

## Grad Talk Lesson Planning

**Date:** 4/13/2023  
**Subject:** Oral Presentation  
**Time:** 60 Minutes (15 for discussion)

### Key Questions:

- How can I manage my comm app?
- How should I outline and prepare?
- What are key tips for delivering the speech?

### Objectives:

Students will **know...**

- Strategies for managing their comm app
- How to identify the causes of their comm app
- How to structure the speech
- How to maintain relationships after the presentation

Students will **understand...**

- Where speech app comes from
- That speech app can be advantageous
- That adapting to your audience is important
- That the PPT is a supplement to the presentation
- The good speaking requires practice

Students will **be able to...**

- Practice cognitive restructuring
- Outline their presentation
- Avoid jargon and utilize analogies
- Construct a throughline
- Identify good delivery
- View the PPT as a story

### Teacher Process:

Welcome and Introduction [START AT 3:30]

PSA Questionnaire [START AT 3:35]

Content: Donuts!!

*Hello! Please Help Yourself to a donut.  
I really enjoyed speaking with this group this time last year and was thrilled when Eduardo asked me to come back this year.*

- Asst Prof in 2020
- PhD in 2019
- Accolades

My goal today is to try to provide you with some practical tips from a communication perspective that I hope can help you when it comes to oral presentations.

To do that, I first asked you a couple questions to get a sense of your speaking experience, and I'd like to take a few minutes to go over those with you.

\*Go over the answers to paint a picture of the group.  
Include a summary slide of what we know\*

- Everyone has had similar experiences;

## Overview: 3 Main Goals

## Content: Comm App [START AT 3:40]

- Everyone sees public speaking as important

- **We need to build some confidence**

- o We do this through skills training

Based on these results, as well as my own history, I want to take some time to cover three specific areas:

1. Communication anxiety & app
2. Preparing your speech structure
3. Presenting as a performance / Q&A

\*\*At any point in time, please stop me to ask questions about an area I might not cover. I want to provide tips, but I also want to hear from you all as well in the spirit of conversation\*

### Seinfeld Quote

- **Why do you think people are so afraid of public speaking?**

### Define Comm App

- Doesn't just have to be a presentation, it can be uncertainty that stems from any personal, public, or professional presentation
- Not something we can get rid of – nervousness is a natural reaction
- **But we can manage it!** This starts by knowing where it comes from

Research tends to group comm app as coming from 3 places:

- Hereditary (LISPY story)
- Learned (Context, Audience, Situation, Reinforcement)
- Skills Deficit

We also know that **apprehension affects people at different times:**

- Depending on when it hits, could lead to consequences from procrastination to poor performance
- Pre-Prep; Prep; Pre-performance; Performance

Finally, app tends to affect us in different ways:

- **Internal:** These are the physiological effects that can manifest themselves in a physical sense
  - o Sweating, redness, shaking
- **External:** These are the behavioral elements that the audience can see.
  - o Avoiding eye contact, shaking, fidgeting

So, if you can identify when, where, and how your apprehension affects you, we can manage it. As stated in

**Activity:** I Would Just Die If...

**Content:** The Donut! [START AT 3:55]

**Activity:** Book Activity [START AT 4:10]

Bodie et al. (2010), there are four evidenced backed suggestions from comm scholars:

1. Systematic Desensitization
2. **Cognitive Restructuring**
3. Visualization
4. Learning the right skills

Combination of 2 and 4 that will help this group.

Do the activity!

So, most of the conversation surrounding comm app has been about preparing yourself to give the speech. The other part **of preparation involves the content itself**. This is where those donuts come in.

Essentially, the donut represents what we are trying to achieve. If the donut is your field, your goal should be to fill the donut hole.

- It's the gap in the literature that your research fills
- It's the problem that your technique solves
- **It's what the audience doesn't know yet that you do**

First step should be to **identify the donut hole**.

Second step should be to think **about your audience**

- You should plan to adjust what you say depending on who you anticipate to be present

Third step is to **find your throughline**

- What is the common thread that ties everything together?

Fourth step is to **choose your language**.

- You can always explain in more complex terms later

Fifth step is to **wrap it up**. Listeners typically only remember the beg and end

**Oral presentations are just as much about preparing the content as it is delivering it!**

- If you KNOW you've prepared correctly, the delivery becomes easier.

Often times I think the hardest thing is trying to explain your complex ideas in simple terms.

- I break this down into 4 steps so we can try to put complex ideas into familiar language

**How would you explain this to a group of 2 to 4 year olds?**

Show them the Baby University books

**Content: Presenting as Performance [START AT 4:15]**

What specific strategies do the books take to explain their subject matter?

- There is a goal in mind.
- It relies on things the audience understands.

Just do the activity out loud with them as examples.

