

# Principles for delivery effective presentations



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## **Understand the principles underpinning the delivery of presentations:**

### **1. 1) Analyse the advantages and limitations of different methods of making presentations and the different media:**

There is a variety of different methods of presenting information to an audience. If you have a large amount of information to discuss then the use of visual aids would be exceedingly beneficial. PowerPoint or Prezi are commonly used software for developing presentations. Using these materials to support your presentation engages audiences, and presents the information clearly. It also highlights key points that you want audiences to recollect. When you are presenting statistics, using images and graphs to display the data, makes it easy for individuals to interpret. Visual aids are easy to create and the different types of software available are easy to use. They can also be adapted depending on the audience's requirements, such as making the slides more colourful if you are presenting to younger children. Visual aids are flexible because they can be used in numerous platforms.

Nevertheless, visual aids can be overwhelming for audiences if the presentation slides contain too much text. Additionally, if the theme colours of the presentation are too drastic, because they can be distracting for viewers. Technical difficulties may occur during the presentation; this can cause a huge problem if the speaker is reliant on the PowerPoint slides. This means that the speaker would have to develop contingency plans, and produce further materials for the event, which, is time consuming. They would also require a remote controller to change the slides in during the

presentation otherwise; they would have to stand by the computer, which is restrictive.

Another method of presenting information is through face to face communication. This would normally take place in smaller groups which, is a more personal type of communication, because it allows you to meet new people in order for to extend your client base. Furthermore, if you are meeting with partners for the first time it allows you to put a face to a name. Face to face discussions improve and build business relationships and, so benefit a company's credibility. You also have the opportunity to analyse the body language of other individuals. You are more likely to listen and trust an individual that has positive body language, like maintaining eye contact. You can fulfil product demonstrations, so everyone can visually see how products work. Presentations give audiences the opportunity to ask questions or present their views, so it allows a speaker to receive feedback and ensure everyone understands the context.

However, not all individuals feel comfortable speaking out in a group, therefore a speaker may not collect as much feedback as they had hoped. Another issue with face-to-face communication are barriers and impairments. For example, a language barrier will affect an individual's ability to understand the discussion, unless it is translated. Furthermore, if someone has a hearing impairment, this will influence how much of the discussion he or she can actually hear and process. During face-to-face conversations interruptions can occur. This will affect the fluency of a discussion and may cause the speaker to become distracted. Lastly,

conversations tend not to be as formal for presenting information unless it is a business meeting or a forum.

Lastly, teleconferencing is another frequently used method for communicating information. Teleconferences can be set up through the internet using media like skype or gotomeeting software. <sup>6</sup> These types of software are easy to set up and they do not require travel or catering arrangements during discussions and presentations. Without having to plan these arrangements, the company will save money, which can be spent elsewhere. Communicating on this type of media reduces the cost of business calls. Teleconferences can be scheduled at short notice due to the unrequired planning. It also allows you to have discussions with people and ensure they have understood your ideas. It enables you to keep in touch with customers and/or other business particularly if they are not local.

However, teleconferences will be unsuccessful if there are technical failures such as losing internet connection because it will cause buffering and lagging. Furthermore, it requires smart technology and expensive facilities, so you need access to these, to be involved in online discussions. Language barriers can be problematic if individuals do not understand the conversation. It will also hinder their ability to contribute to the discussion. Interruptions could occur, which can affect the flow of the conversation, and potentially cause disputes if it is constant. Although this type of presentation is face to face, it is not as personal because you are not physically meeting the individuals.

## **1. 2) Explain how the type and size of the audience affects the delivery of a presentation:**

Analysing the size of the audience before the event, will help with the preparation of a presentation. For instance, if you are delivering a presentation to a large group, you may require a microphone, in order for you to project your voice sufficiently. The use of PowerPoint slides will help in outlining the key information to the audience. Using these simple implements will certify the audience is following the presentation; they can hear and clearly understand what is being said. They are more likely to remain focused during the entire presentation, if these aspects are considered. On the other hand, if you are delivering a presentation to a smaller group, you can use other methods to retain an audience's attention. Using resources like flip charts or handouts would be more beneficial, because you do not want to overwhelm the audience by using too much technology, and divert their attention. You can use additional methods to maintain an audience's attention such as, keeping eye contact, positive body language and facial expressions. <sup>1</sup>

Consider the type of audience you are presenting to, and the importance of the presentation message to them. Make sure you highlight significant action items, so they will absorb the information and take it away with them to apply elsewhere. Acknowledge the amount of knowledge they possess in the particular subject area. If they are familiar with the topic of discussion, ensure you include a range of interesting information in the presentation that they might not be aware of yet. If you repeat what they already know, you will avert their attention. Examine the age group you are delivering the

presentation to, and tailor the presentation to meet these requirements. A business forum consisting of predominately adults would have a larger attention span than younger children would. Furthermore, the adults would be able to take on board a great deal more information, and concentrate for the majority of the duration. Finally, establish some common assumptions the audience could interpret. This will allow you to present the information in a way that the audience will be less likely to misconceive. <sup>1</sup>

