

The Inspiring Presenter



At a Glance

Maslow's Needs Pyramid

Slow Down – Nervous and inexperienced speakers tend to talk too quickly. Consciously slow your speech down and add pauses for emphasis.

Don't Read – If you can't remember your lines it shows you don't really understand your message, a huge blow to any confidence the audience has in you.

Project Your Voice – There's nothing more annoying than a speaker you can't hear. Even in the high-tech world of microphones and amplifiers, you need to be heard. Projecting your voice doesn't mean yelling, rather standing up straight and letting your voice resonate from your chest.

"That's a Good Question" – You can use statements like, "that's a really good question," or "I'm glad you asked me that," to buy yourself a few moments to organise your response.

Put Yourself in the Audience - When writing a speech, see it from the audience's perspective. What might they not understand? What might seem boring? Use WIIFM (What's In It For Me) to guide you.

Have Fun - Sounds impossible? With a little practice you can inject your passion for a subject into your presentations. Enthusiasm is contagious.

Profile Your Audience

- The mood
- Education
- Familiarity with Topic.
- Familiarity with Jargon.
- Interest in topic.
- Possible misconceptions.
- Attitude.

Q&A Sessions

Why are questions and your responses so important? Questions are the interactive element of your presentation. They give you a chance to respond to the concerns of your audience by adjusting your presentation on the fly.

What's the best way to prepare for questions? Prepare before hand and anticipate questions that may arise. If you've done your audience analysis, you should know what concerns your listeners might have, even those unrelated to your presentation that could lead to questions.

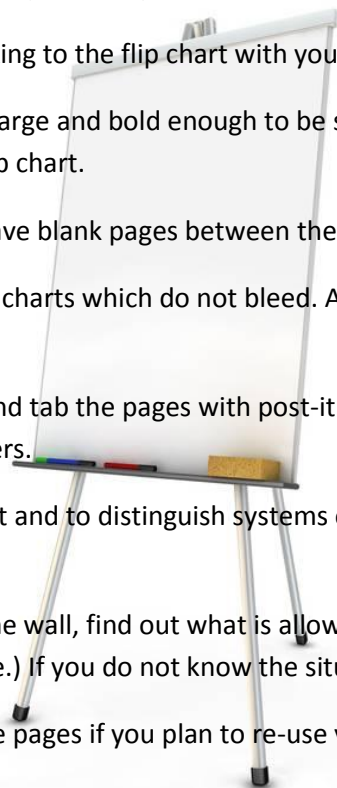
Once the questions start coming, what should you do? Listen intently to the question being asked. You may have to go beneath the surface and read between the lines.

What types of questions should you be wary of? Some people like to give a mini-speech of their own. Some may have their own agenda and will ask a question intended to promote themselves or their own views or company.

How should you deal with hostile questions? Consider in advance what parts of your presentation could lead to disagreement. Your audience analysis, for example, might indicate certain biases or preconceptions among your listeners.

Tips on using flip charts

1. Confine flip chart use to smaller groups (under 25).
2. Write, then turn and talk to avoid talking to the flip chart with your back to the audience.
3. Print rather than write. Make letters large and bold enough to be seen. Use one inch height per letter for each fifteen feet the audience is away from the flip chart.
4. Use only the top 2/3 of the pages. Leave blank pages between the used pages to avoid "see through" effects.
5. Use markers made specifically for flip charts which do not bleed. Avoid magic markers. Scribes will appreciate scented markers with refreshing odours.
6. Pre-design the pages ahead of time and tab the pages with post-it notes for easier turning. Pencil in lightly what you are going to write or draw with markers.
7. Use more than one colour for contrast and to distinguish systems or types of information. Black and blue are the best; avoid yellow, orange or pastels.
8. If you plan to mount used pages on the wall, find out what is allowed and what sticks on the mounting walls. (Some wall surfaces repel many kinds of tape.) If you do not know the situation, come with a surplus of tack pins and tape.
9. Invest in a carrying case to protect the pages if you plan to re-use your flip charts.



Dealing with nerves

Preparing Mentally

Receptive visualisation. Relax, clear your mind, sketch a vague scene, ask a question, and wait for a response. You might imagine you are on the beach, hearing and smelling the sea. You might ask, "Why can't I relax?", and the answer may flow into your consciousness.

Programmed Visualisation. Create an image, giving it sight, taste, sound, and smell. Imagine a goal you want to reach, or a healing you wish to accelerate. Jane used visualisation when she took up running, feeling the push of running the hills, the sweat, and the press to the finish line.

Guided Visualisation. Visualise again a scene in detail, but this time leave out important elements. Wait for your subconscious to supply missing pieces to your puzzle. Your scene could be something pleasant from the past.

Breathing

1. Find a comfortable position either lying on your back or sitting. If you are sitting down, make sure that you keep your back straight and release the tension in your shoulders. Let them drop.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest.
4. Take a few breaths as you normally would. Does your belly rise and fall with every breath and? If you can answer "yes," that is good. This is the natural way of breathing. If your belly stays still but your chest rises and falls with every breath, practice breathing by only allowing your belly to rise and fall when you breathe in and out.
5. Continue to take deep breaths, concentrating on only moving your belly.
6. Continue as long as you would like!