

LESSON-17

THE SKILL OF MAKING PRESENTATIONS

“You climb every mountain, cross every stream, follow every rainbow till you find your dream”. What is Presentation?

Introduction

*“You can have excellent content with good presentation technique and win the bushes
You can have good content with excellent presentation technique and win. But you may not have ever heard of a poor presentation and good or excellent contents winning anything”.*

Poor presentations are consistently losers irrespective of purpose or the business for which a presentation is made. We will draw some lessons from winning presentations and some from losers to help you to plan your business presentation successfully. That’s really this chapter is all about.

In our daily routine we speak more often than write and a majority of us have not overcome the fear of having to speak to a group. Each one of us have stage fright, it is a matter of degrees that it varies amongst individuals. Yet an oral presentation is an important part of the business routine and each one has to deal with such challenges successfully.

What is a Presentation

“A presentation is a commitment by the presenter to help the audience do something, to solve a problem”. The interesting thing to note is that in a presentation occurrence of commitment by the presenter and judgment by the audience is simultaneous. The presenter advocates and audience evaluates to render a verdict.

In terms of content and structure, presentations and speeches have a good deal in common with formal reports - many of them are oral version of a written document.

Presentation is a process through which you present some things, some thoughts, some ideas, some products, some information, some reports, some findings, etc. to some individuals or a group of individuals, with a definite purpose and a clear goal in your mind. Your intention is to put your point across to your audience in a manner, which best serves your purpose and that of your audience. Therefore, the underlying idea is that you should be an effective presenter for which you need to possess the required skills to understand the intricacies involved in the act of presentation.

The successful presentation of an idea or series of ideas or suggestions to your audience will influence the events and the relationships and will, accordingly, shape the outcome of a targeted situation. This will also contribute to the general success and morale of the team in such act. The important ingredients for a successful presentation are:

- (i) **Objectives.** You must know your objectives and also know what should your audience do at the end of your presentation. This will ensure that your audience will remain attentive.
- (ii) **Preparation.** If you fail to prepare, be prepared to fail. The successful presenters prepare for every presentation. Those who prepare and practice are more successful in presenting their information, which is not only enjoyable but also meaningful to the audience.
- (iii) **Enthusiasm.** Your own enthusiasm will evoke enthusiasm in the audience. Therefore, you must be fully energized and excited about your presentation. This will make sure that your audience is equally energized and excited not only to receive your presentation but also hope to gain something out of it for them. To keep yourself fully enthused remember the old saying that “*only a lighted candle can light another candle*”.
- (iv) **First impression.** As they say, “ First impression is the last impression”. In every situation of interaction this saying holds true and counts much. This is particularly true of presentations also. The audience evaluates the presenter within the first 120 seconds of the presentation. If you make a bad first impression you will lose credibility with the audience and consequently seriously damage your chance to effectively communicate with your audience. If you lose this opportunity in the first instance you will never get a second chance for creating that magical and lasting the first impression.
- (v) **Facial Expression.** Do you know that even the smallest muscle movement on our face can convey a lot. The facial expressions can help reinforce the oral message.
- (vi) **Eye Contact.** Briefly looking into the eyes of the participants in your audience reflects a personalized attention. It symbolizes a direct communication and reflects your confidence too.

If you do not make eye contact with the participants in your audience, they may not take you or your message as seriously as you expected them to do so.

- (vii) **Visual Aids.** The visual aids are meant for reinforcing the main points of your presentation. Without such captivating aids, you will make your presentation dull, uninteresting and insipid. The visual aids should be clear, crisp and beautiful.

- (viii) *Audience involvement.* You should engage and involve your audience to ensure that they remain fully attentive to and absorbed in the various acts of your presentation. For this you have to remain in an interactive mode for most of the time of your presentation without any laxity.
- (ix) *Floor Syndrome.* Manage the floor of the dais from which you are speaking. If you are seen fixed to the floor you will be perceived to be a dumb by your audience. Therefore, you should be as natural as possible and move about on the floor to give the look of an articulate and invigorating person.
- (x) *Ineffective Conclusion.* It is extremely important to close your presentation on a positive and active note. This is the stage when you wind up your presentation and spell out what your audience should do and how to gain from this. There should be a very logical and interesting conclusion of your presentation.

