

# Communication Skills for Leaders

## *Getting Your Message Across*

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Name

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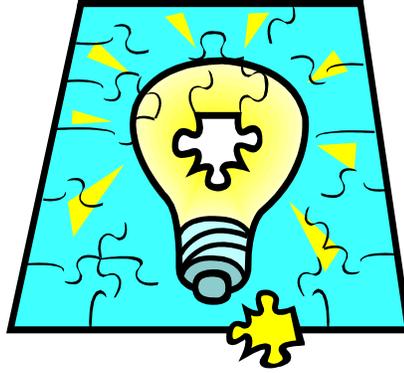
Date

A Training Program of



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Special Points of  
Interest



## 7 Messages of a Good Speaker

1. I will not waste your time.
2. I know who you are, and I know why you came.
3. I am well organized.
4. I will deliver this speech in an interesting, conversational way.
5. I know my subject.
6. Here are my most important points.
7. I am finished.

*Content is king, but style is the beautiful queen that captures and keeps attention.*

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## The goals of Getting Your Message Across

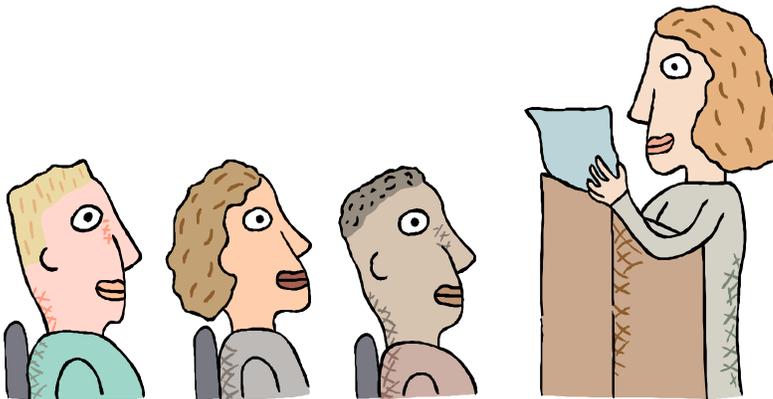
are to develop participants' knowledge and skills in:

- ⇒ Developing a presentation.
- ⇒ Delivering a presentation.

## Workshop Performance Objectives:

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- ⇒ Identify the elements of an effective presentation.
- ⇒ Discuss how a presenter's body language impacts the effectiveness of the presentation.
- ⇒ Identify ways to use nervous energy to strengthen a presentation.



**What is your biggest fear?**

**Special Points of  
Interest**

**The difference between. . .**  
Public Speaking

Presentations

**Today, we will discuss:**

1. Designing a Presentation
2. Delivering a Presentation
3. Practicing Your Presentation Skills

**Circle the questions to which you answer 'yes.'**

1. I am uncomfortable speaking before a group.
2. I find it difficult getting started when developing a presentation.
3. I suffer from high anxiety when speaking publicly.
4. I have trouble handling questions in front of a group.
5. I am afraid my gestures and my non-verbal language look unnatural and awkward.
6. I worry about what I should wear to present.
7. My voice sometimes seems weak and shaky.
8. I am afraid of being boring.
9. I feel intimidated by an audience.
10. I am afraid I do not get my message across.
11. I would rather face a mean bunch of ravenous lions and tigers than speak publicly.



# Developing Your Presentation

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Preparation is key to your effectiveness. To prepare your next presentation, answer each of the following questions.

Special Points of  
Interest

## Why are you giving the presentation?

- ⇒ What do you want the audience to do or to know?
- ⇒ Make your goals \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Who is your audience?

- ⇒ Besides knowing and respecting the age, lifestyle, culture, and formality of the group, respect their intelligence and knowledge on your topic.

## What are the major points you will make?

- ⇒ Three (3) is a good number.
- ⇒ What supporting information do you need to make those points?
- ⇒ Do the points support your goals?
- ⇒ Here is where you either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ the audience.

