Giving Effective Presentations

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Variety is the Spice of Life!

Different Schools... ....Different Rules

– Can you use ‘I’ in an academic text?
– Should an essay have section headings?
– How long is a report?
– Do you use primary or secondary research?
– Footnotes, endnotes or no notes?
– Harvard style referencing or MLA? What about APA?

Which school are you in? What is acceptable and what is unacceptable in your field?

Always check in your module handbooks or with your tutor if you are concerned about appropriacy
Giving Effective Presentations Aims

— Raise awareness of what constitutes an effective presentation
— Discuss how to prepare good visual aids
— Discuss how to deal with questions
— Discuss using your voice effectively
— Give opportunity to practise presenting
Presentations

With a partner, discuss the following:

— What do you think makes a good presentation?

— What is the difference between reading and listening?

— What happens when everything goes wrong?
Presentation Stations

There are three important aspects to consider when planning an effective presentation:

— Clear speaker ↔ audience roles
  • Audience can’t clarify meanings

— Pre-planned speaking [cf. ‘usual’ speaking]
  • Needs structure; aims; engagement

— Extended length of speaking turn
  • Needs language to help audience follow
  • Requires careful planning
  • Demands skilful delivery
Task

What’s the difference?
Typical Speaking

‘Typical’ Speaking

— *Listener is actively involved* – s/he can easily clarify speaker’s meanings, ideas, links between ideas

— *Listener is actively involved* – speaker can constantly notice / monitor their comprehension / understanding

— *Context is explicitly shared* – links between points, ideas etc are obvious & apparent [if not, see above!]

Speaking in a Presentation

— *Listener is less directly involved* – s/he cannot interrupt to clarify presenter’s meanings, ideas etc ...

— *Listener is ‘distant’* – presenter has less ways of monitoring listeners’ interpretation of text

— *Context is not shared* – links between speaker’s points, ideas etc may not be as obvious & apparent as the presenter thinks [and if not, see above!]
Confusion Abounds

You need to be *very* direct & explicit about your meaning, directions, and links:

— Powerful & decisive introductions
— Clear transitions [pauses + explicit language]
— Clear signalling [at the ends & beginnings of different sections]

Always be wise to how people *might* be able to interpret your points ... some potential interpretations may not match your intended interpretations
What NOT To Do

We are going to look at some of the most common mistake students make when giving presentations, and discuss ways to avoid to them. These are the areas we will be looking at:

— *Helping the audience*
— *Delivery*
— *Manners*

What do you think they mean? What mistakes could be made?
Helping The Audience

Look at this list of mistakes. All these errors result in your audience loosing interest in your presentation:

- No explicitly stated **AIMS**
- No introduction of content
- No introduction of structure
- No outlining of scope [areas to be covered]
- Disorganised content
- No clear signalling of topic changes
- Abrupt finish & no offers to take questions
Delivery

Ask any comedian, and they will tell you that success or failure lies in the delivery of a punchline. Delivery is a crucial element of public speaking. Some common mistakes are:

- Reading aloud
- Mumbling
- Monotonous delivery
- Speaking very quickly
- No eye contact with audience
- No gestures
- Giving dense / difficult information without any explanation
- Hands in pocket

The AWL Open Workshop Using Your Voice Effectively can give you more detail on improving your delivery.
Manners

“Manners make the man”, as they say. Giving a presentation is an interpersonal task – manners count! What do you think constitutes bad manners?

