

Oral Presentation

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Second lecture

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What is an oral presentation?

Oral presentations, also known as public speaking or simply presentations, consist of an individual or group verbally addressing an audience on a particular topic.

The aim of this is to educate, inform, entertain or present an argument.

What is an oral presentation?...cont.

Oral presentations are seen within workplaces, classrooms and even at social events such as weddings. An oral presentation at university assesses the presenter's ability to communicate relevant information effectively in an interesting and engaging manner.

What is an oral presentation?...cont.

Oral presentations are a form of assessment that calls on students to use the spoken word to express their knowledge and understanding of a topic.

It allows capture of not only the research that the students have done but also a range of cognitive and transferable skills.

Different types of oral presentations

A common format is in-class presentations on a prepared topic, often supported by visual aids in the form of PowerPoint slides or a Prezi, with a standard length that varies between 10 and 20 minutes.

Different types of oral presentations

In-class presentations can be performed individually or in a small group and are generally followed by a brief question and answer session.

Planning and presenting an oral presentation

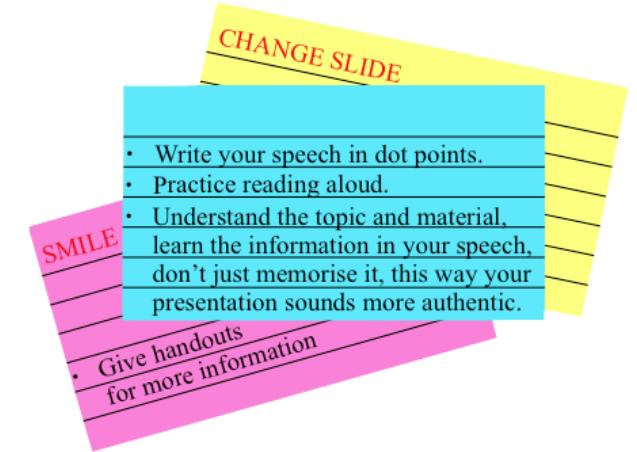
Planning your oral presentation

The most important factors for a successful presentation are: careful planning, lots of practice and engaging the audience. It's a good idea to watch some professional presentations online to get a sense of what good speakers do.



Preparing to present

Once you have completed writing your presentation – remember, this needs to sound like spoken language, not written language! - and have finalized your visual aids, it is time to practice the presentation. When practicing your speech consider these aspects:



Some tips on for how you deliver your presentation:

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Don't read off your palm cards.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- Maintain good posture so you can be clearly heard.
- Use natural hand gestures.
- Use a natural tone of voice.

Some tips on for how you deliver your presentation:

- Practice to improve your confidence.
- Practice pronunciation of difficult words by breaking them into syllables.
- Be mindful of your body language.
- Time yourself to make sure you are within the time limits.

