

The three main aspects

- The what:
 - Structure
 - Expression
 - Vivid communication
 - Change of pace (variety)
- The how:
 - Voice & body language
- Visual aids (e.g. images, charts)

The three-part structure

The instructions for any presentation, stated simply, are:

- Say what you are going to say
- Say it
- Say what you said

Hence, it should have a three-part structure:

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

In the introduction

- Introduce the topic and the setting.
- Outline the main aspects you will be presenting.
- Say how for long you will talk and when you'll take questions.

In the body

- Indicate when you are going from one point to the next.
- Order the slides so that the 'story' unfolds and is easy to follow.
- Vary the pace, changing from facts to an analogy, from a serious to a light-hearted note.
- Say how for long you will talk and when you'll take questions.

In the conclusion

- Re-state the main theme or topic.
- Highlight the main findings, outcomes or recommendations.
- Thank the audience for listening.
- Invite questions.

Time length

- For a 15 minute presentation with an average of 1 minute per slide, you are limited to about 15 slides.
- You will need to rehearse the presentation in front of someone to check the time and make the necessary adjustments (e.g. less content or less labouring a point).

Slide content

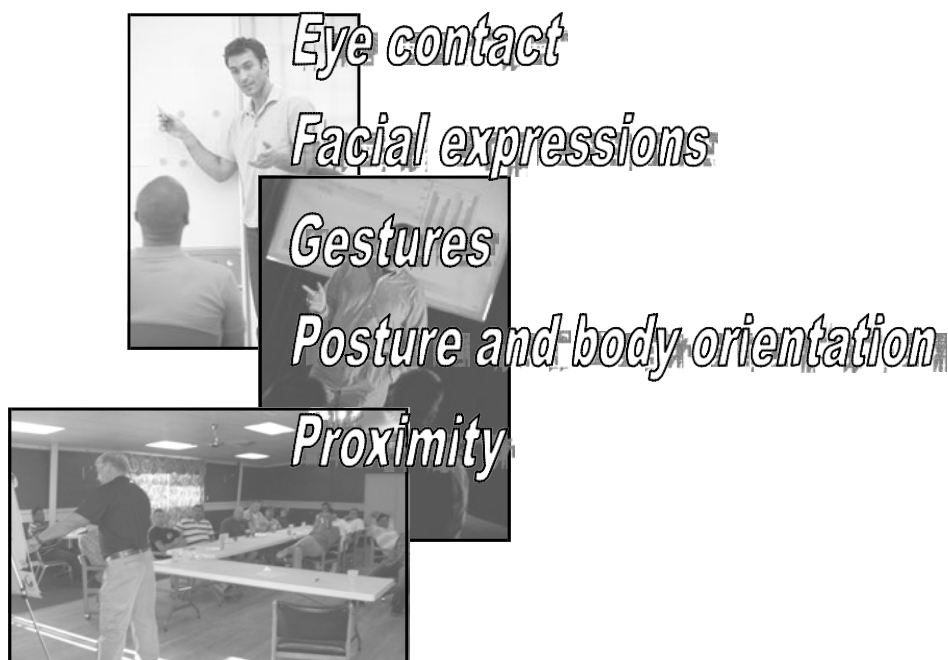
- Don't make slides too cluttered; only have about 6 - 7 dot points (elaboration on the points is what you do and rehearse separately so that the dot points are just an "anchor" for the discussion).
- Positioning – if describing a situation, make sure the image is on the same slide as the points referring to it.
- Structure – the first slide needs to summarise what the presentation is going to be about and the last to make concluding remarks.
- Each slide should ideally deal with a separate issue.

Voice and body language



Use your voice well. Enunciate clearly and vary;

- The pace – varying the pace helps to maintain the audience's interest.
- The volume – good speakers lower their voice to draw the audience in, and raise it to make a point.
- The pitch and tone – a high pitch can be annoying. Also, one of the major criticisms of speakers is that they speak in a monotone voice.



Use dynamic body language to;

- Hold their attention.
- Reinforce the message in your words.
- Some helpful tips;
 - **Eye contact** – This helps to regulate the flow of communication.
 - **Facial expressions** – Smile and maintain a relaxed expression.
 - **Gestures** – A lively speaking style captures attention, makes the material more interesting and facilitates understanding.
 - **Posture and body orientation** – Maintain a relaxed stance while looking at the audience. Position yourself in a “V” with the screen and the audience so that you can swing your gaze between the slides and the audience.
 - **Use of a pointer** – do not wave it around in the air like a sword. Use it only to point to the part of the slide being discussed.

Visual aids

- If you have handouts or notes, do not read straight from them.
- Speak to the audience...not to the screen or board. (This means you will need to get very familiar with the material beforehand).
- PowerPoint slides should have good contrast between text and background and the colours should not be too harsh.
- Utilise images/charts etc. they will help make the explanation a lot clearer.
- If available, a model (e.g. a model car) may assist the explanation.

Questions



- Always allow time at the end of the presentation for questions.
- Do not rush to answer; pause for a few seconds to allow the audience to gather their thoughts.
- When answering, direct your remarks to the entire audience.
- If you do not understand the question, ask them to clarify.
- If you do not know the answer, be honest, and tell them you will get back to them.

Stay positive

A positive mental attitude is a belief in yourself and what you are trying to communicate or promote. Virtually everyone feels nervous as they step forward to communicate something important especially in a formal setting. These nerves create negative messages such as the audience not liking you that you will forget the key points you want to make. Running positive messages through your mind such as “I am well prepared” or “The audience are my friends” can counteract this negativity.