
Pair Presentation – Public Speaking Assignment (10%)

Presentation - 5% | One-page Infographic - 5%

Preparation	Week 2: Task + Audience Analysis/ Speech Skeleton Workshop/ Doc Design Workshops
Sign-up Dates	The night before your presentation or earlier, drop your presentation slides and/ or video recording, plus Infographic, in the Brightspace DROPBOX
Duration	6-7 min. talk. It normally takes about 2 mins. to read roughly 1 page (~250 words) . Stay within time-limit to successfully complete this assignment; sticking to given time constraints is a valued skill in the workplace.
Topic	Your presentation topic relates to some aspect of engineering communication. Team up with 1-2 other student(s), select a topic from the Sign-Up sheet on Brightspace (Module 2), and present an informative 6-7 minute talk on that topic to your classmates (who are all here to learn about technical communication!) on the assigned day. You'll have only 6-7 minutes to present, so <i>narrow</i> your topic appropriately and practice timing and delivery ahead of time.

Goals and Objectives

This is an opportunity to practice and develop **valuable public speaking skills**.¹ Working in two's, your primary goal is to **coordinate planning** so as generate a **professional presentation** on some aspect of engineering communication—something you all need to learn about to maximize your success as technical professionals.

By completing this assignment, you'll (a) **learn** about your selected topic sufficiently well to be able to **teach your peers** something meaningful about it² - *not* everything about it – and (b) **collaborate** fully on all aspects of the presentation from planning, to research, to delivery. In short, you'll work closely together to prepare, practice, and deliver a talk to the rest of the class, each of you taking turns speaking.

¹ As Linvill, Telepragada, and Kaye point out, “a survey of public works departments who hire engineers placed both ‘good listener’ and ‘good communicator’ in the top 10 needed skills for employment, ahead of both ‘technically proficient’ and ‘organized.’ Additionally, Darling and Dannels (2003) found that 72 percent of practicing engineers indicated speaking skills (i.e., audience analysis, interpersonal communication, persuasion, teamwork) were important to their work. . . . We know from research,” they add, “that the work involved with engineering occurs within a fundamentally oral environment where communication skills are the ‘lifeblood of a practicing engineer’ (p. 15).” *Communication Education*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2019, pp. 308-327. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2019.1608367>

² In *How to Train your Brain to Remember almost Anything*, Thomas Oppong notes that “the ultimate test of your knowledge is your capacity to transfer it to another person.” Indeed, many studies show that the best way to learn a topic is to explain it to someone else, e.g. Koh and Lee, “The learning benefits of teaching: A retrieval practice hypothesis.” *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, vol. 32 no. 3, 2008, pp. 401-410. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.3410>

Modes of Delivery

As we meet for classes in person, you may choose one of the delivery options below:

OPTION A: Go live. Present your talk in-person on your scheduled presentation date, accompanying your talk with slides. This is the approach where most of you likely need some practice, so please give careful consideration to presenting in-person as a way to grow your communication and presentation skills.

OPTION B: Develop a set of voiced-over slides and present these to the class. Prepare the points you want to make; create your slides; decide what you want to say to accompany each slide; then [record a voice-over for your presentation slides](#). (Here's another [video tutorial](#) showing you how to do that).

OPTION C: Create a video of yourselves presenting your talk as if you were physically speaking in front of an audience. Display and refer to your slides as you would for a regular in-person talk. You can create videos in number of different ways (including simply recording yourself on Zoom), hence if this is an option you want to take, I leave it to you to decide which method works best for you.

Whichever option you choose, **coordinate closely with your partner(s)** in all aspects of **planning and preparing**, clarifying who will deliver which part of the talk. Arrange to practice/ record your portion of the talk, with the goal of producing a smooth, seamless presentation.

Regardless of mode of delivery, there will be a “**live**” **Q&A session** following your presentation—a standard expectation for any professional presentation. The idea is that an engaged audience always has questions or comments, and presenter should be able to field questions on a topic they've just spoken about (and hence are familiar with).

Engaging an Audience

More than just **teach and inform**, successful presenters **engage** their audience. Think about how to create **rappor**t with your audience, pique their interest, and keep their attention from wandering. No audience wants to feel like they've wasted time listening to poorly-prepared *ums*, *ahs*, and *y'knows*. Respect your peers by giving them something worth listening to.