Image transcription

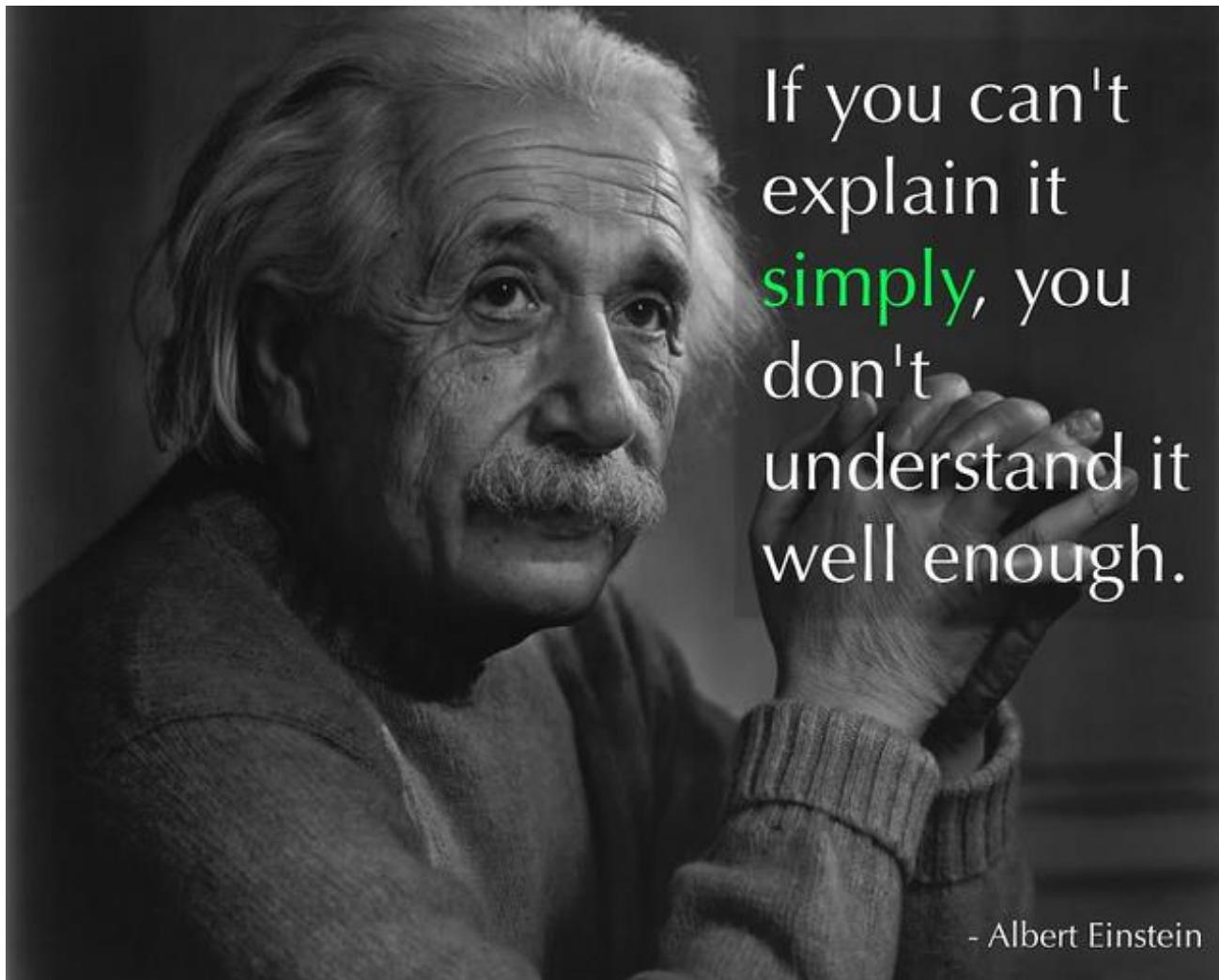
- Write your speech in dot points.
- Practice reading aloud.
- Understand the topic and material, learn the information in your speech, don't just memorize it, this way your presentation sounds more authentic.
- Remember to smile.
- Give handouts with more information.

Structure of a presentation

How to Structure your Presentation



The basic structure of an academic presentation is the order background and aims \Rightarrow methods \Rightarrow results and discussion \Rightarrow conclusion, or questions/hypothesis \Rightarrow argument \Rightarrow conclusion (answer). Using this format will further promote mutual understanding of your audiences.



Introduction

- ▶ Greetings
- ▶ Purpose
- ▶ Structure
- ▶ Timing
- ▶ About Q&A

Main body

- ▶ Present data/material, using visual aids, with verbal signposts to aid understanding

Conclusion

- ▶ Review of purpose
- ▶ Summary of main points
- ▶ Final 'take-away' message

Q&A

- ▶ Answer questions from the audience

Introduction

The introduction is a vital part of your presentation. It must arouse the interest of the audience, provide them with a clear idea what the topic is and what you hope to achieve (your purpose), as well as explaining how the presentation will be organized (the structure).



Introduction

You also need to greet the audience and introduce yourself, say how long your presentation will be, and say when you will be answering questions.

