## How to make a successful presentation

Most presentations are divided into 3 main parts (+ questions):

1 INTRODUCTION

2 BODY

3 CONCLUSION

+ Questions

As a general rule in communication, repetition is valuable. In presentations, there is a golden rule about repetition:

1. Say what you are going to say,

2. say it,

3. then say what you have just said.

In other words, use the three parts of your presentation to reinforce your message. In the introduction, you tell your audience what your message is going to be. In the body, you tell your audience your real message. In the conclusion, you summarize what your message was.

### Introduction

The introduction is a very important - perhaps the most important - part of your presentation. This is the first impression that your audience has of you. You should concentrate on getting your introduction right. You should use the introduction to:

1. welcome your audience

2. introduce your subject

3. outline the structure of your presentation

4. give instructions about questions

The following list shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

1. Welcoming your audience:

- Good morning, ladies and gentlemen

- Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman

2. Introducing your subject:

- I am going to talk today about...

- The purpose of my presentation is to introduce our new range of...

3. Outlining your structure:

- To start with I’ll describe the progress made this year. Then I’ll mention some of the problems we’ve encountered and how we overcame them. After that I’ll consider the possibilities for further growth next year. Finally, I’ll summarize my presentation (before concluding with some recommendations).

4. Giving instructions about questions:

- Do feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions.

- I’ll try to answer all of your questions after the presentation.

- I plan to keep some time for questions after the presentation.

### 2. Body

The body is the ‘real’ presentation. If the introduction was well prepared and delivered, you will now be ‘in control’. You will be relaxed and confident. The body should be well structured, divided up logically, with plenty of carefully spaced visuals. Remember these key points while delivering the body of your presentation:

- do not hurry

- be enthusiastic

- give time on visuals

- maintain eye contact

- modulate your voice

- look friendly

- keep to your structure

- use your notes

- remain polite when dealing with difficult questions

### Conclusion

Use the conclusion to:

1. Sum up

2. (Give recommendations if appropriate)

3. Thank your audience

4. Invite questions

The following table shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

1.Summing up:

- To conclude,...

- In conclusion,...

- So let me summarize/recap what I’ve said.

- Finally, may I remind you of some of the main points we’ve considered.

2. Giving recommendations:

- In conclusion, my recommendations are...

- I therefore suggest/propose/recommend the following strategy.

3. Thanking your audience:

- Many thanks for your attention.

- May I thank you all for being such an attentive audience.

4. Inviting questions:

- I would be happy to answer any questions.

- If you have any questions, I would be pleased to answer them.

- I would welcome any comments/suggestions.

- Now I’ll try to answer any questions you may have.

- Can I answer any questions?

- Do you have any questions?

- Are there any final questions?

### Questions

Questions are a good opportunity for you to interact with your audience. It may be helpful for you to try to predict what questions will be asked so that you can prepare your response in advance. You may wish to accept questions at any time during your presentation, or to keep a time for questions after your presentation. Normally, it’s your decision, and you should make it clear during the introduction. Be polite with all questioners, even if they ask difficult questions. They are showing interest in what you have to say and they deserve attention.

## Basics

**Visual aids:** flipchart, screen, whiteboard, projector, overhead projector, handouts.

**Types of presentations:** press conference, briefing, demonstration, product launch, lecture, talk, seminar, workshop.

**Remember:**

* to find out about the audience – how many people there will be, who they are, why they will be there, how much they know about the subject
* to find out about the presenting room – the seating plan, equipment
* to plan the content and structure
* to write notes
* to memorize the first five sentences of your talk
* to prepare visual aids – pictures, diagrams, etc.
* to rehearse your presentation – to practise it
* to start on time
* to plan timing of the slides
* not to spend too much time on one point
* not to digress
* to finish on time
* to speak clearly with appropriate tone and volume of your voice
* to make eye contact
* to face the audience at all times
* to smile only if appropriate
* to use gestures only to emphasize key points

### Useful phrases

To begin, let’s look at …

Let’s get back to …

That’s all I have time for now.

Let’s move on to ….

As you can see…

I think that covers everything on ….

Time is moving on, so let’s turn to ….

Firstly, …. Secondly, …. And last, but no least …

In my view, …

That brings me to the end of my presentation.

**Answering questions:**

That’s a fair point.

That’s confidential. I’m afraid I’m not at liberty to tell you.

That’s not really my field. But I can put you in touch with …

Well, I think that goes beyond the scope of today’s presentation.

I’m afraid we’ve run out of time.

Sorry, I didn’t catch the question.

