and honesty.
- If you must use a lectern, don't "hug" or "cling" to it. Lecterns are great for presenting formality and authority. Put your notes on it (if you have any,) not your elbows.
- Hands should not be in pockets, behind one's back, fidgeting, or gripping each other. Do not stand akimbo or with arms crossed.
- Avoid pointing and clenched fists
These convey nervousness, hostility, defensiveness or even sneakiness.
- While you may use your index cards or papers as props, your handling of them in front of an audience should be minimal.
- If you are reading from papers, don't wave them around randomly or shuffle them needlessly. Not only does it look bad, it makes noise and could drown out your words.
- When you're nervous, you may find yourself doing things without realizing it. Playing with your hair, constantly touching your face, tapping your fingers or your feet - any of these behaviors will diminish your credibility.

Movement - attracts an audience's attention, for the eye instinctively follows moving objects rather than stationary ones and focuses on them.

- But your movement must be natural, not stilted or in any way stage-managed.
- Avoid pacing up and down the platform.
- Body motions during oral presentations are usually for the following reasons: to hold attention, to get rid of nervousness, to suggest transitions or to increase emphasis.
- They can be used to show confidence and can signal transitions.
- You should walk purposefully and gracefully.
- It's not always possible, but if you can walk around a bit while delivering your speech, it will keep your presentation from being visually monotonous. Don't get carried away, though.
- Use the 3-step rule. If you move towards one side of the room, take three steps then stop. It is distracting if you constantly move one step one way, one step the other.

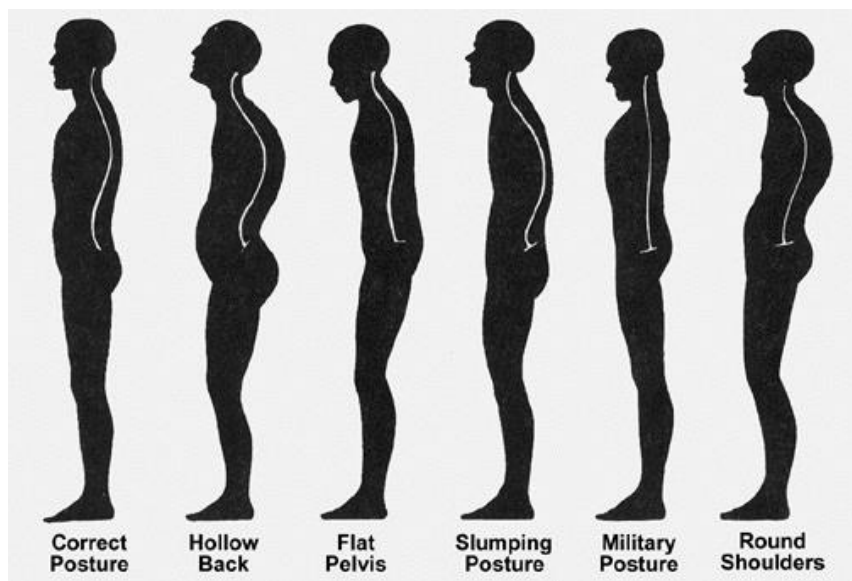
Posture - component of effective nonverbal delivery

- Stand upright and tall, relax and put your weight on both feet.
- Keep your head up and shoulders back.
- You can lean forward – do not hunch over because that will prevent voice projection.
- Slumping or slouching can be perceived as lacking confidence and not caring.
- Even if you are giving an informal speech, a slouched posture suggests a lack of confidence.
- Posture should be natural - not too firm or stiff.

http://www.ehow.com/list_6027496_top-public-speaking-nonverbal-behavior.html

<http://fearless-publicspeaking.com/body-language.html>

<http://www.examiner.com/article/nonverbal-delivery-components>



<http://www.swolept.com/posts/how-to-have-a-straight-back-your-guide-to-good-posture>

2.3 Techniques for dealing with QUESTIONS from audience

Allow for a question-and-answer period toward the end of your presentation.
Follow these techniques on how to answer questions from the audience:

Prepare for questions

- You should be able to anticipate most of the questions you receive.
- Prepare for the worst and everything else will seem easier.
- You can prepare back-up visual aids just to be used when answering anticipated questions.
- Practise answering questions.



