

Oral presentations summary

Introduction

Purpose

You may need to do a presentation as part of your assessment or as part of the learning experience, such as class presentations or poster presentations. In any presentation, the needs of the audience must be considered when preparing visuals. Practise using your voice and body language to deliver the key information.

Steps to preparing a presentation

1. Understand the task
 - a. Individual or group presentation?
 - b. Online or face to face?
 - c. Recorded or live delivery?
 - d. Purpose and length?
 - e. Is the presentation assessed?
2. Consider the audience
 - a. Who will be the audience?
 - b. What will the audience already know?
 - c. What do they need to know?
3. Prepare your content
 - a. Do your research
 - b. Organise the content to maximise audience understanding and enjoyment
4. Prepare for delivery
 - a. Create your slide and presentation notes
 - b. Consider the impact of the visual content
 - c. Decide the most useful type of notes for you – note cards? Slide printout? Learning off by heart?
 - d. Practise your delivery, ensuring your presentation fulfils any group or time requirements

Structure and content

Content

Introduction	Introduce yourself Introduce your topic Give an outline of the presentation Say when the audience can ask questions Give the audience a reason to listen
Body	Organise the presentation into clear sections Allow the audience time to digest key information Signal clearly at the end of a section and when introducing the next section Use your visuals to show sections effectively

Conclusion	Signal the presentation is ending Include a summary OR repeat the key message Allow questions
Questions	Clarify a question if you are not sure what the audience member is asking Give yourself time to digest the question before answering Check that the audience member is happy with your response before moving to the next question Be prepared to refer the question to someone else and be open if you do not know the correct response

Useful strategies

Engaging the audience

- Presentation title – aim to convey the main message of the presentation and appeal to the widest possible audience
- Hooks – use a specific strategy to gain and maintain audience interest, such as posing a problem, using an analogy, or using a visual
- Body language – use an open stance, and use facial expressions and eye contact effectively
- Voice – be aware of your use of pacing, pausing, and stress and intonation when delivering your presentation
- Repetition – repeating key phrases aids memory and emphasis for the audience

Using visuals

- Adopt a clean, uncluttered approach to slides as crowded or dense slides can be distracting and hard for audiences to process.
- Minimise the use of text so that the audience focuses on your spoken development of the topic.
- Be aware of the use of colour, font type and font size if you are projecting onto a screen.
- Ensure you use visuals which convey meaning.
- Avoid the overuse of animations and transitions.

Preparing group presentations

- Use a shared drive to allow for students to work independently.
- Allocate tasks fairly and set clear goals and deadlines.
- Use a consistent slide design and font.
- Practice timing and transitioning between speakers.
- Agree on how to deal with questions.