How to make an oral presentation

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The info is downloaded from
http://web.cba.neu.edu/~ewertheim/skills/oral.htm

Are you panic?

1. your audience understands your nervousness; they know what you are feeling and will forgive it; similarly they will forgive honest mistakes
2. nervousness is usually invisible; most will not notice the small changes in your voice or occasional mistakes; most speakers who describe themselves as nervous appear confident and calm to the audience
3. be yourself; let the real you come through; relax, practice some deep breathing techniques;
4. begin in your comfort zone; practice with friends; share your fears with friends
5. check out the room first; check out the space, the equipment, the lights
6. concentrate on the message
7. begin with a slow, well-prepared introduction; have a confident and clear conclusion
8. most important: be prepared and practice
Four basic steps

1. formulate a **strategy** for the specific audience
2. develop a flexible, flowing **structure**
3. combined prepared material with an enhancing, not distracting, **presentation style**; it is important to remember that **how you present** is as important as what you present
4. supplement the presentation with confident, informed responses to **questions** and challenges

Strategies

1. **understand your purpose and role**: It is critical to be clear about your **purpose in the communication**. This involves knowing your audience, the occasion, and the **expectations of your audience**. Knowing the audience will be a critical determinant in what information is presented and how it is presented.
2. **tailor** your message to the audience—understand their needs, desires, knowledge level, attitude toward your topic
3. be concrete, **specific, practical**, and **relevant**
4. **clarify your objectives**—is it to motivate? ... inform? ... persuade? ... teach?—each calls for a different approach
5. clarify what **role** you will be performing—coach? advocate? teach? be devil’s advocate, watch dog, or messenger?
6. develop a logically compelling case for your plan—how will it help **resolve a pressing problem**, advance a salient value, or help
7. **reach a common goal**
8. **research** your topic
What does the audience think?

1. Why should I pay attention to you when I can think about more interesting things?
2. Now that I am listening, why should I care about this issue?
3. I agree with the significance of the topic, but how are you justifying your ideas?
4. So, now that I am convinced, what do you want from me?

Structure

1. begin by placing your topic in context; provide an outline
2. provide the intended, expected benefits, organization of the presentation, and ground rules
3. organize the body of the presentation and make it easy to follow—go from the simple to the complex
4. when appropriate, plan ways to encourage audience participation
5. maintain credibility: discuss the pros and cons
6. conclude on a “high note”—including an overall summary and proposed actions or options
7. incorporate visual aids effectively—don’t let mechanics of presentation interfere with your message
8. prepare for contingencies—practice/rehearse your presentation; think about what might happen and prepare—what if the overhead bulb blows out;... what if the audience is more prepared than you expected ... what if there is an unexpected question—if a disruption is particularly obtrusive, you might relieve the tension with a joke or humorous comment
Style: both intellectual and emotional

1. convey "controlled enthusiasm" for your subject—the audience will forgive a lot if the speaker is enthusiastic
2. posture, tone; don't lean
3. your audience will mirror your attitude—radiate confidence without preaching
4. don't confuse enthusiasm with loudness; try to convey a range of emotions from concern, anticipation, excitement, dismay
5. where appropriate, candidly discuss pros and cons; explain advantages first; present risks or challenges

Style: how to keep the audience’s interest

1. provide variety and relief if possible; novelty and uniqueness will increase the impact
2. alternative moving and standing still, speaking and listening, doing and thinking; use physical space and body movement to enhance your message
3. try to add stories, anecdotes, testimonials, analogies, demonstrations
4. use humor appropriately—make it in good taste
5. presentations are movies not snapshots; prepare the space for movement
6. try to position yourself to enhance rapport with the audience
7. eye contact is your primary tool for establishing audience involvement; look at your audience in random rotating order
8. use gestures naturally; do what is natural to you: some gestures are wrong—jingling change in a pocket, toying with notes, shifting from one foot to the other; any repeated gesture
Style: how to help the audience refocus

1. I will give the three basic reasons why change is needed

2. Transitions such as now that we have analyzed the problem, we need to look at the possible solutions.

3. Conclusions: the discussion so far leads to this final thought...

4. Straightforward Conclusion: ...if you enact this program, three basic consequences will result from...

SUPPLEMENT: Questions and challenges

1. ask interesting questions that are thought provoking but not too difficult to answer

2. use questions to strengthen your main arguments-answer questions candidly but positively link objections to attractive features

3. ask some open ended question with no right or wrong answers—encourage sharing experiences, feelings, opinions

4. put "you" elements into questions - make them relevant to the audience's personal experience

5. prepare key questions prior to the presentation; it is difficult to think of good questions on your feet
Avoid the following questions

1. avoid asking risky questions - that is, questions that may imply lack of knowledge or intelligence
2. don't let respondent wander or attempt to take control of the presentation; a polite "thank you, that's what I was looking for" can get you back on track
3. if extensive audience discussion is desired, avoid isolated one-on-one dialogues with specific individuals
4. when challenged, be candid and firm but avoid over responding
5. be firm and assertive without being aggressive or defensive
6. don't let interruptions disrupt your composure
7. avoid circumstances that require an apology

How to answer questions

1. Anticipate Questions: think of the ten most likely questions and plan out your answers
2. Understand the Question: paraphrase it if necessary; repeat it if needed
3. Do Not Digress
4. Be Honest: if you can't answer the question, say so
5. Reinterpret Loaded Questions: if attacked, try to show the similarity to other situations
6. Control Interchanges: if a questioner becomes a heckler, try to enlist the audience; if a questioner digresses, try to remind the audience of the goal of the presentation
7. Use the Last Question to Summarize
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Engleberg’s principles of public speech

**Purpose:** Why are you speaking? What do you want audience members to know, think, believe, or do as a result of your presentation?

**People:** Who is your audience? How do the characteristics, skills, opinions, and behaviors of your audience affect your purpose?

**Place:** Why are you speaking to this group now and in this place? How can you plan and adapt to the logistics of this place? How can you use visual aids to help you achieve your purpose?

**Preparation** Where and how can you find good ideas and information for your speech? How much and what kind of supporting materials do you need?

**Planning:** Is there a natural order to the ideas and information you will use? What are the most effective ways to organize your speech in order to adapt it to the purpose, people, place, etc.?

**Personality:** How do you become associated with your message in a positive way? What can you do to demonstrate your competence, charisma, and character to the audience?

**Performance:** What form of delivery is best suited to the purpose of your speech? What delivery techniques will make your presentation more effective? How should you practice?