Seminar presentations

Seminar presentations – how to be successful

PREPARATION, PLANNING AND PRACTICE

1. Preparation of content

- Objectives — consider the reason(s) for your talk (e.g. to inform/instruct/convince etc.)

   — what are the key things you want your audience to know?

- Subject — not too complex

   — of real interest to you

- Set boundaries - if working in a group, decide who does what.
- Research fully (e.g. use interviews, reports, newspapers, magazines, journals, books, Internet)
- Decide main points/themes
- Plan the format

2. Planning the format

Start well - use:

- ✓ humour   ✓ audience involvement
- ✓ realism   ✓ a role play/story/anecdote/personal experience maybe?

Consider questions? discussion? when? how?

Know your audience (e.g. prior knowledge, age, educational background, interests etc)

Finish well with:

✓ brief summary   ✓ reminder of a successful part/key point   ✓ an intriguing question

3. Preparation of tools

- *Lectern or table*
- *Paper / writing tools*
- *Posters/ flip charts*
- *White board and pens*
- *Video? CDs PowerPoint slides?*
- *Handouts: copies of PowerPoint slides*
- *Summary notes (Pamphlets//posters? Given out how/when?)*
- ***Note -*** *If you distribute handouts while you are talking, be prepared to lose your audience's attention briefly.)*

> **Important -** If you are using any technology for your presentation, test it well before the presentation, on the actual equipment you will be using.

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4. Practise and rehearse your presentation

✓ Rehearse two or three times - at least once with full equipment. Become so familiar with the material that key words on a page or cue cards will trigger a key point for you, and you can talk while maintaining eye contact.

✓ Rehearse in front of a practice audience and get them to critique it for you.

Check:

- Content.
- Timing.
- Whether you can be heard and understood.
- Non-verbal communication.
- How well you use the tools.

5. The presentation - on the day

- Dress appropriately and comfortably for the temperature in the room.
- Be early - check everything is ready.
- If nervous, try to relax - use deep breathing.
- Adopt a comfortable stance.
- Remember to move a little - hand gestures, facial expressions.
- Don't block audience's view of whiteboard or screen.
- Don't turn away from audience when speaking.
- Maintain eye contact - move your gaze around the audience, a section at a time.
- Project your voice - speak clearly and not too fast. Vary your tone.
- Try to relax, smile, and respond to any humour from audience.
- Repeat important points for reinforcement.
- Use humour and stories to make your presentation "real".
- Don't over-run your allocated time.
- Don't let interruptions distract you - listen politely (briefly) and then take control again.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say "I'm not sure about that but I could find out for you."
- Finish well with a strong statement, a joke or an interesting question.

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Presentation checklist

Topic: _____

Objectives: _____

Research Checklist

- ☐ Textbooks
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Friends and Family
- ☐ Professional Bodies

Audio-visual aids

- ☐ PowerPoint
- ☐ Handouts
- ☐ Whiteboard and markers
- ☐ Posters / Flipboard
- ☐ Video / DVD / CD
- ☐ Realia (real life objects)

Planning checklist

- Introduction

_____
_____

- Middle (Key) Points

_____
_____
_____
_____

- End – summary of key points

_____
_____

- Anticipated Questions

_____
_____
_____

Design tips for effective PowerPoint presentations

Text
- Maximum five lines of text per slide.
- No more than 20-25 words per slide.
- Mix upper and lower case letters.
- Slides should not contain complete sentences.
- Use short bullet points that emphasize or reinforce what you are discussing.
- 10 Second Rule – If it takes longer than 10 seconds to read the slide there is too much content.

Font
- Use easier to read sans serif fonts such as: Tahoma, Arial, and Verdana.
- Avoid serif fonts such as: Times New Roman, Courier, and Garamond.
- Use 44 font size for headings.
- Use 38 font size for bulleted points.
- Minimum of at least 28 size font.
- Remember person in back of audience must be able to read text.

Colour
- Avoid using black and white for the colour of all slides.
- Avoid background colours like red, yellow, and white.
- Use dark background colours like blues and greens.
- Always use bright colours for lettering such as white, yellow, and bright orange.
- When designing charts make sure to use a contrast of colours.
- Recommended that you only use between 3 - 6 colours per slide.
- Use colour to help separate concepts.
- Highlight important information.
- Presentations may look different when using an LCD projector. You may want to test slides ahead of time.

Content
- Picture should match what you are discussing.
- Use clip arts for appropriate age level participants.
- Try and keep charts free from clutter and make it simple.
- Avoid using too much audio, can be distracting.
- Remember the presentation is about the content, not about pictures, movies, and audio files.

Design tips adapted from http://sites.csn.edu/cape/documents/Tips%20for%20Effective%20PowerPoint%20Presentations.pdf

To download a presentation on how to create good PowerPoint slides go HERE

For information about giving a presentation in class go HERE

To watch a video on how to give a good presentation go HERE

To watch a video on overcoming nerves when giving a presentation go HERE

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TANZeCampus.com to see the services available, including how to contact your personal advisor.