Structure of Presentation

It is a problem for a person to structure the presentation appropriately so as to clearly decide from where to start and where to end. A presentation has four parts: opening, body, closing and question and answer. It is suggested that in a presentation first, tell what you will tell, secondly actually tell them and thirdly, tell the audience what you have told them.

Opening or Introduction

The opening of a presentation is very important. It is in the first few minutes you gain or lose the audience. The major purpose of the introduction are:

- . To catch the audience attention & arouse their interest.
- . To relate the speakers' purpose with the audience interest.
- . To build the focus for the contents' structure.

Body

The body of the presentation should relate to the selected important points (3-4) you want to make. You want the structure of your presentation to be clear and you don't want to lose the audience's attention. In order to achieve this the following points can help in some ways:

- . Emphasizing structure and help the audience follow your presentation by summarizing your remarks as you go along and by emphasizing the transition (links) from one idea to the next.
- + Holding the audience's attention not only by relating the subject to the audience's needs or by using clear language but by introducing variety in your speech or presentation.
- + You may pause for questions & comments as it shifts the audience from listening to participating.
- . Visual aids can be used to provide clarification & stimulation.

- . Variety in your tone & gestures will help in breaking the monotony of your voice
- . Consideration for Humor? Sometimes, humor helps in steering through difficult situations. -

Ending

As the audience's attention peaks at this stage it helps in further clarity. The final summing is not a place to introduce new ideas. It is suggested that you should begin your conclusions by telling listeners that you are about to finish and don't be afraid to sound obvious words like, in conclusion to sum it all up, etc. They might/will make one final effort to listen intently. It is also suggested that during the concluding stage restate the next step. Some presentations require the audience to reach a decision or to take specific action. In these cases the summing must cover the specific action to occur and who would be responsible for doing what.

Your final words should round out the presentation. You want to leave the audience with a satisfied feeling, a feeling of completeness. It is therefore important that you should always end on a positive note. Your final remarks should be enthusiastic and memorable.

One of the worst mistakes we can make as a public speaker is talking too long. It doesn't matter if the entire speech was brilliant and the audience came away with information that will change their lives. If we talk too long, they will leave saying, "That speaker just wouldn't quit." Don't let this happen. Say what you have to say and sit down. Before you do, give them a well thought out closing.

The last thing we say may be the most remembered. We must put as much time into selecting and practicing closing as we put into any other part. Just like opening, our closing does not have to be humorous. It could be motivational, challenging, thoughtful, respectful of the length of the presentation, or it could restate our point in a different way. This ending segment will have a strong influence on what the audience takes home with them when we are done. Sometime during the talk ask the audience to do something. Many talk went no further than the walls of the meeting room because the audience wasn't moved to action. If we didn't ask them to do something by now, the closing is our last chance.

If the subject is appropriate, humorous closings are best for several reasons. If we leave them laughing and applauding, we will exit, but an extremely positive impression about us will remain. Another good reason to leave them laughing is that the room will not be deadly silent as the speaker is walking back to his seat. Speeches that are for entertainment purposes only should generally leave the audience laughing.

Finally, if the subject is not appropriate to end with laughter, we could end with a touching story or quotation that leaves the audience thoughtful and quiet. Even the most serious public speaking subjects can benefit from humor, but the humor should be sprinkled throughout the body of the speech. Don't put it at the end because closings are powerful and the audience will think your overall attitude toward the subject is flippant.

This same technique can be very effective in ending a mostly humorous speaking engagement. Have them laughing all along while we make our points. Then finish seriously. This contrast will create a great impact. It will convey the fact that we believe in a lighthearted approach to the subject, but the results are very serious to us.

Don't be afraid to use humor when speaking in public. Just make sure to learn to do it right.

Transitions

To be a polished speaker one has to tie all information together so that it flows smoothly. We must lead our audience and alert them that slightly different, but related information is coming. This is called transition.

Go to an amusement park. Look around a little bit and find out where the excitement is. Of course, it's over on the roller coaster where transitions are sharp and exciting. The excitement is also at the bumper cars where one can get blind-sided because cars are coming at you from all directions. The excitement isn't at the baby boat ride where a small wave would flip one's kid out of the boat.

