

Top Ten Presentation Tips - Tip Card Sheet

TOP TEN LIST

Become a Better Presenter by Incorporating These Suggestions



1. **A laugh** is the shortest distance between two people, so challenge yourself to include humor or light comments at least once in your talks. It makes you more approachable and creates energy. The only exception is when you are announcing bad news.
2. Ask yourself, **“So What?”** Is this slide or piece of information really relevant to my main message? So often what we need to get across can be expressed in far fewer words or slides. More is less when it comes to making your message memorable and understandable.
3. When you practice, **stand up and verbalize** what you will say. Too often we run through our presentation in our heads instead of actually standing up and saying out loud. By making your practice as real as possible you reduce nerves and ensure that what you are saying makes sense. It also gives you an opportunity to practice gestures and vocal variety – two very important delivery elements.
4. Don't just give a presentation, **start being the presentation**. Too many speakers come across as talking heads. What do you uniquely bring to this presentation? What are your unique opinions, ideas, experiences and reflections? I can read your slides – tell me something I can't read.

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5. Create a **key message** that you repeat at least three times during your talk. The best way to develop a key message is to imagine you are creating a T-shirt that will have the main message of your talk written on it. Then imagine you are handing out that T-shirt to attendees so that they can remember your key message and share it with others.
6. Author and accomplished speaker Liz Carpenter once advised, “Begin as though you are taking off a pair of long kid gloves. You can't do that in a hurry.” The point here is: warm up to your audience, create a personal connection and **provide an attention-getting opener** before you launch into the body of your presentation. Business speakers are too quick to show the agenda and get to bullet number one which can quickly bore or overwhelm the audience.
7. Before you put pen to paper (or text to slides) take a moment to analyze your audience and ask yourself, “What is their point of view on this subject?” This will help you develop a presentation that focuses on what is in it for them. Always develop content with your audience's interests in mind. **Don't write for you, write for them**.
8. Watch out for execution by bullet point. Too many points will kill your audience's interest. **Use the PEP formula** (Point – Example – Point) throughout your presentation. Whenever you have an important point to make, be sure to support it with one or many examples. Examples can be analogies, stories, demonstrations, activities or case studies.
9. **Learn to tell stories** and include at least one in your presentation. Stories have the greatest power to create connection. If you are giving a persuasive speech this becomes even more important. You can tell personal stories, stories from friends, movies, books or historical figures.
10. **Find Ways to Practice Often**. There is no better way to improve your speaking skills than to regularly get up on your feet. Volunteer to speak at company events, in your church or as part of a business association. Join Toastmasters or inquire about a Spoken Impact's Business Edge Speaking Group for your company.

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