

EFFECTIVE ORAL PRESENTATIONS

A presentation is a contract to help the audience to obtain something specific. The audience attends with the expectation of receiving and gaining something, something that will be of use to them. The presenter also needs something from the audience, he/she needs the audience's receptivity and approval. Fortunately the presenter can satisfy both of these needs.

All of us have to make oral presentations at least once and frequently we are obliged to do them often. Nevertheless, few do them well. Furthermore, the majority of us have an exaggerated fear of the possibility of finding ourselves unprepared in the rush of doing an oral presentation.

Happily, this matter has a remedy: all of us can learn how to pull off fabulous oral presentations. Using a few easy techniques we can change into confident and successful presenters. Above all, it depends on the preparation and practice: the more it is done, the better it'll be.

Actually, it is a great opportunity to be able to do an oral presentation. One has the opportunity to gain support in the workplace, to impress others and to do something special.

6 KEY STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ORAL PRESENTATIONS

- 1. PREPARATION*
- 2. PRACTICE*
- 3. CONFIDENCE*
- 4. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANXIETY*
- 5. IMPACTING VISUAL AIDS*
- 6. FEEDBACK*





BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE 6 KEY STEPS

1. PREPARATION

Even though it may seem like a punishment or a nightmare, all presentations are an opportunity to shine in front of others. For this reason, one should never give a presentation without preparation and practice - no matter how insignificant or brief the presentation might be.

The preparation and practice should be carried out in a proportion of 10:1. That's to say, for every minute of presentation there should be 10 minutes of preparation and practice. So, if you were giving an oral presentation of 30 minutes, the preparation and practice should take 5 hours.

A. Analyze the audience.

- Imagine yourself as part of the audience, listening to the presentation.
- Discover what the audience wants, what would interest them.
 - * The audience wants HELP from you.
 - * You need the audience's approval.

B. Establish the objective.

- Decide what needs to be achieved.
- Decide the desired result:
 - Do you want that the audience does something?
 - Do you want that the audience knows something?
 - Do you want that the audience decides something?
- Tell the audience what you want to achieve with them at the beginning and at the end.



C. Investigate the theme.

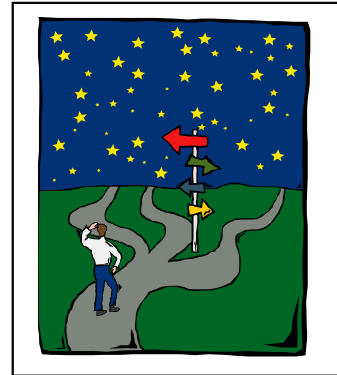
- Learn all that you can.
- Know enough to be able to explain the points of the presentation in a clear and credible way.
- Anticipate questions and prepare responses.



D. Plan the format.

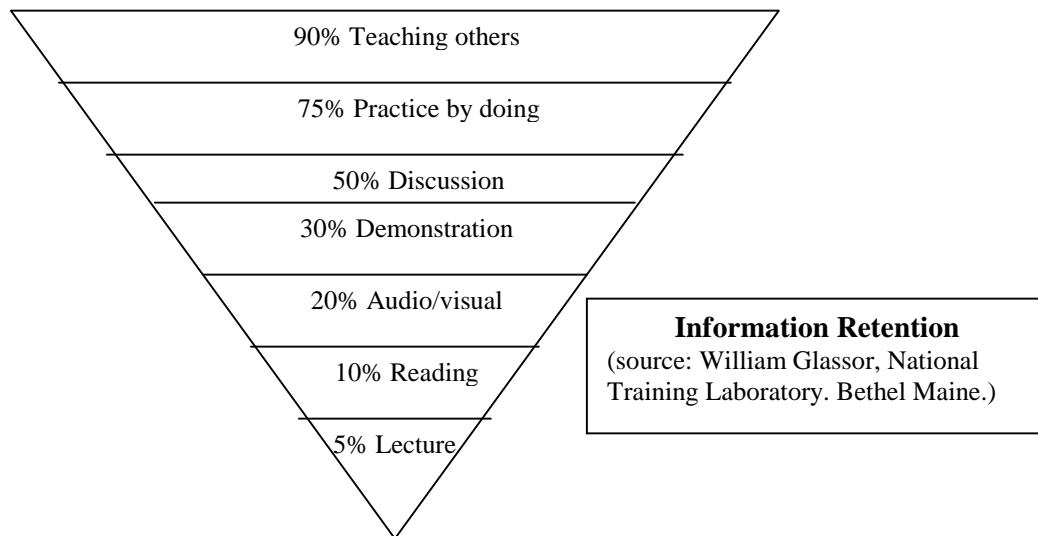
- Decide how to carry out the presentation.
- The way in which you present the facts at times is more important than the facts themselves.
- It isn't just talking: use visual aids, handout papers, ask the audience questions, do demonstrations, make practice guides, etc.