When speaking in public some thought should be given to transition, especially with older, more traditional audiences, and when we have a very high content presentation.

But we don't have to be a trite, snoozer by saying things like, . . . speaking of bananas. I'm now going to talk about bananas. We could, however, do a transition like that and then make fun of one self for doing it by saying something like, Don't you think that transition was really smooth?

Transitions are one of the places where we could plan to use some humor. This works well with technical audiences because they won't feel we are wasting their time. Since, in their minds, we are REQUIRED to do a transition anyway, it's OK if it's funny.

One can make transitions by changing stage position, pausing, using visual aids, giving out a handout, picking up a prop or sharply varying the sound you make come out of the public address system. Do anything that breaks the pattern of what you were doing in the previous segment and introduces what we plan to do next.

For verbal transitions, one-liners, anecdotes, and questions work well. Also, people seem to like and need recaps, say things like, to recap this section. . .

When speaking in public, whatever we do, think in terms of roller coasters and bumper cars so you keep your audience excited and alert all the time. -

Question & Answer Period

Majority of the speakers avoid or discourage this period, without realizing that providing opportunity for questions and answers, facilitates interactions. The thumb rule is to encourage questions throughout in a smaller group and ask a large audience to defer questions until later. But do provide time for this stage as it shifts the audience from listening to participating.

Some tips for handling questions: Given below are some categories of questions. You may decide in which category the question falls and then take action accordingly. Although it is not possible to remember these tips, but by practice you learn to handle critical situations:

.Confused Question: Reformulate/Paraphrase the question. It gives you time to think and it can be followed by all.

.Hostile Question: Don't be defensive or hostile, rephrase it and unload emotions from it to understand the message.

. Two part Question: Separate the parts, prioritize them before answering.

. Off topic Question: Suggest the audience that you would not handle off topic questions.

. Can't Answer Questions: Admit it and say that you would answer it later.

. Scene Stealer Questions: Some audience use Q-A sessions as a platform for giving their own opinion, when they pause, use the opportunity to ask the speaker politely. While interpreting what he said, ask to state the questions.

. Underground Questioner: While the presentation is progress he/she will make comments or ask questions in an undertone, enough for a few to hear. You have to handle such case directly by asking, "Do you have to say something".

Planning The Presentation Strategy

Developing a strategy for delivering an oral message is just as crucial as developing a strategy for a written message. You have to put information in an easily digestible form. For maximum impact therefore it is important that one must define the purpose, analyze the audience construct or develop the message with due estimate ,of time and appropriate length, decide on the most appropriate style and media for presentation. These are some variables which one has to keep in mind to develop an appropriate strategy for a presentation.

Define the Purpose

The first step to confusion and failure is not thinking through the purpose of the presentation and focusing it sharply.

The amount of audience interaction varies from presentation to presentation, depending on

the speaker's purpose. Often a speaker accomplishes more than one purpose simultaneously. The purpose of a presentation could vary from informing, persuading, exploring to changing behavior/attitude etc. The specific purposes for a presentation are:

. To motivate (or "entertain") Le. you do most of the talking and the audience essentially plays a passive role. You control the content of the message and the audience listen. Here the challenge is just not to giving information but giving in a manner for a response.

. To inform or analyze: A group of people meet to hear the oral equivalent of a written report, then members of the audience offer comments or ask questions.

. To persuade or collaborate: The most interaction occurs when you aim to persuade people to take a particular action or to collaborate with them to solve a problem or reach a decision. You generally begin to provide facts to increase the audience's understanding of the subject. You offer arguments in defence during discussion and you invite audience to express their needs. In this process therefore you have little control, so one has to be flexible to adjust to an unexpected reaction.

Analyzing the Audience

Your choice of a strategy for accomplishing your purpose must take into account those who will be attending. The nature of the audience affects your strategy for achieving your purpose. You should know your audience and size them up in advance. You must look for characteristics that will affect your speech e.g. audience size, sex, age, education and knowledge. More specifically, consider the followings in as much detail as possible.

. First consider the size & consumption of the audience. A small group may be drawn into a decision making process. A homogeneous group benefits from a focused presentation; a diverse group requires a more generalized approach. So be sure of the size of the group to which you are going to address.