Here are some common mistakes:

- no greetings
- no visual aids / unclear visual aids
- use of language which audience will not understand
- inadequate preparation
- very dense information
- turning your back to the audience
- not talking about the topic
- not sticking to time
- abrupt finish
- no offers to take questions
What TO Do

We’ve spent some time looking at what you shouldn’t do; now let’s look at what you should do:

— Outline **AIMS** in intro (i.e. your thesis)
— Outline main points / topical areas in intro
— Highlight scope & perspective & focus in intro
— Remember the limitations of the human brain
— Outline sections before + after saying them
— Summarise frequently to help audience see your argument & how it fits together
— Make sure to return to your main thesis at the end & finish conclusively
What TO Do

We’ve spent some time looking at what you shouldn’t do; now let’s look at what you should do:

— Plan carefully but don’t read aloud
— Speak clearly & articulately & with verve
— Remember your audience are there – look at them!
— Use your hands / arms to help get your ideas across [and of course your voice!]
— Explain things which need explaining
— Keep hands out of pockets?
Task

What phrases can you think of to:

- Greet audience & introduce presenter(s)
- Give initial introduction of topic / content / structure / aims of presentation
- Deal with questions
- Finish a point / area during your presentation [before you move on to the next point / area]
- Move on to a new point / area during your presentation
- Refer to a visual aid
- Give overall summary of / ending to presentation
Persuade

The main goal of a presentation is to persuade your audience (and your marker) that your argument is valid. Bear these points in mind:

**Preparation**
- Identify your purpose
- Be clear what your talk is / not about
- Analyse audience expectations etc
- Gather information
- Devise structure & logical steps / premises
- Prepare visual aids

**Organisation**
- ? Catchy opening?
- Clear statement of aims
- Overview of whole talk [The talk itself]
- Summary of main points
- Memorable conclusion
Bigger Picture

It’s not just what you say that affects your presentation, it’s also how you say it.

— Active listening in communication
— Body language in communication
— Spoken discourse markers (well; so; now; okay) [managing message / audience]
— The concept of “face” in communication
— Face-threatening Acts
  • soften the message by using minimisers (e.g. just; quite; slightly; apologies)
— Use of the voice for meaning [stress]
Body Language

In oral communication, Mehrabian & Wiener (1967) suggest we convey our message as follows:

- What we say: 7%
- How we say it: 38%
- Our body language: 55%
Body Language

Discuss with your partner what you think you should / should not do?

- Facial expression
- Gaze
  - not maintaining eye contact is a sign of dishonesty or of politeness?
- Posture – this can speak volumes
- Gesture
- Proximity
- Touch
  - can be formal (a handshake on first meeting), or informal (hugging a friend)
- Personal appearance – style of dress, cleanliness, grooming – important?
Body Language

What message is being conveyed?
Body Language

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Body Language

What message is being conveyed?
Questions

The Q&A section of your presentation is your opportunity to show what you know about your subject. However, it can be quite nerve-wracking. Check you (or the audience!) have understood the question:

— “Sorry but I didn’t quite get what you said”
— “Could you just repeat that”
— “Sorry. But I don’t quite get what you mean. Are you saying...?”

What do you think the benefit of using ‘just’ and ‘quite’ is?
Just and Quite

‘Just’ and ‘Quite’ reduce any potential Face Threatening Act(s) and therefore help create a relaxed and professional atmosphere.

- “Sorry but I didn’t quite get what you said”
- “Sorry. But I don’t quite get what you mean. Are you saying ...?”
- “That’s not quite what I mean. What I mean ..”
- “That’s not my point. I’m just saying that ...”
- “I’m just going to pop out to get a coffee”
- (cf. I’m quite happy / it’s quite hot / that’s quite right / I’ve just arrived / that’s just my point / there are just seven of us)
Disagreeing

Disagree is a natural part of academic life – it is expected. However, you must make sure you frame your disagreement in an appropriate manner, so as not to threaten face.

What are the advantages of the following phrases?

— “I see what you’re saying but ...”
— “I get your point but ...”
— “I take your point but ...”

How do you evaluate this speech?

