

Speaker Tips

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Delivery Skills:

Review these tips just before presenting in order to give a peak performance.

1. Maintain good posture by balancing your weight equally on both feet if you are in front of a live audience.
2. Connect with your audience by looking at them. Give each person a full sentence or thought. Consider moving towards them. With a larger audience, pick out 4-5 sections for eye contact. Your eye contact will have a "ripple" effect. If you are speaking over the phone in a teleconference make sure you are talking to some pictures on your desk. It will slow your speech down and will help you to connect with listeners in your audience.
3. Use gestures and facial expressions to emphasize your points and to speak in a relaxed, natural manner. This is especially important if you are speaking over the phone. Gestures and facial expression will affect the tone of your voice and make it sound energetic. It will insure that you will not have a monotone.
4. Pause to breathe, think and enhance vocal variety.
5. Do not *read* to your audience. If you need to cue yourself from the visuals, simply pause. Once you have digested the chart or concept, look at your audience and begin talking once again.

Polishing your talk:

Use this checklist to tighten your presentation and work out any problems beforehand.

1. ___ Do you grab attention immediately?
2. ___ Have you provided you audience with a clear focus by stating your position or purpose, your proposal and the payoff in your introductory remarks?
3. ___ Are all your ideas relevant to *this* audience?
4. ___ Is there a logical flow between ideas?
5. ___ Are your ideas well supported? Do not sell features. Stress the benefits.
6. ___ Is there a balance between technical and emotional support?
7. ___ Do you have too many visuals?
8. ___ Have you rehearsed out loud, with your visuals at least three to six times?
9. ___ Have you timed yourself to be under the allotted time?
10. ___ Have you summarized effectively by repeating your position, your recommendations and the benefits for the listeners?

Visual Aids:

Consider these guidelines to insure that your visuals are not distracting and that you are using them effectively.

1. No more than 1 visual per 2 minutes of talk.
2. No more than 5 bullet points with 5 words per line.
3. Your visuals should be like a billboard, easily read, easily understood, primarily visual.
4. Pause to allow your listeners time to read your slide.
5. Talk to your listeners, not the screen.

10 Reasons Why Presentations Fail:

1. The speaker is unconvincing. Major points are poorly supported or aren't relevant to this audience.
2. Major points are not clear and concise.
3. The audience is overwhelmed by too much information.
4. The presentation is boring.
5. The speaker lacks enthusiasm, seems stiff, not genuine.
6. The speaker seems unprepared and dependent upon notes.
7. The speaker handles questions poorly.
8. The speaker reads the slides.
9. The speaker goes over the allotted time.
10. The audience does not feel involved.

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. To reach us, phone (847) 438-4480 or contact our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.