

How to make a good oral presentation



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HOW TO MAKE A GOOD ORAL PRESENTATION Make a good oral presentation could be easy but some aspects that we have to consider first of all, it means answer some questions: Who is our audience Age, genre, if they are students or workers, if the group is hetero or homogeneous etc. Where are we going to expose our speech In other word the context: it is clear that it is not the same if our audience is of middle age women in a meeting of amateur theater actresses or middle age women but in a conference for theater directors, for instance.

When have we to talk Starting a conference in the morning or closing it in the afternoon, maybe after days of different presentations, and, of course, how much time we will have to expose our speech. How we decided to talk about the subject Formal or informal, using humor or/and metaphors, in general rhetoric features but not only, we have to consider as well if use images, sounds, material to distribute individually among our audience or live it free for those who want it, etc. What are we talking about In my opinion this is the main question we have to answer. The subject of our speech determines mainly all the other parameters. After we have considered carefully all these variables, there are some common point that mean to be kept in mind when we are planning our speech and during the exposition itself, while we are facing the public, and these are common for every kind of oral exposition we have to prepare. Lets have a look at them.

It is a good way to start with a pre-introduction of the speaker, ourselves (who we are, why we are there speaking, if we have any title to be there etc.) and the subject we are going to talk about. Introducing ourselves allows to create a connection with the audience: we could be very famous or well

known, but a direct and human connection it is essential in order to ensure communication, to pull down emotional frontiers or walls. For the same reason use *captatio benevolentiae* is another of the tools means to be at the beginning: we are not perfect, we are human, we are in front of a micro just because we are going to share with somebody else what we already learned, nothing more nothing less.

It could be true or not, but present ourselves as perfect superior creatures that can not be wrong never, dispose our audience in a negative attitude that hampers communication. Secondly, it is good to set the conference, provide audience with a context, from general to particular, the main topic, and the reasons why that subject was chosen. Explain the developing of the theme in order to clarify the audience what they are going to listen to; this is helpful to avoid ??? bad choices???, that is to say if someone is unfortunately in the wrong conference hall because he/she had wrong expectations about the theme. In this moment of our oral presentation is essential to catch the attention of the audience: it may be possible they are in because of misunderstanding, but it does not mean that, after a clear exposition of our purposes, they will not decide to stay and enjoy the conference. It is always a pleasure to be positively surprised, doesnt itAnother point we have to keep in mind is that, even under the aspect of ??? common people???, the image we pretend to reflect after what we said more above, we are the commander in chief, we are at the helm and set the course. To maintain the control of the situation in every moment, it is crucial to have perfectly in mind what we are going to talk about, which is the order of the singular parts and the time we will need for each part.

Sharing these knowledge with our public, at least quickly, give them a clear view of the subject, too. It will be easier for them to follow the developing in a logical sequence, at the same time they feel like be active part it. Once you have left these points clear, you can start with the body of the conference. Contextualize it in details, use funny or interesting, curious quotations to keep the attention wakes up. Respect the order you predict leaving questions and doubts at the end: this helps you to stay focused on your purpose as well as your audience. Be clear but try to make it interesting: even a public of adults can lose its attention if you always use the same voice tone, if the conditions of the conference stay the same minute after minute, if you never interact with them, if they are not part of the process. So do not forget to look at them while you are speaking because they are your thermometer: if there are mouths opening, people chatting, movement in the hall etc.

these are all signs that something is going wrong because you are losing their attention. If so, you have to do something to attract it: enchant your public and they will follow you till the end. Your oral exposition has to be something people will say it meant to be there.

For it remember and use all rhetorical features you consider helpful: humor, metaphors, comparisons, rhetoric questions and so on. Using quotations gives professional and scientific confidence to the subject but they have not to extend other while the effect produced will be the opposite. All these resources give us several benefits making easier for us the conference, less boring for both audience and us and the time bearable. Do not forget to expose all theories, not only yours: it is definitely more polite.

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To close the conference it is important to talk about your personal conclusions: an oral exposition is not only a summary of some books and studies, you-the-speaker and your opinions are the plus-value which makes that conference worthy. At the same time, closing your paper, is useful to make a sort of short and quick review of all the points we have just treated. That is twice useful: for us, to check if we were really able to honor our purpose, and for the audience, it gives them the chance to fix concepts and have a general view of the whole, like the circle is closing. At the end, as we said, it is a clever option to leave time for questions and doubts: maybe there will not be any, but it is a sign of good willing.

Now, because our purpose is to be able to make a good oral presentation in particular to a class of high school students, all we have to do is respect the points viewed up to now already knowing part of the answers to the questions to be solved. Our audience could be a mixed or homogeneous class of students, all between 11 and 16 years old; the subject is going to be one of the lessons among the ones of the English Curriculum; mostly one hour is the time we have and the style, mainly, has to be formal but interesting. The most important aim to reach in this context is to catch childrens attention: in this period of their life they have their minds focused in everything but study, even less study a different language whose usefulness they probably cannot see. Once more, be clear and organized is indispensable: our students need to keep clearly in their mind what they are going to study, to listening to, what they are demanded to do, which are their general and personal aims and how they could reach those goals. Of course, we are their guides, so it is obvious that they have to be sure we will

always be present and available to help them in everything they may need, but only if they make evident their compromise. Let me explain better this point. It is not a discrimination but exactly the opposite: we have to forget the old concept that to be equal we have to divide our time for each student, the same time for each and everyone. This is not correct.

But at the same time, we can not dedicate all our resources to one needed person, this will not be equal too. So, how can solve this dilemma Easy, look at your pupils and focus your mind in looking for their compromise: are they interested in the subject Do they really want to improve their skills If the answer at these questions is yes, well, dedicate them all the time they need, all your forces and passion. On one side we have to hunt their respect, while on the other they have to do the same: time is precious, so the earliest they understand this concept most productive be their life. Nonetheless, if the answer is no, there are something wrong in what you are doing. Maybe you are not able to catch their attention in class, they may have a higher or lower level of English respect the average, maybe you have to chose the style of the activities you usually propose in class etc. Do not forget that you are the commander in chief: the responsibility of the ship is yours, not of your sailors. This remark mainly thinking about the last part of the oral exposition: the time for doubts and questions. It is quite common that this part lasts for a long time but mainly for senseless questions, making you lose your time, the concentration of the pupils and finally the control of the class.

Time for questions and doubts, precisely because we are talking about an oral exposition to a high school class, never has to miss as well as participation, collaboration of students during the class is a good stuff to

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maintain attention, promote peer to peer learning and make them conscious about learning process. To close my paper, let me remember that if it is true that you are the commander, without your sailors, without your staff you will never be able to control, manage your ship and more, your journey will be senseless. Thank you for your attention.