

HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE AND POWERFUL ORAL PRESENTATION

"Often, people come to a conclusion about your presentation by the time you're on the second slide. After that, it's often too late for your bullet points to do you much good." ~Seth Godin, Entrepreneur & Author

Making an oral presentation can be exciting or nerve-racking.

How do you approach this task?

- with ease?
- with confidence?
- with fear?
- with courage?
- with excitement?
- with apprehension?
- with entitlement?
- with self-satisfaction?
- with optimism?
- with pessimism?
- with wisdom?
- with concern?
- with nonchalance?

Are you...?

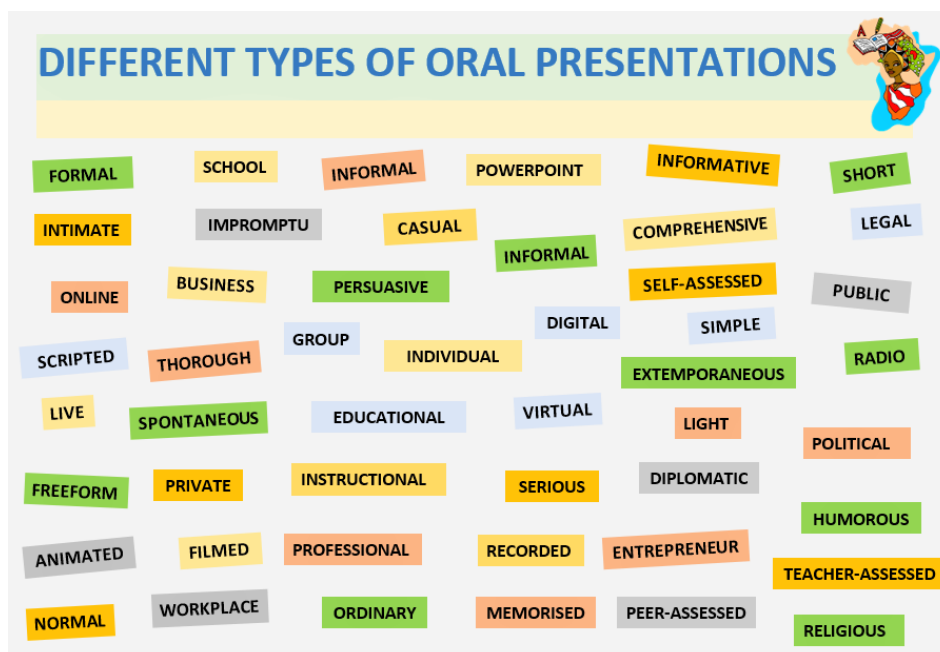
- scared?
- terrified?
- bold?
- worried?
- happy?
- challenged?

- inspired?
- overwhelmed?
- disturbed?
- discouraged?
- encouraged?
- paralysed with fear?
- enthusiastic?

Do you...?

- look forward to the presentation?
- try to find excuses to cancel the presentation?
- find someone to do the presentation with you?
- discover many ideas to put in your presentation?
- think that you will nail your presentation?
- believe that your presentation will not be successful?
- ignore any bad feeling that you have and go on anyway?
- tell your teacher or your employer that you can't do it?
- do a lot of research and preparation so that you will feel more confident?

Your actions or reactions will depend on the type of presentation you will have.



Whatever the case, be confident and believe in your abilities, most of all. You just have to be better prepared and everything will be all right.

Take this as an opportunity to show off your oral presentation skills or to learn.

How to Make an Effective and Powerful Oral Presentation: Step 1 (Definitions)

It is always important to define core words in the topic we are discussing for us to be on the same page.

So here we go!

A presentation can be...

- a talk that gives information about something.
- a speech in which an idea or a product is explained to the audience.
- a lecture that is given in front of a group of people.
- a performance.

A talk refers to...

- an occasion when a person speaks to a group of people about a particular subject.
- an informal lecture about something.
- communication by spoken words.
- a formal discussion over a period of time.
- a speech that is given to a group of people for educational purposes.

A speech is defined as...