One powerful way to engage an audience is to **convince** them of the **value**, **relevance**, or **importance** of your topic. For instance, *right at the very outset of your talk*, aim to **link** your topic to some aspect of your classmates' future success as computing engineers; reiterate its **relevance** by supplying **examples** that illustrate its usefulness or value in a technical communication context.

Supplementary Materials

Another way to engage an audience is to create visually attractive **materials** to supplement your talk. For this assignment, supplementary materials will take two forms:

1. An **INFOGRAPHIC (worth 5%)**: create a **one-page handout** for your audience that showcases your mastery of **document design principles**, a learning outcome of the course, while providing your audience with a useful, accessible reminder of key points laid out in a visually attractive, **well-designed** way. This is a wonderful chance to enjoy some creative fun, experimenting with applied aesthetics!

Review my [slides on Doc Design](#), plus the relevant chapter in *TWE* to do well on this part of the assignment. Review the [student sample leave-behinds on Brightspace \(Module 2\)](#) for ideas and inspiration!

2. A set of attractive, well-designed **PRESENTATION SLIDES** that showcase your mastery of design principles. Aim to produce a balance of **visuals** and **text**; I might also suggest including a humorous slide to help **engage** your audience!

Preparing Content

To prepare an effective presentation, research information on public speaking *and* on your selected topic by going online, or by looking through handbooks on technical communication.

Review my **Brightspace** resources on **document design** and **public speaking** under **Modules 1-2**. These include writing prompts, model samples, practice activities, and handouts, all of which are intended to help you organize and deliver an effective presentation. As well, aim to consciously observe public speakers: attend a public meeting in your area; watch your professors; observe Youtube presenters. See what works and what doesn't, then apply what you've learnt.

Although you want to avoid reading a prepared script, you might still *draft* one to get to know your topic: this is called "**writing to learn**"—and *knowing* a topic gives speakers confidence. Ideally, when presenting in person, you should aim to **extemporize**: i.e. speak conversationally without reading a fully-prepared script. If you do rely on reading a script aloud, then aim to make your reading *sound* conversational – avoid a mechanical, stilted mode of delivery.

Preparing Delivery

As you've got only **6-7 minutes**, practice **pacing**. Focus on *slowing down* to let your audience digest what you're saying: well-timed **pauses** are key to effective public speaking.

Organizing Your Talk

Here are some tips for organizing your talk:

- Introduce yourself; greet the audience: make strong opening contact.
- Present an opening **Power Statement** and stick to that focus for the rest of the talk.
- Explain *why* the topic is **important** and stress this to your audience right at the outset. (You'll have to believe it yourself to make it convincing . . .)

- Divide your topic into several sub-points, and use **transitions** (*first, second, next, lastly*, and so on)
- Present specific **examples** to help illustrate your points and relate them to real world scenarios
- End your talk with a **Power Conclusion**: mirror the opening Power Statement and underline how the topic will help your audience succeed in their careers. End strong: audiences remember the last thing they hear!
- Remember to ask the audience for **questions**
- Don't flee when questions are done. Direct some **closing remark**, thanking the audience or offering some other comment to acknowledge their time and attention.

Evaluation

Evaluation is based on evidence of preparation (familiarity with the topic; smooth, well-paced delivery; strategies for promoting rapport); informative, relevant content; clear organization and sequencing; use of transitional signals (e.g. *first, second, lastly; next; in addition; for example; most important of all*, and so forth); smooth hand-overs between speakers; confident, engaging delivery (projection; pacing; pausing; self-presentation); well-designed presentation slides and Leave-Behind.