. Consider likely reactions to your speech or presentation. The reactions to your speech could be hostile, receptive, indifferent. But be clear that whether the audience care about the issues you will discuss and how much they already know about your subject.

. Finally, you need to take a cold hard look at their relationship with you. Do they already know you? Do they respect your judgment?

The answer to these points would help deciding the best way to organize your material.

Developing message

A message should be carefully developed with a view to generate a desired response. It is therefore important that while developing messages one should define the main idea, construct an outline and estimate the appropriate length. A number of times a speaker is required to carefully choose the words, particularly while handling sensitive subjects. In such situations if you loose control on what you speak, your message will not be understood correspondingly. It is therefore important that we define the main idea and construct a concrete outline around the identified idea and then collect sufficient information, which should correspond with the available time to make the presentation. You collect a whole lot of information but you fail to put it together in an appropriate order. It is suggested to follow the “Inverted Pyramid” structure. The suggestion is that you should either start with the most important point and then go down to the least or, start with conclusion and go down to back-up information or start with a general statement & go down to specifics.

Although it appears simple but actually it is not. One has to decide and compartmentalize information in various groups, sequence them and then present.

Having decided these things for developing an appropriate message, the next step is how do you deliver it, Le., knowing your abilities, time for preparation, audience size, etc., deciding the presentation method.

Determination of presentation method

We may follow any of the following presentation methods depending on our own abilities, subject, purpose etc.

Extemporaneous presentation is that which is prepared in advance and delivered afresh. The exact wording is figured out as the speaker goes along. It combines prior organization and spontaneity. The audience prepare an outline, may write down, at best, full opening and closing sentences and prepare visual aids to promote thoughts.

Impromptu is that when you are given no time to think and organize. You never know when your superior will ask you for a two minute update in a board meeting.

Memorized is a presentation which is learnt by heart and if a link is broken while speaking the whole 'presentation gets affected as the speaker doesn't know in which direction to look at to catch the missing link.

Reading is yet another method. In paper reading it is said that even the speaker looks at his notes for 350/0 of time and for the remaining 650/0 to the audience, it is still a paper-reading. In business this method is followed 'least.

Speaking from notes is similar to the first method with a difference that the speaker has his points, with explanations written down and he speaks from the notes. To prepare these notes normally reference- cards are used which the speaker can hold in one hand.

There is no hard and fast rule in which situation what method should be used. As a speaker it is up to you to decide which method is best suited for you in the given situations and practice it in advance before making a presentation.

Deciding the presentation media

In an interactive medium, which an oral presentation is, you can choose from a wide range of audio-visual (A V) materials. But here also you require careful planning. A number of times a presentation gets killed because of over emphasis on A V material. Always keep in mind while selecting any A V material that to what extent the selected media would help supplementing or reinforcing your message. It is suggested to follow the following guidelines:

- . Do not cram information if you have too much to say, may be you should write it out.
- . Keep only relevant material as irrelevancies create distraction.
- . Organize and break up your material into small modules. Disorganization forces the Audience to concentrate on finding the structure of your presentation rather than listening to you.
- . Visualize or pictures your ideas as much as possible. Understanding, remembrance are the highest in the picture form.
- . Use as few words as possible. Use only those Abri / Syms which the audience understand.
- . Make the pictures and letters bright enough to be visible from a distance. . Make the letters bright enough and think enough to be read by all.
- . Use light color for background. Use dark or bright colors for pictures or letters to improve visibility.
- . Make the sound material audible, pleasing in tone, varied and synchronized with visuals.
- . Finally, before the presentation check particularly the audibility, visibility and readability of your A V material, if possible, in the actual place of presentation.

Ask an Open Question

Often making a very small speech follows the Golden Rule of Three. Rule 1: Announce your idea.

Rule 2: Re-announce your idea with one example and one open question. Rule 3: Conclude by repeating what you have just told the audience.

The idea of the open question is that it will make people think. The human mind is never satisfied with unanswered questions. The human mind is never satisfied with unanswered questions. Therefore, the more people try to find answer to the questions, the more people will try to look for clues in what we said. And that will make them think of us.

The question has a dual purpose. First, it keeps the audience involved and alert, and second, it helps speaker to develop a logic of the subject that is totally acceptable to the audience.

