



TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION (KAS – 301)



UNIT – 3

TOPIC : STAGE FRIGHT

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STAGE FRIGHT

- Stage fright or performance anxiety is the anxiety, fear, or persistent phobia which may be aroused in an individual by the requirement to perform in front of an audience.
- Performing in front of an unknown audience can cause significantly more anxiety than performing in front of familiar faces.
- In the context of public speaking, this may precede or accompany participation in any activity involving public self-presentation

- According to a Harvard Mental Health Letter, "Anxiety usually has physical symptoms that may include a racing heart, a dry mouth, a shaky voice, blushing, trembling, sweating, lightheadedness, and nausea".
- It triggers the body to activate its sympathetic nervous system. This process takes place when the body releases adrenaline into the blood stream causing a chain of reactions to occur. This bodily response is known as the "fight or flight" syndrome, a naturally occurring process in the body done to protect itself from harm.
- Pupils will dilate giving someone the inability to view any notes they have in close proximity; however, long range vision is improved making the speaker more aware of their audience's facial expressions and nonverbal cues in response to the speaker's performance.



STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING STAGE FRIGHT

- Strategies in advance of presentation
 - Strategies just before the presentation
 - Strategies when the presentation begins
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STRATEGIES IN ADVANCE OF PRESENTATION

- Develop an interest in the topic of your presentation.
- Reserve adequate time for preparation.
- Anticipate easy as well as hard questions and try to work out your answers.
- Practice your opening statement several times.
- Rehearse your entire presentation at least twice.

STRATEGIES JUST BEFORE THE PRESENTATION

- Arrive early; check the arrangements, equipment, and your PowerPoint slides.
- If you see some participants, look at them, greet them, and talk to them so as to ensure that you are not nervous while speaking and your voice is flowing freely.
- Take a few sips of tepid water.
- If you have time walk around or outside the venue.
- Concentrate on your ideas.
- Relax yourself by taking deep, even, and slow breaths.

STRATEGIES WHEN THE PRESENTATION BEGINS

- Feel good about your presentation and walk up to the dais taking a few deep breaths.
- Do not begin immediately or in a hurry. First look at the friendliest faces among your audience and smile.
- If your legs are shaky, lean on the lectern or table on the dais and hold it.
- Remember that the audience may not realize your nervousness as much as you feel it.
- Never comment on your nervousness during your presentation (some speakers say 'I feel nervous, let me have some water please').
- Do not show explicit signals, such as clearing throat, drinking full glass of water, wiping forehead, etc., which display your nervousness to the audience.

VISUALIZATION STRATEGIES





- Positive visualization is a proven technique to reduce nervousness or stage fright on any occasion such as a presentation, an interview, a group discussion, etc.
- Visualize (you need to imagine and see things or people in front of you; not just think) that you have prepared very well and you are now standing in front of your audience.
- All the eyes are on you. Here you can imagine your friends or other known people sitting in front of you.
- Visualize their smile, clapping, etc. See in your mental image that many among them are appreciating and shaking hands with you after the presentation is over; you are very happy and enjoy that day with your friends in your favourite

- While practicing this technique, initially you may only think and not visualize. But after a few attempts, you will be able to visualize people and activities in front of you.
- The concept behind this technique is ‘positive thinking’. Rather than thinking ‘My presentation is going to be a failure as I do not have experience. All are going to mock at me ...’, you should visualize positive things such as success, commendations, happiness, etc.

ON-CAMERA TECHNIQUES

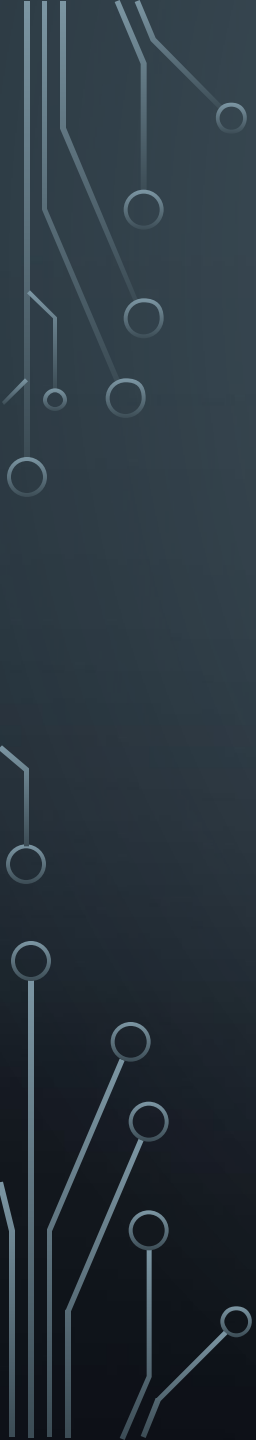
When your presentation is captured in a video format, you may have to follow certain guidelines:

- If it is a presentation in front of an audience that is being video recorded, forget that there is a camera in front of you.
- Do not be conscious of the camera and behave naturally as you would do in front of your audience with all the guidelines you have learnt.
- Do not look into the camera, but you may not be able to avoid it if some people in the audience are sitting in its vicinity.