- Paint a picture of what the audience knows
- Connect the ideas

So when you put all these ideas together the right way, we get something that resembles an hourglass

- Listeners only have one chance to hear, so we have to be a bit repetitive to make sure they follow

Think broadly, specific, broad again

**And if all else fails, do these three things**

*Did you notice anything missing?* Said NOTHING about the lit review. The types of audiences you present research to typically aren't interested in the literature. **They want to hear what you're doing.** You can direct them to the literature later if they want it.

Knowing both of these areas – managing app and preparing your content – we can talk about delivery.

When you think of the way you present a speech, you should envision it as **a chance to perform an identity.** How do you want to be seen and heard?

Just like an actual performer has to practice and prepare, you realistically should do the same for your speech.

From what I could tell by your questionnaire, this is what a lot of you think an oral presentation really is.

*This might be the area where I have the most practical takeaways.*

When it comes to delivery, understand that energy does not mean effectiveness.

- It's more about **matching your delivery to the emotion.**
- So if you want to drive a point home, it's about a soft delivery and pauses.
- If you want to really get their attention, you should increase your volume.

Eye contact both sides of room and standing help increase nonverbal immediacy – or psychological closeness.

- When you connect with everyone in the audience, it makes them feel like you care
- Builds a personal connection

Some presenters sit, especially in our new virtual environment, but the most engaging presenters stand so they can work the room.

- I often tell my students to use the WOMP. Walk On Main Points.
- Notice how at every transition slide I moved to a different part of the space?

Graduate students often have a tendency to belittle their own achievements by self-handicapping at the start of their talks

- You are the expert!
- No need to hurt your credibility.
- Sets a negative tone that you don't want

Finally, I always encourage students to take a chance.

- Audiences do not want to be bored.
- When you try to speak from knowledge instead of reading a script to them, you become human, authentic, and genuine.
- An audience appreciates someone who acknowledges their presence and adapts to them vs someone who just reads
- Plus, if you're engaged with the audience, you typically have more leniency with mistakes (at least they're trying)

Something that was NOT mentioned in the questionnaire was how you approach visual aids. I wasn't sure if this meant you were experts in this area or didn't think of it as part of the presentation, but it's a typically expected.

Your visual aid should supplement your presentation

- It provides context, but the audience focus should remain on YOU as the speaker

This means that we should construct it in a way that doesn't draw attention to it.

- The visual should be added context in the background but not something the audience remembers afterwards
- To achieve this, we keep things simple, stay consistent, keep things organized, visual ideas, and stay in line with cultural expectations.

Then, if there is ever a time when you really want to drive a point home, have the audience focus on you and your words by including solely a picture.

I've learned that maybe the best way to understand this is through thinking about what NOT to do with your PPTs – what a colleague of mine calls the 7 deadly sins of PPT

1. Try not to use more than 7 lines – reduce the cognitive load
2. Make sure to have a prof font – it's not a high school dance so comic sans likely out
3. Use branding or logo colors – Uks are easily accessible
4. Animation should be at a minimum – between slides or reveal steps in a process
5. Biggest pet peeve – look at the audience
6. Imagine what it will look like on screen. Texts say at least size 18
7. If there are mistakes, just keep moving

What I tell my students is that perhaps the easiest way to keep yourself from making mistakes and having the audience remember them is to follow a simple pattern

- Header:
- Content:
- Visual:

Or, if you really want to connect your planning to your delivery, think of your visual aid like a story.

- There is a throughline that connects all the different pieces.
- Your visual aid reflects the components in just a few slides

Then at the end of the day, if all goes well, you're going to have a lot of questions

- This is where you can **expand on some of the details you left out** during the presentation

**ALWAYS stick to your time limit.** If it means leaving information out, do it. It's disrespectful to other presenters. Let audience know that there's additional information that you're happy to share.

- It's like when class is supposed to end at 4:45. Do you pay attention to anything afterwards?

Many of you expressed concerns about fielding questions.

- I've learned over time that **you don't have to answer quickly.** It's okay to take your time or

scribble out what you want to say to make sure it's correct. It's also okay to say I'm not sure. Don't try to be something you're not

In that same regard, it might alleviate your fears to know that most academic questions aren't actually questions.

- It's just people giving their thoughts on your topic
- Take notes to confirm their ideas and make them feel important
- Plus it might help you one day?

If there was an idea that stuck out or someone you met as part of the presentation – always follow up shortly after the conference.

- You never know where that connection might lead

So, to recap from the content today, there were three areas of focus

- Managing apprehension
- Outlining and preparing content
- Performing the presentation

All of it takes practice, and that is because...

...speaking is hard.

- You aren't expected to be perfect.
- I encourage you to embrace making mistakes because that is the only way you're going to get better

It's only by recognizing and embracing our mistakes that we become aware of what needs to change.

Then, using the strategies that we discussed today, we can make conscious efforts to fix or improve our speaking behavior.

Eventually, when we do it long enough, that conscious effort becomes unconscious, and the cycle starts again somewhere else with you being a better presenter.

Q & A [START AT 4:30-4:35]

Thanks so much for the opportunity – what questions do you have?

**Evidence of Achievement:** The discussion at the end!