I am here to support your learning

Check with me for guidance as needed

Review the **Rubric** on the next page: it shows the criteria by which your presentation will be evaluated and assessed. This means you can also use it as a **self-review checklist!**

RUBRIC – Pair Presentations - Review Checklist & Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA	Yes! Excellent	Very good; solid	Somewhat; developing	Not evident
Self-Introduction establishes strong audience contact	✓			
Clear Power Statement indicates what the audience can expect to hear				
Topic's value or importance is strongly underlined				
Useful signaling (<i>first, second, next, most important, lastly, etc.</i>) orients the audience, making the talk easy to follow				
Concrete examples are used to illustrate abstract points, giving the topic “real world” relevance				
Strategies have been mapped to make the topic engaging and interesting , as well as informative				
The talk is extemporized , or <i>sounds</i> extemporized in the case of voiced-over slides/ video, coming across as fluent, audible, and conversational, not flat, hard-to-hear, or mechanical				
Slides are relevant, useful, well designed , emphasizing visuals over text-dense slides				
Concluding recap clearly summarizes key points				
Final words underline the value or benefit of the topic				
Presenters appear well coordinated , with effective transitions				
Questions are requested; responses are relevant, well-expressed				
Courteous exit comment acknowledges the audience				
Talk appeared well-prepared overall				
Presenters seemed confident, relaxed, personable				
All assignment requirements have been met				

DELIVERY

1 = weak

2 = fair

3 = good

4 = very good

5 = excellent

(These do not represent % values)

Pace	Projection
Enunciation	Modulation for emphasis
Eye-contact	Audience contact
Overall Self-presentation	

DESCRIPTION OF GRADES

Grade	Description
A 80-100%	Excellent! Professional presentation in all respects. Confident, relaxed, well-planned, and extemporized delivery creates effective rapport with audience; speaker provides an accurate and complete explanation of key concepts or facts; well-developed explanation of topic with relevant concrete examples; transitional cues create a seamless flow of ideas; presenters act as a team, establishing strong rapport with the audience; questions are handled with confidence and clarity. Speakers DO NOT READ or (in the case of voiced-over slides) do not <i>sound</i> as if they're reading. Speakers use vocabulary and style appropriate to audience. Excellent visual aids and handout help the audience visualize and remember important ideas: slides are clear, informative, and well-designed; leave-behind makes excellent use of document design principles in terms of font, whitespace, headings and listing, outlining key points in a clear, well-formatted, one-page layout. Audience feels confident that they have fully understood the topic and are glad they came!
B 70-79%	Good to very good presentation! Generally confident and relaxed, with few to very few references to notes or cue cards; mostly clear and accurate understanding and explanation of topic with helpful concrete examples; mostly seamless flow of ideas, but maybe one or two overly-mechanical transitions or occasional loss of direction and fumbling for words; audience may very occasionally feel a bit confused; questions handled well. Presenters work well together; keeps audience attention; establish rapport. Mostly appropriate vocabulary and style for the audience. Visual aids (slides; leave-behind) are informative and well-designed for the most part, though some design elements (eg. font style and size; listing; spacing) may need attention. Audience feels fairly well informed about your topic, and feel their time was well spent.
C 60-69%	Pretty good presentation, showing good content, but not entirely confident in presenting (stammering, mumbling, awkward pauses, do not face audience, too quiet, etc) or not sufficiently familiar with topic; topic explanation may need a bit more clarification or more concrete examples; flow of ideas is mechanical or awkward at times; visuals (slides; leave-behind) could be better organized or designed. Presentation could use more practice, more thorough understanding of topic, or better visuals. Audience may not feel adequately informed about your topic, and may have been a bit bored at times.
D 50-59%	Barely competent to fair presentation: content is sketchy or notably short; presenters speak inaudibly or unclearly at times, losing audience attention; material sometimes inaccurately or unclearly explained; examples are too vague, unclear, or sometimes inaccurate or entirely absent; flow of ideas is mechanical at best, sometimes jumpy or occasionally difficult to understand. Visuals (slides; leave-behind) need more detail to make them useful and/ or formatting. Some required criteria may be missing or incorrectly presented. Vocabulary and style may be either too simple or too technical for the target audience. Audience learns very little and feels like time has been wasted.
F 0-49%	Information may be inaccurate, imprecisely presented, and/or incoherently organized; presenters may be difficult or impossible for the audience to understand because of language and/or vocabulary errors, or because of lack of adequate preparation; visuals/handouts may be lacking, irrelevant, confusing, and/or inaccurate; criteria may be missing; delivery shows a lack of preparation; logic of presentation is not clear. Presenters fail to give the audience an opportunity to ask questions, or presenter is unable to address questions with meaningful responses. Listeners have not learned anything valuable about the topic.