Repeat the question

- If you think that anyone in the audience did not hear a question, repeat it for the whole audience.
- If you get a complicated, emotional or multipart question, restate it to make sure you understand it.
- Since we think approximately five seconds faster than we speak, repeating the question may give you a few extra seconds to formulate a good answer.

Maintain your style

- Maintain the same style and demeanor you used in the presentation.
- A change in demeanor can suggest that you are not confident about your position.
- When you are asked a question you do not know the answer to, you may say, "Sorry, I don't know the answer to that now. But I'll find out and get back to you later." (Remember to get the questioner's contact and reply as soon as you can)

Involve the audience in your answer with the 25-75 rule

- Direct about 25% of your eye contact to the person who asked the question and approximately 75% to the rest of the audience.
- This will help you stay in command of the situation and keep the audience involved in your presentation.

Q&A tips on sticky Q&A situations:

Q: What if no one wants to ask a question?

A: Highlight one or two key points presented and ask if anyone would like to find out more.

Q: What could you do when you get a complicated, emotional or multi-part question?

A: Restate it to make sure you have understood it correctly.

Q: How should you handle a questioner who tries to “hook” you with a difficult question?

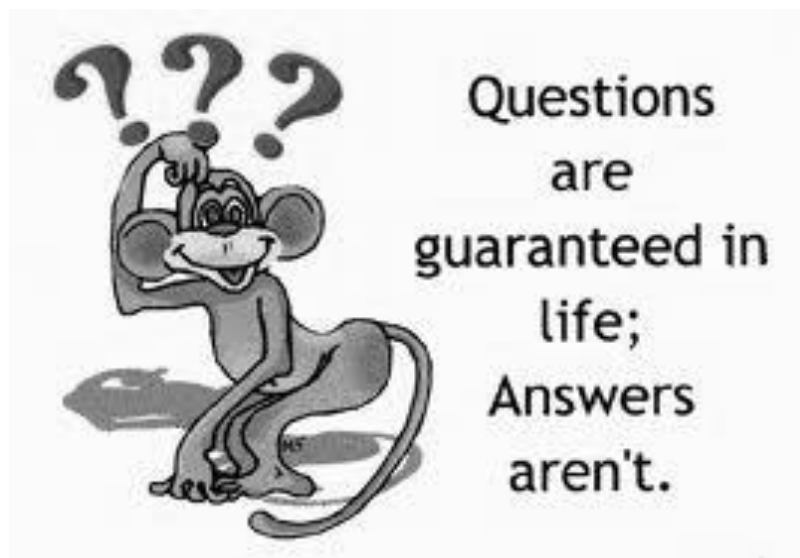
A: Do not spend too much time trying to answer the question and neglecting the rest of the audience.
You can try to invite answers or opinions from the others.

Q: What if someone gives a long-winded question/comment?

A: Direct him/her to get to the point tactfully & politely.

Q: What if someone dominates the session by asking lots of questions and does not give others a chance to ask questions?

A: Select another member of the audience to ask a question or give an opinion/comment.



CHECKLIST - EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION (INDIVIDUAL)

	Items	Y/N	Remarks / Areas to improve
Greeting			
1	Did the speaker greet the audience formally?		
2	Did the speaker introduce himself and the topic of his presentation clearly?		
Introduction			
3	Did the speaker appear confident?		
4	Did the speaker get the audience's attention?		
5	Did the speaker state the purpose of the presentation?		
6	Did the speaker explain the benefits of the presentation to the audience?		
7	Was there a preview of the main points of the presentation?		
Body			
8	Was the presentation clearly organised?		
9	Were the main points clearly pointed out?		
10	Were the points well supported with explanations and examples?		
11	Was there a smooth transition from point to point?		
Overall Body Language			
12	Was the speaker appropriately dressed?		
13	Did the speaker smile and have relaxed facial expressions?		
14	Did the speaker maintain eye contact with the audience?		
15	Were the speaker's postures, gestures and mannerisms confident?		
Overall Vocal Delivery			
16	Was the speaker clear and audible?		
17	Was his/her voice varied and interesting?		
18	Did the speaker use a comfortable pace of speaking?		
Visual Aids			
19	Were the visual aids well prepared?		
20	Were they visible?		
21	Did the speaker make good use of them?		
The Closing			
22	Did the speaker summarise key points?		
23	Was the conclusion strong & memorable?		
24	Did the speaker thank the audience?		