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- If you know that your presentation is being video recorded, dress yourself in suitable colours.
 - If you are delivering an impromptu speech for a television coverage (you must have seen the reporters asking viewers to speak on certain occasions, such as cricket matches, elections, etc.), do not look to be surprised. Listen to the reporter carefully and present your views very briefly.
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VISUAL AIDS IN PRESENTATIONS

- Spoken words are temporary; as soon as they come out of our mouth they evaporate into the air. Because of this limitation, speeches often need strong visual support—handouts, chalk boards, flip chart, overheads, slides, computers, charts, tables, film, etc.
- If a picture is simple, clear, and appropriate to its purpose and audience, it will deliver its message more accurately and quickly than a verbal explanation.
- Ours is a visually-oriented society and an audience likes to hear as well as see information

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- The slide features a dark blue background with white circuit-like lines and circles along the left and right edges, resembling a stylized electronic board.
- We should choose only those visual aids that suit the style and content of our presentations.
 - We should use visual aids for any point that sounds vague and requires discussion in detail.
 - However, they must be well designed and professionally generated. We should not use visual aids as a verbal crutch for the speaker

TYPES OF VISUAL AIDS

Overhead transparencies

- Use larger fonts. Avoid decorative fonts.
- Separate the transparencies using sheets of paper.
- Keep transparencies uncluttered.
- Show only the required information.
- Do not add multiple colours or exciting backdrops to your slides.
- Use pointer on the screen, or your pencil or pen on the transparency to draw audience's attention to a specific item.
- Familiarize yourself with the operation of the overhead projector.
- Be ready with your notes in case of power failures.

PowerPoint presentations

- Check the computer system/equipment before loading.
- Familiarize yourself with the operation of the slides.
- Transfer your file to the hard disk.
- Be familiar with the operation of slide show.
- Rehearse your presentation.
- Keep a printed copy of the slides (6 slides on a sheet of paper) for use in case of computer malfunction.

Blackboard or whiteboard

- Clean the board well before starting and check the condition of markers.
- Write in large letters.
- Stand to the side as you write.
- Do not face the board while talking to the audience.
- Divide the board into columns and write legibly.
- Keep contents which you may want to refer to again.

Flip charts

- Use different coloured markers.
- Keep two pads of paper.
- Write in large letters.
- Use only one side of the chart.
- Wait for the audience to grasp the contents before turning pages.

APPLICATION OF MS POWERPOINT

- Microsoft PowerPoint (PP) slides have become the standard for visuals in almost all professional presentations.
- Although we can use note cards (15 cm × 8 cm) or (overhead projector) (OHP) transparencies for our presentations, MS PowerPoint is the most widely used presentation software across the globe, as the slides are easy to prepare, animate, and add effects to.
- The result is eye catching and impressive presentations fit for any occasion

SLIDE PREPARATION

Design, layout, and colour

The **design** and layout should be selected keeping in mind the occasion and purpose of the presentation.

While choosing the **colour** scheme in the design, we should keep in mind the lighting in the presentation venue. If we are going to keep the lights on (or a venue with plenty of light), then we should choose light background and dark fonts .On the contrary, if we are presenting in a dark setting, a dark background with light colour fonts should be used. The important point is to keep the font colour that contrasts the background colour.

For layout, When organizing the main content, the layout depends on the format of the content itself. If it has to be presented in columns If we have to show a diagram or chart, If the text is in the form of points, When we want to insert a picture or photograph We should always select a design template that is clear and that does not detract from our presentation.

FONT

- The same set of fonts should be used for all the slides of a presentation. For instance, if you use complementary fonts Arial Black (for headings) and Arial (for text), use them for your entire presentation.
- Although serif fonts (having small hooks at the edges), such as Times New Roman, Garamond, Cambria, New York, etc., are said to be easily readable even from a distance. Irrespective of the font we are using, the text must be readable even by the last row of our audience.
- A font size of 24 and above should be used. The size should be chosen keeping in mind the amount of text we have to accommodate on a slide. If the title of the presentation is in font size 32, then font size 30 or 28 should be used for the headings and main text in other slides.

NUMBER OF SLIDES

- Remember the rule ‘one minute one slide’, but do not be rigid. While this rule will help us in deciding the approximate number of slides we need to prepare, we may vary as per the expected interaction from our audience.
- We may also adjust our time by explaining one slide for 30 seconds while explaining another for 90 seconds. The only thing we need to ensure is that we will be able to explain all the slides clearly. There is no point in including a slide just to flip it without discussing the contents.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- If we use graphs, maps, drawings, diagrams, photographs, pictures, etc., their clarity should be ensured while using them in our slide show.
- Instead of using pictures only from the Clip Arts inbuilt with PowerPoint, we can use photographs taken by us so as to bring in some freshness.

VIDEO OR AUDIO CLIPS

- Many a time we may want to start our presentation with a video clipping.
- For instance, if you wish to present on 'Animations' you may like to begin with a short video clip from an animation film.
- We can do this without using a video or DVD player. However, it should be ensured that the computer or the laptop we use for our presentation contains the hardware such as the sound card, speakers, etc., so that the sound is audible.
- Likewise, we can use only an audio file as well.

SPACING IN THE SLIDES

- The slides should never look cluttered.
- Enough white/empty space should be left in the slides so as to enable easy reading and also to avoid straining the audience's eyes.
- Seven or eight lines of text containing six or seven words each in font size 28 should be readable. But at least 1 cm space should be left on all slides within the frame.

SLIDE SHOW ANIMATIONS

- Animation in PowerPoint is a set of effects applied to the text or objects to animate them during the 'slide show' of our presentation. These include making the text or objects fly in, fade out, bounce, zoom out, etc.
- The animation also includes slide transitions, which refers to the manner in which a slide gives way to the next. For example, the first slide fades or dissolved into the second.
- Most young presenters love to use animations and transitions in their slide show. But these should be kept to a minimum so that they are not the centre of attraction of the presentation, sidelining the speaker or the content. We can use various animation effects such as flip, fade, wipe, dissolve, fly, etc.
- We can make our text lines appear one by one, all at once, fading one line as soon as the other line appears, etc. Likewise, we can use transition to select the speed of our slide show—slow, medium, fast; sounds can also be used. However, the effects should be subtle and elegant, not irritating or distracting