

Activity 7. Five or ten minute presentation

Select an article from one of the journals listed below. Prepare a five minute presentation on your chosen topic which would be suitable for a non-scientific audience (e.g. students from an arts course). In addition to the talk structure you **MUST** consider the level of detail and language that will be suitable. When your audience is from a non scientific background using detailed technical information which they will not understand will simply confuse and bore them. Keep your talk simple and to the point, explain the relevant points clearly without unnecessary technical detail.

Journals

- Chemistry in Britain
- Chemistry in Industry
- Nature
- New Scientist
- Physics World
- Journal suggested by course tutor

Activity 7. Oral Presentation Feedback

Name of speaker.....

Identify one positive aspect of the presentation

Identify one aspect of the presentation for improvement

Give some general impressions of the presentation

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Activities 6 & 7. Tips for Oral Presentations

It very rarely works for someone to stand and read out a pre-prepared speech. Although this may sound fine when practicing in private it tends to sound false and wooden when tried in public. Listed below are some of the main points to consider.

Jot down what you want to say using:

- Snappy headings
- Brief sentences
- Structures
- Schemes
- Small tables/graphs/charts

Produce your overhead transparencies (OHTs)

- Using OHTs means the audience has something other than you to look at!
- Keep OHTs simple
- Structure your OHTs to help guide and inform your audience (N.B. OHTs can contain prompts for you)
- Use large drawings/type
- Do not cram them with information
- Use colour for emphasis
- Check that they are easily read at a distance

Try the talk

- Just try explaining everything aloud, referring to your OHTs
- If you're very nervous, write it all out as a back-up but DON'T be tempted to read it to the audience
- Make headings on a card for reference or, print out a set of your slides as 'notes page' on PowerPoint using the 'print as' facility
- Possibly add something for variety (visual aid, anecdote). Run through the talk 3-4 times, ideally to a friend, until you're happy with content and length

Giving your talk successfully

- Beforehand, check you can work the overhead projector (OHP)/lighting etc
- Try to stand relaxed, without fidgeting, and looking confident!
- Take it easy - there's no rush - refer to OHTs, but look at the audience as much as possible

The end of the talk

- Try to finish on a high point (something successful)
- Thank anyone who has helped with the work
- Make it clear you've finished - e.g. "Thank you for your attention" (not "That's it!")

After your talk

- Get some feedback - you need an honest friend to tell you the best things about your talk ... and also the features that were less successful.

Some additional tips

Preparation

Using composite slides or OHTs (where you add or reveal information to gradually generate a quite complex slide) often works well

Using slides or computer-driven visual aids often leads to a very slick presentation, but remember: The same guidelines apply concerning the structure of the talk and the visual aids

Mixed media presentations (e.g. slides + demonstration + OHP) are great, but lots of quick changes between different media can bewilder an audience

A good idea is to number your slides and OHTs, and check you know how to get them right way up! Be prepared for technical failure – have a copy of OHTs as back up!

Giving your talk

- Have an OHT illuminated before you start
- Look at the audience ... although just over their heads has the same effect!
- Try not to block your audience's view of the screen - if you want to point to something on an OHP, simply point a pen at the appropriate bit of the transparency
- If you stumble over your words, or spot any mistakes on your slides/OHT, just carry on regardless ... like any other performer would!

At the end

- If questions are asked, take your time to answer, and admit if you don't know the answer. One good tactic is to repeat the question in your own words, which: ensures everyone can hear the question; and means it is clear what question you'll answer.

Remember your audience is there to listen to what you have to say. Your audience may consist of academics or business people who are confident speakers. However, just like you they had to learn those skills. Although it can be daunting and you may feel apprehensive about speaking in front of an audience practice helps improve performance and mistakes you make in one presentation will allow you to learn and avoid making that mistake again.

Meta data

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