## What tone or mood do you want to set?

*Prior proper preparation prevents poor performance of the person putting on the presentation.*

# Recipe for a Winning Presentation

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## 1. Those first 90 seconds.

- ⇒ WIIFM — The “what’s in it for me?” principle. Why should I (a member of your audience) pay attention?
- ⇒ Why should I listen to you?
- ⇒ Give them an overview of what you are going to tell them.
- ⇒ Good openers include:

## 2. Provide the main body of the presentation.

- ⇒ Use the major points and supporting information you prepared.
- ⇒ \_\_\_\_\_: Link each point together.

## 3. The Grand Finale.

- ⇒ The closing is the \_\_\_\_\_ part of your presentation.
- ⇒ Summarize and review what you told them.
- ⇒ Types of closers include:

- ⇒ Avoid:



## Special Points of Interest

The way you look through the eyes of the audience increases your credibility and helps get your message across.

### Facial Expressions

- ✓ You'll appear upbeat if you keep your eyebrows up and your eyes open.
- ✓ Lowered eyebrows are more intimidating than raised.
- ✓ Don't stare or squint.
- ✓ Smiling is usually interpreted as cooperative and warm.
- ✓ If you smile at your audience, they will generally smile back.
- ✓ Your face can perform 250,000 different facial expressions.

### Eye Contact

- ✓ Initiate eye contact with your audience right away. You will catch their attention and raise your own confidence.
- ✓ Recipients of prolonged gazes tend to nod in agreement.
- ✓ Lack of eye contact at key moments suggests submissiveness, and it trivializes your message.
- ✓ Hold eye contact for a few seconds with different audience members. With larger audiences, make eye contact with the people on the outer rims of the audience.
- ✓ Don't scan the audience or look over their heads.

### Posture and Body Movement

- ✓ Standing up straight increases dominance and credibility.
- ✓ Sitting and standing still, versus fidgeting or pacing, help you appear controlled and confident.
- ✓ When standing, think "tree." Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart to keep from swaying, rocking, or dancing. Do not cross anything (feet, legs, hands, arms).
- ✓ Don't shuffle or wander. Walk briskly and with purpose.
- ✓ Dominant people lean forward more often.
- ✓ Tilting your head can be submissive or curious.
- ✓ Movement shows enthusiasm, passion, and energy.
- ✓ Distinctive movement forces the audience to keep their eyes open.
- ✓ Movement can emphasize an important point and greatly increase audience retention.

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## Hand Gestures

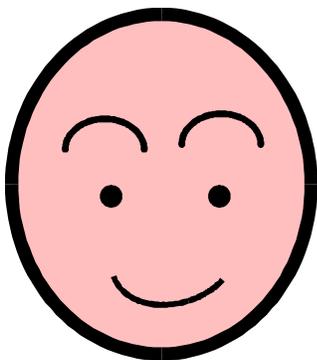
- ✓ Keep your hands in front of you, at waist level or above. Lifted hands indicate confidence and friendliness.
- ✓ Keep your palms up and visible. Don't hide them in your pockets, droop them by your side, or gesture below the belt.
- ✓ Your hand gestures should be between the size of a softball and basketball.
- ✓ Have purpose in your gestures. Use them to strengthen your point or to keep the audience's attention.
- ✓ Do not point.

## Space

- ✓ If you are close enough to touch your audience, be wary of being perceived as pushy.
- ✓ Yet, if you are more than a restaurant table's length away, you will seem unfriendly.
- ✓ Consider the culture and the personality of your audience.
- ✓ High status people tend to be given more space.
- ✓ Initiation of touch signals the controlling member of the group.

## Your Body Language

... the eyes, the hands, and the body...



# The First Impression

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## Special Points of Interest

### Dress

- ✓ Know your audience.
- ✓ Never have anything on your body or clothing that will make noise.
- ✓ Formal dress indicates dominance and control.
- ✓ Conservative dress implies respectability, stability, and trustworthiness.
- ✓ You do not want people to notice your clothes more than your message.
- ✓ Remove change, keys, jewelry, or any other distraction (either for you or the audience).
- ✓ Dark colors are perceived as conservative and authoritative.

