

Presentation Techniques

PURPOSE AND CONTENT

A well documented, well planned, and well-structured presentation requires an effective, engaging delivery. The delivery phase can make or ruin a presentation. The purpose of this lesson is to provide key points on which to focus on the delivery of the presentation, and to maximize its effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES

Develop your ability to:

1. Introduce the key factors for successful presentation delivery
2. Prepare effective visual aids
3. Deliver successful presentations
4. Evaluate presentation delivery

Oral Presentation Techniques

DELIVERING A PRESENTATION

There are four key factors in the successful delivery of a presentation.



Timing - Timing is crucial. The amount of time required for a given presentation should be determined in advance. As a general guide, one slide needs 1 - 1.5 minutes. Try to stick to prepared outline. If you are asked questions, answer them briefly and try not to get off track. Judge your timing by practice.



Personal Approach - Personal features of the speaker have a major impact on how the presentation is received. There are four aspects, i.e. gesture, voice, eye contact, and breathing.

Gesture can be used to highlight points or to make additional emphasis when needed.

Voice is critical. Use sufficient volume to be heard. A relaxed, natural voice will keep the audience engaged.

Eye contact will help you gain trust, involvement and interest. It is also important to face the audience, and not look too frequently at the screen.

Breathing is important to continue to talk in a loud voice. Breathing can also be used to generate a pause, and to emphasize an earlier discussed point.

Concluding your presentation - Never leave the audience at a low level of attention. Use some clue to alert the audience to the fact that the end is coming, and that there is some summary or highlight to be expected. Try various ways to end the talk, instead of simply saying, "This is the end of my presentation, thank you".



PREPARATION

The preparation of a presentation may require considerable time, e.g. 1-2 periods for your 5 minute presentation. This is because the effectiveness of the presentation has to be *maximized*. A verbal presentation should aim at conveying a message to an audience, but at the same time it must emphasize only the major points. Effective presentations need good visual aids and a logical sequence.

Use of Visual Aids

Visual aids help to make a presentation more effective, mainly because they crystallize ideas, and they assist in the retention of information. Visual aids also keep the speaker on track and generate interest.

Rules to observe when preparing visual aids

- *Keep slide layout simple*
- *Minimize words: max 6 words per line, 6 lines per slide*
- *Use large fonts: 28 point font*
- *Use a heading and list key points*
- *Use exact phrasing*
- *Use consistent, effective colour scheme*
- *Avoid overuse of special effects*
- *Be appropriate and professional*

Practice your Presentation

The final step in preparation is practice. This is essential for a good presentation. It will help you with your self-confidence, and timing. The transition from slide to slide and from section to section is important. It needs to be practiced so that there is a *comfortable flow* in the presentation as a whole. Otherwise, there can be awkward gaps in the presentation delivery.

Practicing the presentation and using the actual slides will help consolidate the speaker's confidence in the presentation materials, and in the overall ideas that are being presented. Rehearse to ensure that timing is reasonable.

Be careful where you stand and how you move around. If you stand in a fixed position, you may block the view of the screen. If you move around too much, you may distract from the visual aid.



REFERENCES

Anonymous - 1987 "*How to do it?*" (Articles from British Medical Journal), British Medical Association, London.

Price Waterhouse Siddik, 1987, "*Effective Business Communications*," Course Material, Price Waterhouse Siddik, Jakarta.

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