

Winning Presentation Skills ..

Put Power, Punch and Pizzazz into Your Presentations

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Your ability to speak well is one of the most powerful keys to business and personal success. Research reveals that those with the highest incomes have superior presentation and persuasion skills.

In fact, speaking well and getting your point across in clear and concise manner are stronger factors in achieving high status in business than education, length of experience or career field.

Presentation skills aren't just for top executives and CEO's anymore. They're necessary for any person in business who wants to get their point across confidently, clearly, and without nervousness, whether they're presenting a new idea ... selling a product ... or making a presentation before a small group or board of directors.

The two most crucial areas of successful presentations are planning and delivery.

Planning includes understanding the audience, assessing their needs, establishing objectives to meet their needs, researching the topic, designing the presentation and making sure the facilities are adequate for the presentation. To develop a successful plan you need to answer the following questions.

Who are your participants?

Do they share the same background and level of experience?

Have the participants attended presentations similar to yours?

Do they have any knowledge or skills that pertain to the topic of your presentation?

How many participants will attend the presentation?

Did the participants volunteer to attend or were they required to attend?

What is the preferred learning style of the group? i.e. lectures, demonstrations

How much time will you have for the presentation?

What are the goals of the presentation?

How will I open the presentation?

How will I close the presentation?

How will I organize the body?

How will I get their attention?

How will I keep their interest?

What questions will I ask?

What questions will they ask?

What notes, visuals and materials do I need?

90% of the success of a presentation is attributed to planning. If you don't plan all the tips and strategies you use won't make a difference.

Delivery includes the presenter's style and his or her ability in knowing how to use verbal and nonverbal communication, questioning and reinforcement, group interaction, and the appropriate use of humor. Some guidelines to make your presentation a winner include:

1. Be sure to tell your audience why your presentation is relevant to them
2. Keep your presentation within or under the allotted time. Never go over time.
3. Make sure you have enough breaks. Research shows that adult concentration peaks out at 1 hour and 15 minutes.
4. Do not tell jokes unless you are a great storyteller ... and then make certain that your story will offend absolutely no one in the room!
5. Eliminate all material that is not directly relevant to the central theme of your presentation.
6. Your visual aids should be aids and not crutches. Do not overwhelm your audience with them.
7. Maintain eye contact with your audience throughout your presentation.
8. Listen actively to audience questions. Often the questioner is asking more than what meets the ear.
9. Always rephrase what you think the question to be before you respond to it.
10. Show enthusiasm. People are more convinced by the enthusiasm of your message than by the message itself.
11. Deliver presentations in your own style. To come across as genuine, sincere and knowledgeable, you must be yourself.
12. Keep the audiences' attention. Have a question, anecdote, story, exercise or discussion point every 3 to 5 minutes.
13. Have an attention getting opener. You can do this by, asking a question, sharing a personal experience or anecdote, starting with a strong statistic, commenting on a current event, or by using a visual
14. Use your voice and body language to make your message memorable. Only 7% of the way your message is perceived is by the words you use. The other 93% is from the tone of your voice, the rate of your speech and your body language.
15. Relieve anxiety by, organizing and planning, practicing, focusing on the happy faces in the audience, doing relaxation exercises, arriving early to get to know and

feel comfortable with the audience.

Whether you are speaking to one person or hundreds, the success of your presentation depends on more than what you have to say. How you say it and how you interact with your audience will also determine their response. By following the guidelines above, you'll be well on your way to planning and delivering a winning presentation.

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