- communication through a talk that is given to an audience.
- a formal address delivered to an audience.
- the ability to talk.
- a formal talk that is given to a large number of people on a special occasion.

An oral presentation is described as...

- a structured talk that aims to inform, instruct, explain, motivate, persuade or sell an idea to a specific audience.

- a talk in which visual aids, props or technology are often used to add emphasis to our words when we are communicating a message to an audience.
- a talk given to a particular audience followed by a conversation.

A presenter can be defined as...

- a television host.
- a person who gives an award to someone.

A speaker is...

- a person who does an oral presentation.

A good speaker...

- is well-prepared.
- is knowledgeable.
- does proper research on the subject he or she is going to talk about.
- articulates and uses language that the audience can understand.


Your Turn: What makes a good speaker in English? Prepare your answer and get ready to record yourself using a mobile phone.

How to Make an Effective and Powerful Oral Presentation: Step 2 (Conditions for Success)

It is fairly easy to become good at making and delivering oral presentations. Below are a few tips to help acquire this essential skill.

HOW TO MAKE AN ORAL PRESENTATION (1)

- Choose the right subject.
- Do proper research.
- Create an outline.
- Write out your presentation.
- Rehearse with visual aids and props.



1) Choose the Right Subject

Make sure that you pick the topic that best suits your interests or personality.

Your ideas will shine if you are enthusiastic about your own presentation.

If you are in a school setting and cannot choose what you want to present, do everything to make your subject interesting.

Remember

"The brain doesn't pay attention to boring things."

~John Medina, Molecular Biologist and Author

2) Do Proper Research

As soon as you have your subject, start looking for ideas and facts that will help you develop your presentation.

You can find information online, in books, newspapers or magazines. Make sure you write down your sources for reference purposes.

Avoid [plagiarism](#) and trust in your abilities.

Food for thought

"I've been imitated so well I've heard people copy my mistakes."

~Jimi Hendrix, Guitarist, Singer & Songwriter

3) Create an Outline

Once you have all the information you need, organise it around three main ideas and leave out the details.

This is the plan or foundation of your presentation which will help you better explain your topic.

Make sure you understand everything and think of the information that you will use to support your main ideas.

Don't forget

*"If you don't know what you want to achieve in your presentation,
your audience never will."*

Harvey Diamond, American Writer

4) Write out Your Presentation

It is an excellent idea to develop your arguments on paper or on any other electronic device.

You will thus know what you are going to talk about and you will feel more confident about the whole ordeal.

Aim to memorise ideas and not whole sentences. You will sound more natural and spontaneous on the day of the presentation if you improvise.

Truth hurts

"They memorise everything and learn...nothing."

~Esther M. Friesner, Science-fiction & Fantasy Author

5) Rehearse with Visual Aids and Props

You can use visual aids such as PowerPoint slides, videos or cardboard. Physical objects are also a good way to demonstrate certain ideas.

Aim for simplicity, relevance and big impact. Do not overwhelm your audience with unnecessary graphics and props.

Practise and practise until you feel comfortable with your oral presentation. You can even rehearse in front of a friend, a classmate, a relative, a colleague or even a mirror!

This is true

"All the real work is done during the rehearsal period."

~Donald Pleasence, British Actor

HOW TO MAKE AN ORAL PRESENTATION (2)

Introduce your topic.

Give an outline.

Support your ideas with facts.

Conclude in a proper way.

Answer questions and get feedback.



6) Introduce your Topic

On the day of your presentation, you should start by introducing the subject you are going to talk about.

You are going to basically answer the following question: ***What is the goal of your presentation?***

This step should be as simple as possible.

So relevant

"A smile is always the best form of introduction."

~Sanam Sri

7) Give an Outline

Tell your audience what you are going to talk about in simple, understandable terms.

Generally, a PowerPoint presentation will do justice to your ideas and arguments.

If you are using slides, don't forget to use a font that is easy on the eye. The letters should be of the right size too.

Keep this in the back of your mind

"People who know what they're talking about don't need PowerPoint."