### **1. 3) Explain the factors to be taken into account in developing contingency plans when delivering presentations:**

One of the first factors to take into account when creating contingency plans is the development of a risk assessment. This is essential for identifying any potential problematic areas that could occur during a presentation. When generating this plan, the main objective to achieve is ensuring you can continue delivering the presentation, even if an issue does arise. In this assessment, you must prioritize the key risks, in order for you to prepare for these. Start by beginning to develop scenarios for each risk, this will allow you to observe how effective the plan actually is. For instance, if you are fulfilling a presentation and there is a power outage/ technical failures ensure you have handouts for an audience to refer to, if the presentation requires electrical equipment, and choose an appropriate venue that is light, airy and spacious. Use the risk assessment to find a variety of ways to reduce these proposed risks. For example, to prevent a power outage/ technical failures a company can ensure their electrical equipment is frequently tested, and that all appliances have passed their practical electrical tests before use. Once you have formed a plan, communicate it

with either your colleagues or department manager, so you can receive some valid feedback. In addition, you could test your contingency plans to check your presentation still runs smoothly with the use of different materials. You could also formalize the contingency plan, so other colleagues can refer to this when they are delivering presentations.

#### **1. 4) Explain voice projection and timing techniques when delivering presentations:**

Voice projection is exceedingly significant during presentations, particularly if you are speaking to a large audience. This is because you need to ensure that everyone, including the individuals seated nearer the back of the room, can clearly hear you. Speaking loudly, and with sufficient control demonstrates confidence, which will enhance an audience's opinion of you. Not only do you want to project your voice sufficiently, you want to depict a positive image to your audience by, maintaining eye contact and remaining a good posture throughout the presentation. Communicate with simplicity and ensure your sentences are articulate. You also need to speak clearly and slowly otherwise; it defeats the object of speaking loudly, then audiences will understand what you are saying. Whereas, if you mumble they may question what you are saying. There are three techniques to develop your ability to project your voice. These are breathing techniques, resonance and pitch. Good breathing techniques will make your voice sound stronger and, so enhance projection. Opening your chest will improve your vocal tone to resonate your voice. Speaking in your optimum pitch will ensure you perform to the best of your ability. <sup>3</sup>

Timing is key during presentations because you want to ensure you abide the allocated time slot. Make sure you are aware of this allocated slot to avoid exceeding it, and risking the attention loss of viewers. However, you do not want to finish early either, as you may have to make up the time, and this could make you look disorganised, especially if you have not planned any additional resources. Creating an agenda will consider the time slot, so you can plan how much time each part of the presentation should take up, to ensure it is within the slot. Leaving some time at the end of the presentation may be good, to encourage the audience to ask questions. Planning the content of the presentation, will help you to include only relevant information. You want the information mentioned to be of interest to the audience, to retain their attention. Before the event, it is good to have a practice run through, so you can gauge how long the presentation will last and make adaptations accordingly. Having your colleagues or managers to watch the run through will allow you to collect some useful feedback to develop your presentation. <sup>4</sup>

### **1. 5) Explain the factors to be taken into account in responding to questions from an audience:**

When responding to questions a factor to take into account would be preparation. Research the topic you are discussing if you lack some knowledge, so you are more prepared and have a better understanding. This will permit you to answer more questions if you know more about the subject area. If necessary, your colleagues could support you in answering questions if you are out of your comfort zone. Another important aspect would be to make a note of questions you think will be raised, and then you are able to



plan detailed answers. It is acceptable if you need time to think about a question, just pause momentarily to contemplate an answer. It is always good to give an answer or at least go back to the individual asking the question otherwise, it looks unprofessional if you avoid answering it. It also leaves the audience feeling confused if they wanted clarification of something. Overall, just answer any questions asked directly and honestly.

### **1. 6) Explain different methods for evaluating the effectiveness of a presentation:**

There are various methods when evaluating the effectiveness of a presentation. Firstly, you can do a self-evaluation and make a note of any strengths or weaknesses of your presentation. For best results try to establish a few ideas for both which, will ideally help you develop for the next presentation. Furthermore, ensure you give yourself fair comments because you do not want to be overly harsh or too generous either. An easy method to support your interpretations would be to distribute surveys amongst the attendees after the presentation. These should be completely anonymous, to encourage individuals to provide honest feedback. If you had a large audience, you should receive more feedback to help you to analyse your performance. If any of your colleagues or managers watched your performance, they could also provide some feedback by either discussing it with you privately, or giving you some written feedback. Receiving feedback is an excellent way to encourage change and allow individuals to develop. Furthermore, positive feedback will make you feel pleased with your performance and boost your confidence.

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