### Time

- ✓ Being, starting, and ending on time imply respect.
- ✓ Taking time to answer questions implies contemplation.

## Make Your Appearance an Asset



- ⇒ A little nervousness gives you an energy edge. Use it.
- ⇒ Practice, practice, practice. You'll be more comfortable presenting the material.
- ⇒ If possible, visit the room you'll be presenting in.
- ⇒ Take relaxing, deep breaths.
- ⇒ Greet and chat with the audience as they enter the room.
- ⇒ Don't apologize for being nervous.
- ⇒ Take a brisk five-minute walk.
- ⇒ Begin with a story, especially one of personal experience that relates to the topic. Your energy will show, and the crowd will loosen up.
- ⇒ Wear clothes that give you energy and in which you feel comfortable.
- ⇒ Involve the audience in your presentation. Not only will they remember more, they will stay focused on the topic.
- ⇒ Relax and have fun. It'll be over soon.



## Special Points of Interest

### Voice

- ✓ Does your voice keep the audience's attention or make them tune you out? Your voice, like the slam of a fist on a desk, can be used for emphasis.
- ✓ The most effective change is raising your voice.
- ✓ The second most effective vocal change is speeding up or slowing down.
- ✓ While still important, changing your tone of voice is the least effective at keeping attention.
- ✓ Mix it up for variety.
- ✓ A low, smooth, relaxed voice is pleasant.

### Pauses

- ✓ Breaks in verbal communication.
- ✓ Can be fillers (uhh, um). Too many fillers make you sound unknowledgeable or uninterested.
- ✓ Appropriate use of silence can make a point or draw your audience's attention back to you.

### Taking Tangents

- ✓ Going off on a topic unrelated to the presentation.
- ✓ They deflect from your message.
- ✓ They imply you haven't prepared your presentation or don't know what you're talking about.

### Pronunciation and Articulation

- ✓ Don't sound like you have marbles in your mouth.
- ✓ Try these exercises.
  - The sixth sheik's sixth sheep's sick.
  - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
  - I am the very model of a modern Major General.  
I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral.  
I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical.  
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical.  
I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical.  
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical.  
About binomial theorem, I'm teeming with a lot of news,  
With many cheery tips on the square of the hypotenuse.

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## Techniques to Help Your Voice

- ⇒ Sit or stand up straight. It makes you sound more interesting, enthusiastic, and persuasive.
- ⇒ Breathe from your diaphragm and get optimum support behind your back.
- ⇒ Relax your throat. Consciously keep an open, “yawny” feeling for more resonance.
- ⇒ Speak in your natural pitch. Find your natural pitch by:
  - Without thinking first, sing the opening line of “Happy Birthday.”
  - Hold the last note.
  - On that note, say, “Hello, everyone.”
  - Remove the singing aspect, and repeat the greeting.
  - Continue speaking on that pitch until you are comfortable with it. This is your natural pitch.



## Tips for Being Confident

### Special Points of Interest

We constantly make impressions with our behaviors. We act a certain way, and people log that into their memories. Over time, those memories create a grand picture of who we are.

Their impression is based:

- 50% on the way you look.
- 40% on the way you sound.
- 10% on the words you say.

### The Basics

1. If speaking to a small group (2-15 people), try to accomplish **eye contact** with every person for a few seconds.
2. **Look up** from your material every 5-10 seconds.
3. **Speak a little bit louder and a little bit slower** than you would in a normal conversation.
4. **Vary the volume and rate of speech.** Monotone will bore the audience.
5. Stand with **feet shoulder-width apart**, and do not lock your knees.
6. **Keep hands open**, at diaphragm level, and relatively still.
7. Don't stand behind the podium. **Move!**
8. **Present to your audience.** Know who they are before you even begin.
9. **Practice.** The material will roll off your tongue the more comfortable you are with it.
10. **Be yourself**, and have fun.

