

Oral Presentations

Planning

In order to plan your presentation, you need to know:

- occasion (occasion will determine content, duration, and tone);
- audience (who is it for); and
- purpose of the presentation.

Writing

Presentation needs:

- an introduction or opening;
- middle; and
- summary or conclusion or closing

Introduction – Depending on the total length of the presentation, the introduction can range from 2 to 10 minutes. In that period of time you have to grab the attention of the audience, and engage their interest in what you have to say. Provide an outline of what you will be presenting or the main goals / objectives.

Middle - This is the largest part of your presentation. Do not try to overwhelm your audience with too much information or too many points. It is better to have fewer points covered well than too many points. Try to arrange the material in logical sequence.

Closing - Try to summarize the key points and / or draw main conclusions.

Preparation

- Check to see if the room or place has the equipment you need for your presentation.
- Use colour, diagrams, and pictures.
- If you have visuals, make sure the lettering is large.
- Make sure to include oral transition points.
- Practice the presentation beforehand, including presenting to a friend or family member.

Delivering the presentation

- Prepare as much material beforehand.
- Make sure you are early to set up any equipment.
- Try to relax. If you feel anxious take slow deep breathes.
- If you are not confident enough to recite from memory, then use notes. Reading from a detailed script will make it difficult to engage the audience.
- Make sure to dress appropriately.
- Speak clearly, and adjust your voice so that everyone can hear you.
- Do not speak too fast, but also do not speak too slowly.
- Use pauses in your speech to allow the audience to react or ask questions.
- Make eye contact with your audience.
- Do not fidget or make other nervous gestures with your hands.
- Do not keep your hands in your pockets.
- Use hand gestures effectively.
- Be yourself, allow your own personality to come through.
- Stay within the time limit.