- E. Plan the presentation
- Make a script
 - Use a "mental map"
 - Use an outline/notes
 - Use key words



- F. Retainer the audience's attention
- Don't read
 - Don't use a podium
 - Move around (don't stand in just one place)
 - Use gestures y hand movement
 - Factor that reduce or lose the audience's attention - Lack of interest in the theme

- Not being clear why the theme is important
- High level of anxiety in respect to the topic being presented.
- One-way communication (without participation)
- Inappropriate time schedule
- Distractions: telephone, external interruptions, beepers....
- Lack of preparation or presenting skills



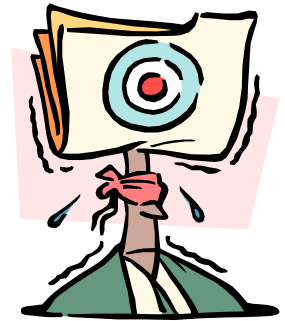
- G. Plan the parts of the presentation for a good flow.
- Opening - grab their attention.
 - Objective - what will be dealt with.
 - Content - details (simple).
 - Closure- summary, benefits.

- H. Plan the material and required equipment for the presentation.



2. PRACTICE

- A. The more you practice, the better it will be.
- B. Read the script out loud to yourself; listen how it sounds to you.
- C. Revise while you read; change words and phrases.
- D. Indicate in the script how it should be presented.
- E. Practice in front of a mirror; use a taperecorder.
- F. Practice with all the visual aids, materials and equipment.
- G. Practice in front of other people like colleagues, or friends.
- H. Imagine how the presentation will be to give the a successful presentation, and how it will be to be part of the audience listening to your fabulous presentation.
- I. Make sure you have everything ready for the presentation.



3. CONFIDENCE

- A. Practice creates familiarity.
- B. Look at the audience and smile - greet them.
- C. Don't worry about facial expressions - look for a friendly person.
- D. Look at the eyes of the members of the audience.
- E. Don't look at the script a lot - when it's necessary to look at the script, only move your eyes and not your whole head.
- F. Use loose sheets, unstapled, to be able to put finished sheets behind the others without making a lot of noise.
- G. Don't look at the visual aids when you show them.
- H. Present what you practiced - don't make last minute changes.



I. Pay attention to the audience's reaction.

4. J. Use a normal voice, conversational.
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ANXIETY

- A. Anxiety is normal: we all feel it.
- B. With preparation and practice, anxiety is reduced.
- C. Tips for reducing anxiety:
- Don't arrive extremely early to the presentation location.
 - Present first if possible.
 - Move your hands and don't remain in one spot.



5. IMPACTING VISUAL AIDS

- A. Using visual aids increases interest and the attention span is up to 6 times greater.
- B. Examples of some types of visual aids:
Slides, transparencies, flipcharts, chalkboards, videos, posters, etc.
- C. Tips for making a visual aid:
- One idea per visual aid.
 - Use key words and symbols.
 - 5-6 lines maximum.
 - Use the same terminology used in the presentation.
 - It's better to use 2 simple visual aids rather than 1 complicated one.
 - Don't read the aid--let the audience read it.

6. FEEDBACK/EVALUATION

- A. Evaluate yourself.
- B. Ask others to evaluate you.
- C. Evaluate others and compare them with yourself.



This handout was prepared by Peter Brody & Reta Chaffee for Universidad Nur. Much of the content was adapted from: I Can See You Naked by Ron Hoff . Kansas City: Andrews & McMeel, 1992. ISBN-0-8362-8000-8.