Introduction

- ▶ Greetings
- ▶ Purpose
- ▶ Structure
- ▶ Timing
- ▶ About Q&A

In short, in the introduction to your presentation, you need to:

- **greet** the audience
- **introduce yourself and the topic**
- **arouse interest** - ask a question, tell a story
- **state the purpose** of the presentation



In short, in the introduction to your presentation, you need to:...cont.

- outline the **structure** of the presentation - tell them what you are going to tell them
- say **how long** the presentation will last
- say when you will be **answering questions** (Q&A)



Main body

The main body presents the ideas which will achieve the purpose you stated in the introduction. You need to be selective about the material you will present in order to keep to the limited time available. You also need to make sure you maintain the audience's interest and understanding.

Main body

▶ Present data/material, using visual aids, with verbal signposts to aid understanding

Main body...cont.

This is achieved by presenting the information in a clear and logical sequence, emphasizing the main points, and by making the structure clear by using signpost phrases to mark the transitions between sections. Visual aids will also be an important part of your main body, so you need to plan these well.

In short, in the main body of your presentation you should:

- present **important data/material** - be selective
- use **signpost phrases** to help the audience follow your ideas
- draw the audience's attention to **important points**
- plan **visual aids** to reinforce the verbal message

Main body

▶ Present data/material, using visual aids, with verbal signposts to aid understanding

Conclusion

The conclusion should provide a strong and clear end to your presentation. This is the part the audience will remember most clearly. It provides a chance for you to review the main purpose of your presentation, and show how this has been achieved.

Conclusion

- ▶ Review of purpose
- ▶ Summary of main points
- ▶ Final 'take-away' message

Conclusion

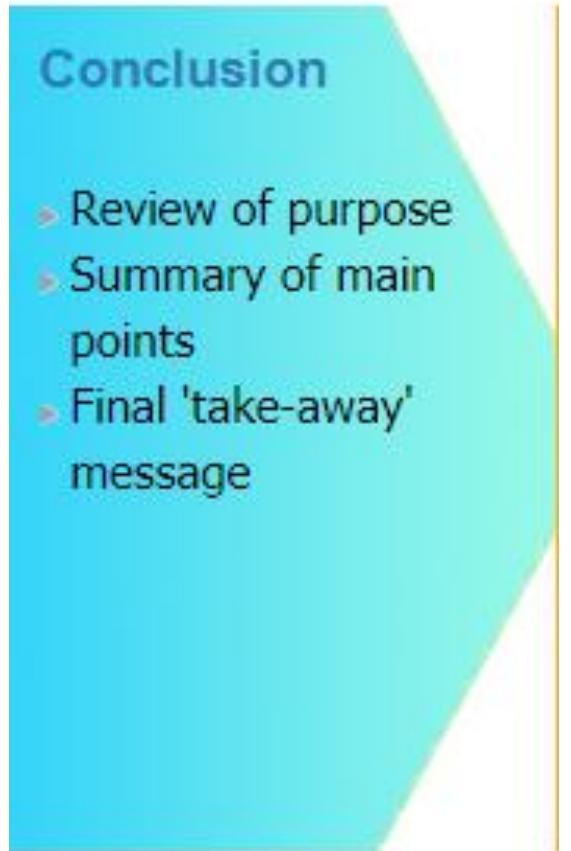
You need to summarize the main points. You should emphasize what the audience has learnt, and what you want them to remember, ideally giving them a final 'take-away' message which is the one main idea you want them to remember from your presentation.

Conclusion

- ▶ Review of purpose
- ▶ Summary of main points
- ▶ Final 'take-away' message

In short, in your conclusion you need to:

- **review the purpose** of your presentation - how did you achieve it?
- give a brief **summary** of the major points of the main body - tell them what you told them
- give a final '**take-away**' **message** - what one thing do you want them to remember?



Q&A

The Q&A session is the interactive part of your presentation: the one-way traffic of your talking to the audience now becomes two-way as they ask you for more information or to clarify some of your points. The Q&A can be intimidating, as you do not know what questions your audience will ask. You can help with this by anticipating questions as you prepare your presentation.



