**Walter**

Walter’s presentation was about acquiring sweeping magnets for the runway at Minden Airport.

Speech and Demeanor

Speaking-wise, Walter used filler words pretty often. Specifically, he was filling dead air with “Uh” pretty often and he would transition and begin sentences with “So.” I also noticed that his tone did not match what I would expect for a professional presentation such as this: as he talked he presented a very casual demeanor in his diction, inflection, and body language. I believe he should have tried to maintain a more formal prose.

Throughout the duration of the presentation, he was planted behind the podium upon which his slides rested. His gaze was locked to that paper for a good portion of the presentation. He would also rubberneck back to the projector screen and talk to it, too. I think he depended on these too much, and this dependence manifested itself at one point when his stack of slides got a bit mangled and he frantically tried to reorder them. This happened over a period of maybe four seconds, but it was during a transitional point and it was pretty much silent from him other than the crumpling of the paper he was messing with.

Content and Slides

I had some issues mainly with his PowerPoint graphics. At some point he did a compare and contrast on how much debris is avoided with and without the sweeping magnet. To visualize this, he used two pie charts. I feel like he could have used something better than pie charts because all he really did was essentially compare two percentages. What graphic would have worked better I am not certain. He also included a table of costs somewhere in the presentation, but he did not cut back the information at all. It is not realistic to expect anybody to be able to parse all of that small text.

As he approached the end of his speech, I felt like he had covered everything. So, when he said the line “I think this purchase would be really good for our company,” I thought the presentation was over at that moment. The fact that he took about a 5 second pause here did not help invalidate that thought either. Instead of sticking to this conclusion, which I think was effective enough, he closed with the typical point-by-point overview.

**Elizabeth A.**

Elizabeth’s presentation was about something called a Soxhlet.

Speech and Demeanor

Overall, I think she started with a good intro, but not for any specific reason. Unfortunately, her speech patterns reverted back to how I remembered them from her last presentations. Specifically, she tends to have short, gasp-like pauses between a lot of her words. To her credit, it is a lot more toned-down from last time. Her volume was also pretty low, and I found her hard to hear from the back. This was especially difficult at the times when she would turn around to dictate to the PowerPoint slides. I did notice she moved away from the podium a few times, but when she did this she usually just walked to the other side of the screen and talked facing the presentation. Whenever she went through a topic and realized she forgot to mention something, she would panic and very quickly try to roll back and bring the information up. She also had a problem with dead air between her slides.

Content and Slides

Overall, I would say that her presentation was pretty wordy. There was a lot of information trying to be delivered all at once, but the ultimate result was that I got none of it. I do not know what the Soxhlet is supposed to do, I do not know what a “thimble” is, and I do not know why this is relevant to the Kumba Iron company. Additionally, I did not understand at all what the bar graph was supposed to be showing. An odd quirk that manifested during this performance was that she would often pause and then give seemingly irrelevant side information about the images on her PowerPoint. From this I got the impression that she may have been trying to pass the time, but this is a suspicion rather than conviction.

There were some interesting critical points in her spoken content. At one point she said that the thimble is “not just kitchen glass” which I think was effective figurative speech. On the con-side, she said “Is anyone asking themselves that question or… asking me?” I believe the first part of that question would have been good enough: “Is anyone asking themselves that question?” Even rhetorically, it would have been a good line. Alas, she lost confidence in it and it ultimately took away from that part of the presentation in my opinion. Closer to the end, she attempted to end with an abrupt “Thank you very much” and ended the PowerPoint presentation to its signature ‘End of Slide-Show’ state. This should have been the end, but for some reason she backed up to justify buying the thimble while the presentation was still ‘off.’

**Juan**

Juan’s presentation was about Grammarly.

Speech and Demeanor

There is not a lot to say about Juan in these categories. He stumbled over words occasionally and used a couple of filler words, but I think he spoke with a generally high confidence. He continued this during the questions phase, where he displayed quick and tactile responses to all of the questions.

