
Preparing a Successful Presentation

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by Kathleen Gage

When most people are asked about preparation for a presentation they will tell you how they get themselves emotionally prepared. There are other areas of preparation which may be overlooked by inexperienced presenters.

Are you prepared for questions and objections? One of the primary reasons people object to what you are saying, and they may express their objection in the form of a question, is because the information may be new to them. Or, you have not presented it in a clear fashion. And of course, there is fear of change or the fact that you have someone in your audience who is trying to impress others with their level of knowledge, be it real or imagined.

The best way to deal with questions and objections is to anticipate them. If you were in the audience what kind of questions might you have? Write out as many questions as possible that people in your audience might ask.

Would the material being presented be believable to you? If the answer is no, what would you have to do to make it believable.

What possible objections might your audience have? You can gain a lot of information in this area by sending questionnaires to your participants, noticing trends in their industry, recent changes, set backs and cut backs or layoffs.

Does the presenter have the authority and credibility to speak on the topic? What would you, as the presenter, have to do in order to gain authority and credibility. One way is to make sure you give some background on yourself as to why you have a right to speak on the topic. This is also part of the preparation.

To insure a successful presentation always check the following before your present. If possible, go into the room you will be speaking in the night before your presentation. Things will run smoothly and you will sleep

better when you know that everything is in running order and you have all the supplies you need.

CHECK LIST

Microphone
Sound system
Overhead projector (extra lightbulb)
Visual aids
Marker pens
Props
Workbooks
Handouts
Pens/pencils
Lighting
Heating/air cond
Room set-up
Signs and directions
Rest rooms
Telephones
Special needs
Ramps
Who do you call if there is an emergency during your presentation?

IDENTIFYING YOUR AUDIENCE

What you need to know before you present

Start time
End time
Size of the group
Men
Women
Age
Occupations
Experience with topic
Participants with the most authority
Education
Diversity
Knowledge of subject
What they need to gain from your presentation
Any topic to avoid

General attitude toward you
Recent changes in their industry
Recent successes
Specific objectives for this seminar/speech
What issues, if any, should be avoided
Any critical issues that need to be covered
Who will introduce you?

Name

Position

Who are the top officials who will attend?
(please include names and positions)

What takes place just before and after the presentation
Where is the meeting site
Will there be other speakers? ____ yes ____ no
If so, what will their subject be?
Is there any subject not touched upon in the previous
questions that I should be aware of prior to coming before
your group at this event?
With proper preparation your presentation will run
smoothly and you can relax and enjoy the experience.

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