“Okay. I see what you’re saying. But looking at the bigger picture, what about the loss of jobs that would inevitably result? Is that really a price worth paying? Is it a price we can even afford to pay?”
References and Citation

In a presentation you are expected to support your claims with references and citations. Here are some suggestions:

— According to Smith (2009), …
— For Smith (2009), …
— According to the paper / research, …
— Smith (2009)
  • suggests that …
  • says that …
  • argues that …
  • claims that …
  • states that …
  • puts forward the idea that …
  • asks us to remember that …
  • defines X as …
Using The Work Of Others

You will also need to verbally refer to your research. Here are some useful phrases:

— [...] quote unquote
— [...] And I cite [...] 
— [...] and I’m quoting here ...
— [...] and these are not my words [...] 
— In Smith’s (2009) own words, [...] 
— [...] and these are the very words of Smith himself
— [...] indeed these are the very words of The Act itself [...] , words which I’m sure you will agree [...]
Some Examples

— **Bad presentations:**
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YivQYeI0vys&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YivQYeI0vys&feature=related)
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTKuyk5A7wQ&feature=fvw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTKuyk5A7wQ&feature=fvw)
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YivQYeI0vys&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YivQYeI0vys&feature=related)
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9XRrQtJ248&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9XRrQtJ248&feature=related)

— **Death by Powerpoint:**
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck&NR=1&feature=fvwp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck&NR=1&feature=fvwp)

— **Good presentations:**
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3QL2DpKKVI&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3QL2DpKKVI&feature=related)
  
  • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whTwjG4ZIJg&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whTwjG4ZIJg&feature=related)
Useful Language

Introductions:

– I’d like to talk about three things today
– Today I’m going to talk about three things
– I’m going to talk about X, Y and Z, while my colleague, [NAME], is going to talk about A, B and C
– Today I’m / we’re going to show you ...
– Good morning ladies and gentlemen
– I’ve divided my talk into three main points
– Let’s begin with a question ...
– Ok, so this is what I’m going to be talking about today
– So, the first point / to begin with, ...
– So, to start / begin with, let’s consider ...
Useful Language

Questions and Answers:

— Could you leave any questions / interruptions until the end please

— If you have any questions, please leave them until the end

— I’ve got a handout here for you which I’ll give you now / at the end

— Thank you very much for listening

— Ok, so that’s pretty much all I’ve got to say really, but I’d be delighted to (try to) answer any questions you may have

— Ok, so we’ve looked at X, Y and Z, and seen that ... now, has anyone got any questions?
Useful Language

Negotiating meaning and message:

— “Okay. So you mean ...?”
— “Okay. So you’re saying ...?”
— “But. What. You mean ...??”
— “But what exactly do you mean by “X”?”
— “But I understand it differently”
— “But my take’s slightly different / not really the same.”
— “Well. That’s not exactly my point. What I’m saying is ...”
Useful Language

Moving On:

— Ok, so that’s all I’ve got to say on the third point
— Now. This (of course) raises the question of .... So now I’ll move on and ...
— Ok, so we’ve looked at ... Now what about this fourth point? Ok, well ...
— Now, the third thing which I’d like to talk about today is ...
— Ok, so that’s the second point
— Now, what about this third point? Ok, well ...
— Now I’ve divided this third point into the following ideas
— Ok, so the third thing we’re going to look at is ...
— Ok, now I’d like to turn to the third point, which is ...
— Now let’s move on to have a look at ...
— Now I’m going to talk about the third point, which is ...
Useful Language

Stating an opinion:
- I believe / I think / In my opinion
- My take on this is that ...
- My opinion here is that ...
- I’d say that ...

Using Images:
- As you can see here / on this map / in this diagram / in this picture, ...
- Ok, this is a diagram / map / picture which shows ...

Defining
- Ok, so what do I / we mean by [WORD / CONCEPT / IDEA]? Well, ...
- Now what I mean by [WORD / CONCEPT / IDEA] is ...
Where now?

— Need more detailed assistance? **Book a tutorial!**

— Want feedback on a specific section? **Drop in to Getting Your Assignment Ready!**

— Want somewhere quiet to write, and get on the spot assistance? **Try The Writing Space!**

— Got a few quick questions? **AWL Office Hours** at [The Study Hub] are for you!

— **AWL Open Workshops** can be **booked here!**
  
  • **Suggestions:**
  
  – Using Your Voice Effectively
Giving Effective Presentations

It's QUESTION TIME!!
References