Content and Slides

I quite liked his title slide. I thought it was pretty eye-catching. Unfortunately, his choice of wording for the title in saying “Removing the Confusion Out of” bugged me. I would have been less bothered with “Taking the Confusion Out of” or “Removing the Confusion from” but he seemed to have absent-mindedly compromised between the two. Shortly after the title slide, Juan asked a question about experiences the audience had involving semantically ambiguous correspondence with a coworker. I think this was a good question, I wish though that he followed up on it to make it a little more personal to the people that raised a hand. I liked the stats that showed how Grammarly has helped businesses. I also liked how the fact that Grammarly is free was emphasized, though I think it could have actually used more emphasis. I liked that Juan tied Grammarly to personal experience. I think this boosted credibility. Close to the end he defended Grammarly against its competitors. I was on the fence about whether this is a good or bad thing, but I think I am leaning more towards a perceived positive influence. He had a pretty nice outro, but he ended up falling back to the point-by-point overview. I do not think he needed to do that – the leadup to that conclusion would have made a good enough conclusion by itself. At this point I also felt like the presentation as a whole was on the short side, though I was not timing. Overall, I think this was a very strong presentation by Juan.

**Ryan**

Ryan’s presentation was also about Grammarly.

Speech and Demeanor

First thing Ryan said was “Hi I’m Ryan and today I’m going to…” which we are still trying to avoid, I believe. He was planted behind the podium for the majority of the presentation and talking to the screen while pointing at small details. I do not feel like the pointing was very effective for guiding attention, and ideally, we would be able to find the relevant material on the slide without assistance. At one point he said Grammarly would point out when your messages sound “more aggressive than you intended to” or something along that line. I think that was a very effective phrase because it highlights mistakes that we might not be aware that we are making. At some point he said “So… get on that,” which I do not believe reflects the language of a professional presentation. Most of his transitions from point to point were one of “Well…,” “Additionally…,” or “Next…”

Content and Slides

I do not think he had an overview. From what I remember, and according to my notes, Ryan went straight into the features of Grammarly after introducing himself. At least the features were presented well, in my opinion. I did not think that the history of Grammarly was necessary – what information does that carry to convince someone to use it? After the feature introduction, the whole presentation seemed to decay into slides of bullet points. I would give an exception to the slide that presents the charts: I think it was very clean, parseable, and well-formatted. He also included a personal experience like Juan, but for Ryan it was worked into the conclusion. Though he had this for his outro, the actual ending was unexpectedly abrupt. He had a good defense of Grammarly over Microsoft Word as a response to that question, though.

**Emily**

Emily’s presentation was about the inclusion of a corporate wellness program.

Speech and Demeanor

When Emily began, the first thing she said was “So…” She ended up filling with so and other filler words very often throughout the presentation. In fact, she would often lose her train of thought and hold really long “Uhhh” moments until she remembered what to say next. She would talk in long sprints without breaking up her speech, making it really easy to get lost. Compounding on this, she talked comparatively fast. During the portion of the presentation when she was reading from the final slide, she was actually talking in this manner to read the details from the PowerPoint all with her back turned to the audience. I really appreciated how she recovered from the ringing phone by apologizing and simply moving on. Sadly, her ending completely caught me by surprise. I did not see it coming.

Content and Slides

I felt like the theme was trying to do too much in terms of how its organized text and images on the screen. In particular, the first and last slides were major offenders in this regard. In my notes, I even have “Slideument!” written about the final slide because she tried to read through every detail put on it. There are a lot of issues with some of the content styling as well. For example, there is a lot of thin medium-orange text on a blue background. This is very low contrast and thus very hard to read. This issue came u against with the bar graph, where the text was a light blue on an orange background. This one was even harder to read, though I think the message of the graph was good. I liked the statistics presented about increases in customer satisfaction. There was another statistic in the presentation – the nature of the statistic I do not recall – that was mentioned to be “66%.” I think if this had been on the visual aid instead of just mentioned in passing, I would have had an easier time remembering what the statistic actually was.

**Edward (myself)**

I am not sure how much I should say about myself. I was not taking notes on what I was doing during this time for obvious reasons. I do have some criticisms:

* I wish I had set up earlier, though my procrastination didn’t seem to have any negative impact on my presentation
* I started sentences with a very heavy “So…” at least twice.
* My transitions were kind of rough.
* I was planted most of the time. I would forget to move around then realize I am standing still and start walking, but I was only able to maintain this awareness for small periods.