Making a Great Presentation

There are three main components to any oral presentation: the content, the vocal delivery, and the non-verbal delivery. Use the checklist below to help you prepare and ensure you are doing a good job in each area.

ORGANIZATION

**Topic** – Is it clear? Concise? Timely? Interesting? Why would/should the audience know this information?

**Speech Goal/Purpose of Presentation** – Do I have a clear goal? What am I trying to accomplish in my speech?

**Thesis or main point** – Is it clear? Supportable with knowledge (as opposed to belief)?

**Introduction** – Does it adequately introduce the topic and me, the speaker? Most importantly, does it grab the audience’s attention?

**Support** – Is it well researched? Factual? Convincing? Appropriate to the topic?

**Sources** – Were credible sources used (if needed)? Were they incorporated smoothly and given credit when used (ex., “According to…”)?

**Organization** – Is the speech laid out in a logical fashion (ex. chronologically, from least to most, from small to large, etc.)? Did I avoid jumping around and stay with my outline or plan?

**Transitions** – Are there clear transitions between points? Do they help keep the speech moving logically from point to point?

**Conclusion** – Does it adequately sum up or restate the main point(s) without being repetitive or boring? Is it related to the introduction? Does it leave the audience satisfied or interested?

**Timing** – Does my presentation fall within the minimum and maximum time constraints?

PHYSICAL DELIVERY

**Eye Contact** – Do I make eye contact with everyone in the room? Do I avoid looking at the floor, walls, or ceiling? Who are a few positive people I can look at for reassurance?

**Facial Expressions** – Are my expressions appropriate to the topic? Do I avoid “goofy grins” due to nervousness? Can the audience see my enthusiasm in my face?

**Hand Gestures** – Do I use gestures to help me speak naturally and to help the audience understand my points?
Movement – Do I take control of the floor? Do I move naturally to help burn off nervous energy? Do I avoid repetitious or unprofessional movements such as pacing, playing with my hair, scratching, or slapping my thighs?

Posture – Do I stand up straight and appear professional? Do I avoid leaning on the furniture?

Appearance – Am I dressed appropriately for the occasion? Is there a way to enhance the presentation by wearing something related to the topic (such as a lab coat for a biology presentation, a suit for an interview, or a Texas A&M shirt for a presentation on careers in veterinary medicine)?

**VOCAL DELIVERY/LANGUAGE USAGE**

**Volume** – Do I speak loudly enough for everyone to hear?

**Rate** – Do I speak at a comfortable speed—not too fast or slowly?

**Vocal Variety** – Do I vary my pitch, volume, and rate to avoid being monotone?

**Articulation and Pronunciation** – Do I pronounce words clearly and accurately? Did I learn how to pronounce difficult words before the presentation? Will I be able to write difficult words or names on the board or on a handout to help the audience understand them?

**Vocal Fillers** – Do I avoid overusing fillers (like, um, uh, y’know, basically, a-a-a-nd, etc.) and use pauses to think of the next word or phrase instead?

**Word Choice** – Is my word choice appropriate for my audience?

**Creative Language** – Is my language interesting? Will the audience be able to “imagine” what I am talking about? Will it create an emotional response?

**Other comments:**

The #1 thing I need to remember to do is:

The thing I do best is:

The thing I could use the most work on is:

My goal for this presentation is: