



Strategies for Developing Successful Presentation Skills

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Presentation skills are indispensable for success in life. Persistent effort is essential to master the art of effective presentation. Its magic formula comprises perceptive preparation and forceful delivery. Given below are effective strategies that will help you in acquiring very good presentation skills.

*Mend your speech a little
Lest it may mar your fortunes.*

— Shakespeare

Presentation skills are indispensable for success in life. Proficiency in communicative skills arguably furthers one's career. The more a person advances in his or her profession the more that person is

likely to be called upon to make presentations. That one should do it effectively is, therefore, a given. It goes without saying that "the only way to do a great work is to love what you do," as Steve Jobs rightly puts it.

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Love and Zero Scores in Tennis

Zero scores in tennis are called 'love', which means egg in French. Tennis was popular in France. The score zero when marked on the scoreboard looked like an egg. This zero was called 'l'oeuf', which is French for 'egg'. When tennis was introduced in the US, Americans began to pronounce it 'love'.

1. Preparation

Let your advance worrying become advance thinking and planning—Winston Churchill.

Thorough preparation is of utmost importance in the successful execution of a presentation. At the outset one should analyse one's objectives in all respects. A positive self-image is one of the ingredients of success. The deliverer should have a definite understanding of the expectations of the audience as well as the organizers and the time allowed to meet them. Your aim may be to inform, to inspire, to



persuade or to amuse them. Whatever be your goal, concentrate on it with all the oratorical skills at your command. Repeat positive thoughts to yourself. Visualize an enthusiastic audience and the questions they are likely to ask. If you succeed in kindling in them your own passion, your performance will be etched in their memory for long.

Preparation should commence at least a fortnight in advance. It ensures the formation of your theme and the collection of the necessary material. The script and the hand-outs are to be prepared with utmost care. Bear in mind that the depth and breadth of the information that your speech is suffused with will determine its quality and impressiveness. Emulating the manner and method of seasoned speakers on the television and the radio is advisable. Besides, rehearsing aloud before a

mirror or in the presence of a few friends is likely to help you a lot.

Arranging points in the order of their priority would help the audience to listen and respond properly. In order to avoid hassle and tension meticulous planning of practical details and logistics is necessary. A visit to the venue prior to the presentation would give you an idea about where to position the projector and how to ensure your visibility and audibility. Last but not least, the host is to be provided with the details about the presenter.

Audience Analysis

Before the commencement of the presentation the speaker should familiarize himself with the audience – their age, sex ratio, education and attitude. He should also mull over its intelligibility and benefits to the listeners and empathise with them. Try to involve the audience in your performance with questions and answers. Spicing the speech with anecdotes, quotes and jokes would narrow down the gap between the podium and the row. If the subject is dull try to enliven the audience with "people words". For example, "A growth rate of sales by 20%" could be rephrased "We/Our sales team have increased the sales by 20%". Off and on, scan their faces, assess their mood and attitude the presentation accordingly. A joke reduces tension and arouses the attention of the audience. Humour tinged with personal experience will arouse the listeners from lethargy. But never spoil a joke by announcing it in advance. Remember that if the listeners yawn or doze off, the speaker is a total disaster.

Content Creation

Collection and creation of an authentic and accurate content that meets the expectations of the audience forms the primary phase of preparation. Content can be collated from press cuttings and websites on the internet. Never bank on dusty old volumes that provide dated statistics.

Revival of Montessori Schools in the United States

In 1958, Nancy McCormick Rambusch led the revival of Montessori schools in the United States, founding Whitby School in Greenwich, Connecticut, and founding American Montessori Society (AMS) in 1960.

ation in pitch, fluency in delivery, rhythm and enunciation enhance the expressiveness of a performance. Your voice is a reflection of your confidence or the lack thereof. See that the tone of the presentation is in tune with your intent. Nasalisation and speech mannerisms like "basical-ly", "this thing", "I mean", "um" "er" etc should never mar your fortunes.

Online Presentations

Digital presentations are a key tool for communicating ideas and information to customers, stakeholders and a variety of target groups. For two decades, the oft quoted acronym ppt (for Microsoft



power point) has been the forerunner of presentation software. It is versatile, easy to use, compatible with Windows Word, Excel and others. Text, data and graphical representations merge seamlessly into the ppt. Professionals have now begun to look circumspectly at the static nature of the content in such presentations. The closest that a ppt can get to being online is by displaying appropriate web references and shuffling between hyper-links in the content.

Of late, several new applications have come up, notably Slide Rocket, Zoho Show, Google Docs, Prezi and SlideShare.

Offering full online options, they work equally well on Windows PCs, MAC laptops and on various platforms including Android, Mozilla Firefox and Chrome. Of course, an Internet connection and a browser are required. Their key feature is that presentations can be archived, tracked and shared on the web. For instance, in a presentation, stock quotes can be instantly drawn from the net or audience feedback be integrated.

Online presentations are here to stay, offering current information and content to discerning audiences. The coming digital age is likely to witness a boom in such presentations which draw more from web resources.

Taking Questions

If a presentation is effective one can expect inquisitive questions from the audience. You have to repeat the question for the entire audience to hear. While repeating, the presenter can think over the answer which should be put across to the whole gathering. "A good question!" is a supportive response. Regarding a difficult question, there is nothing shameful in confessing to your ignorance. You may assure that the answer will be found out shortly. In some questions may be ignored, turning to another part of the audience and inviting fresh questions. In case no question is forthcoming, jump-start them saying something like "I am often aske..." You may also seek their response as to something you have already commented upon.

Conclusion

Last impression, they say, is the lasting impression. To ensure this a classy conclusion is indispensable. Recaps, punchy quotes and dramatic anecdotes ensure a memorable conclusion. Preparation and delivery, the two vital components of an effective presentation, are to be fastidiously improved upon so that your next performance excels the previous ones. ●

Loose-leaf Notebook Paper

Richard Prentice Ettinger drilled holes in paper and put the pages in a ringed binder, using the concept of loose-leaf notebook paper for the first time in the U.S. in 1914. He later co-founded the educational publisher Prentice-Hall.