*Simply paying attention to the messages you send with your body is important. Are you standing in the same spot for the entire presentation? Is your voice flat and uninteresting? Or, maybe you are not making any hand gestures? All these can make a presentation a little boring.*



## Take a Turn

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**What will I speak on today?**

**Special Points of  
Interest**

**What topics might I speak on for my  
neighborhood?**

**What can I do differently next time I speak to  
an audience?**

**What did I learn about delivering a  
presentation?**

### Your Opening: Find Your Hook

1. Is it unusual? Interesting? Exciting? Dramatic? Humorous?
2. Does it lead to your objective?
3. Will it relate to the listeners?
4. Will it excite or interest the listeners?
5. Can it be said in 30 seconds or less?
6. Can you reduce it to one sentence?
7. Should it be used as a statement or a question?
8. You have 7 seconds to get their attention.



## Appendix — Storytelling

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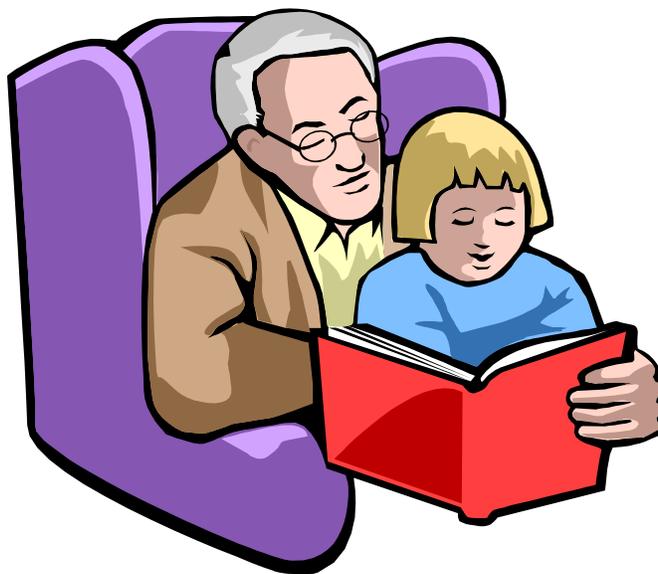
### Special Points of Interest

Stories are one of the most powerful tools a presenter can use. They are a great way for the presenter to relate to the audience.

Stories can be good openers or support information during your presentation.

#### **Make the most of your storytelling opportunity.**

1. Be 100% authentic. Use your own experiences, so you have more emotion and involvement.
2. Identify with the story.
3. Relate your story to the content of your central message.
4. Get involved emotionally and physically.
5. Paint a vivid picture with simple but descriptive words. Address all senses in storytelling – sounds, sights, and emotions associated with particular scenes.
6. Find opportunities to practice your story.
7. Test your story, anecdote, or joke.
8. Maintain a record of good stories you have heard.



### The Don'ts of Delivery

- ⇒ Do not point out your mistakes.
- ⇒ Do not be someone you are not.
- ⇒ Do not try to impress with jargon or big words.
- ⇒ If you stumble, do not repeat sentences.
- ⇒ Do not finish your speech after your audience does.

### The Don'ts for Visuals and Handouts

- ⇒ Forget to turn off your screensaver. (No blaring elephants during your presentation.)
- ⇒ Have a beeping laptop. Plug it in to avoid a low battery.
- ⇒ Speak too quickly.
- ⇒ Overuse animation.
- ⇒ Have unexpected animation fly across the screen. Practice your presentation beforehand.
- ⇒ Use too many bullets and fonts. (Maximum of two fonts per slide.)
- ⇒ Use a font too small. Test it by placing copies of your slides on the floor. Stand above them. Can you read them clearly? Take in to account the size of the room and your audience.
- ⇒ Place too many words on a slide. A good rule is — 7 words per line for a maximum of 7 lines. Headings should be 4 words or less.
- ⇒ Use red letters on a slide.
- ⇒ Have spelling errors.



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