~Steve Jobs, Co-founder of Apple Computer Inc.

8) Support Your Ideas with Facts

Make sure that you have the right information to back your arguments.

Do not overwhelm your audience with a lot of facts because they will not retain it anyway.

If you are using PowerPoint, ensure that the slides contain very few words and graphics.

Wise sayings

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."

~Albert Einstein, German Physicist

9) Conclude in a Proper Way

Sum up your ideas in a way that the audience easily understands.

In general, people should feel that they have learned something and that your presentation was not a waste of their time.

Use concise language and invite reflection.

Something to Chew on

"It is good to have an end journey toward; but is the journey that matters in the end."

~Ernest Hemingway, American Writer

10) Answer Questions and Get Feedback

Usually, after your oral presentation, the audience will want you to clarify certain points.

Some people will also tell you what they thought of your talk.

This is an essential moment—welcome it. Explain and re-explain, accept both positive and negative feedback because they help you to grow.

For that nagging critic

"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt."

~Abraham Lincoln, American 16th President

How to Make an Effective and Powerful Oral Presentation: Step 3 (General Tips)

Here is more advice as to how you can create an excellent oral presentation that will leave your audience asking for more.

HOW TO MAKE AN ORAL PRESENTATION (3)

Articulate.

Modulate your voice.

Have a conversational tone.

Use all your senses.

Use proper body language.



11) Articulate

Make sure to pronounce your words in a clear, meaningful and intelligible manner.

You should be able to separate the syllables in your words and speak with clarity.

Practise this by recording yourself. Someone can hear that recording and give you feedback before you make the oral presentation itself.

Picture this

*"If the tongue had not been framed for articulation, man would still be a
beast in the forest."*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson, American Essayist, Philosopher & Poet

12) Modulate your Voice

It is essential that you vary the speed, tempo and volume of your voice so that you do not sound like a robot.

Your voice can be loud or soft, deep or light, dramatic or neutral. A faster tempo can denote urgency.

Voice modulation enables us to show our emotions to the audience just by speaking in a certain way.

This speaks volumes

"It only takes one voice, at the right pitch, to start an avalanche."

~Dianna Hardy, Author

13) Have a Conversational Tone

Talk as if you were having a normal conversation with someone.

You will connect more to the audience this way and they will react better to your oral presentation.

It is almost as if you were telling a story to the group of people that is in front of you. They will want to hear more of that story and will accompany you to the end.

Believe this

"Be yourself. Be conversational. Be engaged."

~Aliza Sherman, Author & Media Entrepreneur

14) Use all your Senses

The five senses of our human body are sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.

The audience can hear part of a song or a speech. They can also watch video snippets, touch well-chosen props, smell or taste something.

This will surely increase their engagement with your oral presentation.

Hear this

"The senses are a kind of reason. Taste, touch and smell, hearing and seeing, are not merely a means to sensation, enjoyable or otherwise, but they are also a means to knowledge— and are, indeed, your only actual means to knowledge."

~St. Thomas Aquinas, Italian Theologian

15) Use Proper Body Language

You will also connect more with the audience if you keep eye contact with them.

Your facial expressions and hand movements will also speak volumes about your state. Your posture and the way you occupy space will either let you conquer the room or be swallowed by it.

The rule of thumb is to smile and show that you are relaxed. This will reassure your audience in return.

Speak the language of the heart

"Your body communicates as well as your mouth. Don't contradict yourself."

~Allen Ruddock, Business Coach & Mentor

SUMMARY: HOW TO MAKE AN ORAL PRESENTATION

BEFORE THE PRESENTATION

Choose the right subject.

Do proper research

Create an outline.

Write out your presentation.

Rehearse with visual aids and props.

DURING THE PRESENTATION

Introduce your topic.

Give an outline.

Support your ideas with facts.

Conclude in a proper way.

Answer questions and get feedback.

ORAL EXPRESSION SKILLS TO DEVELOP

Articulate.

Modulate your voice.

Have a conversational tone.

Use all your senses.

Use proper body language.



Learn **English**
With **Africa**