Presentation Skills

It is very important that you should be able to have control yourself. The moment you rise to speak you convey some signals to yourself, which might decide ultimately the success or failure of your presentation.

Consideration of Personal Aspects

A logical first step in preparing a presentation is to analyze yourself. You are a part of the message. You should seek following characteristics:

Confidence in yourself is important so as to gain your audience's confidence. Your audience's confidence must be earned. Project the right image, and talk in a strong, clear voice.

Sincerity is vital. Project an image of sincerity by being sincere to yourself, to your subject and to your audiences.

Thoroughness - giving the listeners all they need.

Friendliness - help your communication effort by creating the right environment.

The stakeholders in a presentation

The stakeholders in presentations, workshops, seminars, conferences, conventions, meetings, etc. are: The organizer

- The speakers
- The audience
- The sponsors
- The venue and infrastructure provider

The organizers-their roles

Deciding

- Objectives of the presentation
- Topic or theme of the presentation
- Venue and its booking
- Date and time
- The speakers and obtaining their consent
- The chairperson of different technical sessions

- Allocation of topics to the speakers
- Requirement of audio or video or multi- media aids
- Material for handouts and notepad (kit)
- Budget
- Source of funds
- Invitees
- Publicity of the sponsor
- Publicity of the event
- Media coverage
- Ceremonial requirements and arranging those accordingly
- Making sure that you have enough handouts for all the participants and these are ready to be distributed as needed.
- Correcting any environmental problems, such as temperature that is too hot or too cold, interfering noise, if any, from external sources and bad lighting which can be replaced with its alternative arrangement.

The speakers - their roles

- Preparing the presentation
- Preparing himself or herself
- Delivering the presentation
- Handling the audience

The audience - their roles

- Advance enrolment
- Attending in time
- Spot registration and payment of fee, if any
- Listening patiently and attentively
- Extending full cooperation
- Providing feedback and filling up response sheets

Styles of Speech

The vocabulary of various styles of speech should be kept in mind while addressing the audience.

Word	Meaning
1. Circumlocution	1. Evasive speech
2. Soliloquy	2. Speaking alone
3. Somniloquy	3. Speaking in your sleep
4. Elocution	4. Public speaking
5. Allocution	5. Formal speaking
6. Colloquiality	6. Informal speech
7. Grandiloquence	7. Speech Conversation
8. Inter locution	8. Bombastic speech
9. Magniloquence	9. Scholarly

10. Colloquium 11. Eloquence	10. conference 11. Persuasive speech
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Strategies for an Effective Oral Delivery

As writing has its criteria to move ideas clearly across a page so too does the speaker in an oral presentation. You need to focus on decreasing stage fright and the desirable elements of oral and nonverbal delivery.

Preparing a presentation

The most fundamental and the essential aspects of making a successful presentation are planning, preparation and performance. Unfortunately, the preparation for the presentation is the oft-neglected area of presentation skills.

Why is the Presentation Necessary?

The purpose or the objective of the presentation must be very clear to you as the speaker. The following brainstorming questions which will help you to formulate ideas in a logical sequence. Listing all ideas and thoughts that crowd your mind could do this. Scheduling and prioritizing them in order of importance or manner of presentation can be done at a later stage.

What is my aim?

- What do I want to tell them?
- What is the main message?
- What is the purpose?

Decide whether it is to:

- Teach or train
- Educate or inform
- Enthuse or persuade
- Entertain or amuse

Whatever your objective is, you should also try and entertain your audience. If you want to pass on information, then you need to take a logically consistent, well-structured approach to your subject matter. If your main purpose is to entertain, include some jokes or anecdotes. If you want to inspire the audience, keep the content of your speech positive and pitched at a level at which the participants in the audience can reply personally and emotionally without any slightest hesitation.

What is The Timing?

- The total time allotted to you for making the presentation.
- How much time does this give you for preparation and rehearsal?
- What other commitments have you got? Are you available on the day of presentation?

Knowing how long you have got at your disposal and adhering to it, is crucial to good talks. If there is no clock in the room, take your watch off and put it

on a table near you so that you can look at it intermittently to check the schedule of your timing.

