Title:
Tips On Crafting A Winning Presentation

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Summary:
The difference between a boring presentation and one that leaves an audience excited and wanting more information can often be found in the preparation and the details.

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Article Body:
The difference between a boring presentation and one that leaves an audience excited and wanting more information can often be found in the preparation and the details.

If you want to make sure your audience gets your message the next time you give a presentation, take a look at these simple tips and tools:

• Stop and consider your audience. Help them relax and focus on your presentation. For instance, refreshments can help keep your audience alert-and will definitely be appreciated. And if your presentation is longer than 30 minutes, think about including an intermission so that people can check in with their offices for any urgent messages.

• Turn into a storyteller. According to Cliff Atkinson, author of "Beyond Bullet Points," think of your presentation as a story you want to tell.

Start by writing a script outlining your story. This will help you focus your ideas and figure out what you want to say and how to say it. Use this script to sketch out your slides, then add words and visuals.

• Jazz up your PowerPoint presentation. You can easily turn flat, lifeless PowerPoint slides into a highly polished presentation using Ovation software, from a company called Serious Magic.

This software offers the same visual effects you see on television, such as subtle motion backgrounds, high-resolution text and dynamic transitions.

It's easy to use-simply drop your PowerPoint file into Ovation, select a theme and your plain slides are transformed into a visually exciting presentation designed to hold your audience's attention. The software also includes a teleprompter and timer so you won't have to worry about forgetting your words or running late. To learn more, visit their Web site at www.presentbetter.net.

• Rehearse, rehearse-and rehearse again. Make sure to leave plenty of time to rehearse. Do several practice sessions by yourself to get comfortable with the material and work on your pace and timing.

Ask you colleagues and friends to sit in on a session and give you feedback. After making final changes, do a dry run-through to make sure you have everything you need, including equipment and handouts, to make your presentation run smoothly.

• Last-minute tips to keep in mind. On the big day, when you're ready to present, be sure to make eye contact with your audience, smile, relax-and enjoy yourself.

Experts suggest thinking of your presentation as a story you want to tell the audience.