Q&A

Make sure you thoroughly research your topic. It is important to make sure you understand the question; a good technique is to repeat or rephrase the question to check ('Do you mean...?'). If you really do not know the answer, say so, but inform the questioner that you will do more research and answer the question later.

Useful language for presentations

| FUNCTION | EXAMPLES OF SIGNPOST LANGUAGE |
|--|---|
| Greet the audience | Good morning/afternoon distinguished guests/ladies and gentlemen/colleagues (whichever is appropriate) |
| Express special acknowledgements if appropriate | I'd especially like to welcome... I'd like to thank... |
| Signal question/discussion opportunity | There will be time for questions and discussion at the end of my talk. If you have questions, please feel free to interrupt. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Introduce your carefully defined topic | I'd like to talk to you about... |
| Explain the topic area and purpose | This presentation will cover mainly... I am going to show that... I will argue that... |
| Dispose of a distraction or side issue | Before I start, let me clarify one point... My discussion will not cover... |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Briefly preview the organization of the body of your talk</p> | <p>The main points I will make are, first... second... and third...</p> <p>The subject can be examined under the following headings...</p> <p>We can divide this area into a number of fields. They are...</p> |
| <p>Provide important history and/or definitions</p> | <p>As background, it's important to note that...</p> <p>By X I mean...</p> |
| <p>Remind the audience of the topic and give it status</p> | <p>So we can see that (the topic) involves...</p> |

Body

The body of the presentation should meet the promises of purpose and information made in the introduction.

The structure of the presentation is crucial.

Whether you organize:

- chronologically,
- by priority,
- or theme, subject

the body of your talk must proceed logically. The main points should be brought out one by one, with concise and relevant supportive evidence, statistics or examples and verbal ‘signposting’ of your progress through your argument or report.

You could present each important idea or point several times in different ways, because a listening audience needs several opportunities to fully absorb meaning.

You need to state clearly the links between your ideas and always signal when the next point is coming. If you think something is particularly important, say so and why.

Student and staff experience

Benefits

Oral presentations provide a useful opportunity for students to practice skills which are required in the world of work. Through the process of preparing for an oral presentation, students can develop their ability to synthesize information and present to an audience.

Student and staff experience

Benefits

To improve authenticity the assessment might involve the use of an actual audience, realistic timeframes for preparation, collaboration between students and be situated in realistic contexts.

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Challenges

As mentioned above it is important to remember that the stress of presenting information to a public audience might put some students at a disadvantage. Similarly non-native speakers might perceive language as an additional barrier.

Challenges...cont.

Discussing criteria and expectations with your students, providing a clear structure, ensuring opportunities to practice and receive feedback will benefit all students.

Some **disadvantages** of oral presentations include:

- anxiety - students might feel anxious about this type of assessment and this might impact on their performance
- time - oral assessment can be time consuming both in terms of student preparation and performance
- time - to develop skill in designing slides if they are required; we cannot assume knowledge of PowerPoint etc.

Workload

From a student perspective preparing for an oral presentation can be **time consuming**, especially if the presentation is supported by slides or a poster which also require careful design.

From a teacher's point of view, presentations are generally assessed on the spot and feedback is immediate, which **reduces marking time**. It is therefore essential to have clearly defined marking criteria which help assessors to focus on the intended learning outcomes rather than simply on presentation style.

Group Presentations

It may be that you are making a presentation as part of a group. Essentially the same information applies to group presentations as individual ones. It is important that they are logical and well structured as well as professional and meaningful. It is also doubly important that the group rehearse and practice together several times to ensure the presentation runs smoothly on the day.

Handing over to a co-presenter

Your talk may involve several speakers in your group presentation. You need to manage the handover smoothly and professionally, for example:

“I would like to conclude my discussion/report at this point and hand over to my partner/colleague XYZ who will examine/discuss/report the area/topic/perspective of...”