How many times have you heard speakers drag on long after the expected finishing time? They seemingly do not realize the audience is getting restless. Considering the time of day and how long you have for your talk are matters not to be neglected at all.

Time of the day can affect the audience. After lunch session is known as the burial ground session in training or study circles. Audiences who have had a good lunch will probably be feeling like taking an afternoon slumber rather than listening to a speech. The audience may have already sat through a long span of time, attending several other speakers. You have to make sure that the participants are actively interested and willing to listen to what you have to say?

Jack Benny said, ‘When you are speaking, timing is not so much knowing when to speak, but knowing when to pause.

A pause lets the audience catch up and draw pictures in their mind. It is the audience’s signal to imagine. Timing in public speaking is one of the most important aspects of humor. Not only is timing involved in an individual piece of humor, it is also involved in the placement of that piece of humor in the overall presentation. Timing is also involved in spontaneous reactions to ‘expected’ unexpected developments during the presentation.

Timing Related To Time of Day

Public speaking has aspects related to time of day that one must know about. The first speaker of the day for an early morning (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) program should not expect hearty laughter. People are not conditioned to laugh a great deal in the early morning. Many won’t even be awake yet. Use more information and less humor.

It’s important to know when not to expect hearty laughter. It would be a waste of time to use our best speaking material at a time when laughter normally wouldn’t be expected. If we didn’t know that early morning programs aren’t the best for laughter, we could have our confidence shaken so badly that the rest of our presentation might suffer. Also, keep in mind that these are general principles. One might run into a lively group sometime. Just don’t expect it.

Many consider brunch to be the best speaking time of day to expect a responsive audience. It is late enough that the folks who sleep late are now awake, but not so late in the day that early risers are starting to get tired. Lunch is generally a time for good response for the same reasons as brunch.

In the afternoon people are starting to get tired. “Audience members will retain less because they are not listening as closely as they did In the morning. One can use

more humorous speaking and less hard information, but don't expect laughter to be as intense.

The last speaker of a long afternoon or evening program should not expect a great response, again because folks are too worn out. Keep presentation short and crisp and acknowledge the lateness so that the audience knows you care about them.

One time the last speaker on a long program was being introduced at 8:5 p.m. on a Monday night. The mostly male audience was thinking at 8:35 p.m. were most probably think about the day night cricket match which would be reaching the final stages in a half hour's time.

He started his speech like "There are three things I would never want to be: 1. a javelin catcher; 2. the twelfth man in an important cricket match; and 3. the last public speaker on a long program. (He looked at the watch.) Its now 8:40 p.m. I'm going to limit my remarks to 15 minutes. I guarantee you will be in front of the TV for the slog overs. He kept his promise. He had more of their attention than if he had not made the comment. Even though it had been a long day, they all had a good laugh during the talk. A little care for our audience will go a long way.

Timing In Relation To Placing A Piece of Information.

In public joke telling, a pause just before and just after your punch line gives the audience a chance to laugh. Do not continue speaking when laughter is expected. Laughter is hard to get and easy to discourage. Hold eye contact a little bit longer than you think you should when delivering punch lines because time is hard to judge when you are pumped-up for a speaking engagement.

Unfortunately, the last section of the live presentation was a bit rushed, due to technical difficulties at the front end. These technical problems had nothing to do with the presentation - instead, the previous speaker had rearranged equipment and it took some time to put everything back in place. How do you avoid this situation? The presenter could have planned for 10 extra minutes of Q&A at the end of the presentation. Then, if the time has been eating up on the front end, she could have offered to respond to questions via email or during lunch.

Timing in relation to Size Of Audience

The size of your audience will affect timing. Our presentation will take less time to deliver to smaller audiences. Smaller audiences should mean quicker laughter. Conversely, will take longer for big crowds in large public arenas. Your pauses will be longer to compensate for the wave effect created because of the physical distance between you and the back row of the audience.

Where is The Venue of Your Presentation?

- Is there a location map?
- Is there a car parking?
- Is the room booked?
- Is it available to rehearse in?
- What are the size and shape of the room?

- What facilities are available?
- Whether audio-visual system is available?

While seeking answers to the above questions pay a preliminary visit, if possible, to the chosen presentation venue to check out the layout. If this is not practical, ask the organizers to send you a detailed floor plan showing all the facilities. Consider the lighting, public address system, seating and power supply carefully.

When assessing a venue, take careful stock of its location-is it accessible to your audience? Is it near an airport, railway station or underground? Is the venue on the flight path of a major airport or next to a noisy restaurant? Are there immovable features that could restrict the audience's view? If so, plan your seating around these. Can you control the heating air conditioning? If so, adjust the temperature to just below what is comfortable, since considerable warmth will be generated by a large number of people being together in one room.

If you intend to use audio-visual elements in your presentation, you must check that the appropriate facilities are available at the venue and that they function correctly. Acquaint yourself with each piece of equipment to avoid any delay or mistake during the presentation.

How to put Your Message Across What is the best way of achieving the aim?

Lecture - formal or informal with good supporting material?

Briefing - informal?

Discussion - review or ask series of questions?

Meeting - with agenda book or paper?

The above questions in your mind will trigger thinking on how you intend to achieve your objectives of the presentation and that too in an impressive manner. The answers you sought to the Five Ws will certainly help you devise your most appropriate strategy. Here, the most important aspects of your speech are the use of language, tone, pace and the medium that you will employ to keep your audience interested and involved in your presentation without any distraction whatsoever

After you have completed and sorted out the main parts of your speech, you should think and revise in your mind the best way to open your presentation. Remember that the opening of your speech or presentation has to be impressive, thought provoking and interesting for your audience. Some tips on **INTRODUCTION** at the beginning of your presentation are given below:

Indicate

You will do well to 'indicate' your topic or theme of the presentation while opening your talk. Do not forget the following steps at the opening stage itself:

Greet

Take the opportunity to say Good Morning with a pleasant, open, and coaxing smile that conveys the impression that you are pleased to be there.

Identify

Say who you are, where you are from and what you do.

Qualify

If the organizers have not introduced you to the audience in advance, give some brief indications about your own experience and qualification relevant to the subject matter of your presentation. This will demonstrate your suitability to speak on the subject and you stand a better chance of your acceptability by the audience in the very beginning of the presentation itself.

Questions

Inform the audience when you would prefer to take questions from them.

Need

Show the audience why they 'need' to listen to what you have got to say. What is the relevance to them and how it is going to benefit them.

Title

This relates to 'tell them what you are going to tell them' part of your presentation. Tell them the 'title' of your talk and also brief what items under this title you are going to discuss.

Range

Inform your audience as to how long you will take to complete your presentation and the 'range' of the issues covered in the same.

Objective

Always keep in mind the 'objective' of your presentation-whether it is to inform, to persuade, to sell or to entertain. Therefore, at the introduction stage itself, you must define the objective clearly to your audience.

Diction

Your choice of words and phrases, the tone and pitch of your voice and the pronunciation constitute the 'diction' and a pleasing delivery in the beginning of your presentation shall set the mood of your audience in a receptive frame of mind. Also remember that your diction should suit the context and it should be appropriate for the particular occasion.

Understandable

You must use such simple language, words and examples that are 'understandable' to the audience who could easily comprehend and interpret your words exactly in the same sense in which you intend them to understand. Keep It Short and Simple (KISS).

Compact

Avoid becoming too much explanatory. Keep your message to the point, brief and 'compact', but at the same time, make sure that the message remains comprehensive.

Tone with Tact

You need real impressive 'tone' of your speech and its usage with a lot of 'tact' so as to be able to deliver your message that is easily and clearly understood and appreciated by

the audience. Besides, you need the tact not only to visualize the mood of the audience but also to handle them gracefully during the question- answer session of your presentation.

Impersonal

The most important point to remember is that your speech should be ‘impersonal’, i.e., it has to be dispassionate, detached, objective and business like without any subjective consideration.

Obeisance

You must hold your audience in high esteem, bow in a courteous manner as a mark of respect and show the ‘obeisance’ to them who, in turn, will reciprocate the same response with a sense of unavoidable obligation.

Novelty

You should always keep in mind that even you yourself in audience would love to look at the speaker if he or she exhibits some newness, freshness, originality and a marked difference. Therefore, the virtues of the ‘novelty’ should not be lost sight of at any cost.