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Fall 2004, EMBA – Elective C
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Guidance on Presentations

1. Appearance counts, so look nice.
2. Preparation, preparation, preparation:

You absolutely need to be prepared, so practice, practice, practice!
Winston Churchill prepared for 10 hours before giving a 40 minute speech

3. Work on eye contact.

You need to make eye contact with every student in the class at least once

4. Content

Always introduce yourself and say it slowly,
but never say something like:
“For those of you who do not know me...”

Introduce your topic

When presenting with a group,
you need to coordinate with your partner(s)

What is the key message you are trying to get across to the audience?

Be prepared for tough questions, this will greatly affect the results of your presentation!

When answering a question, do the following:

- A: Focus on the person asking the question and listening very carefully

- B: Take a moment to form your complete answer, do not be afraid of a moment of silence. Feel free to repeat the question if you do not think that everyone heard it. This also buys you some time.
- C: Address your answer to the entire audience, not just the person who asked the question. It is only in this way that you regain control of the forum.

5. Handouts:

Handouts are O.K., do not be afraid of them

If you present lots of information, handouts can be very effective at delivering the message and they give the audience something to take away from the discussion.

If technical information is presented on slides, make a handout of the same material available.

6. Have fun!

Audiences want to be entertained and a speaker that is having fun is more entertaining.

Humor is inherently gregarious and can be extremely effective at bonding with your audience. However, no one wants to watch a “clown” presenting, so be professional about your presentation

Even bad humor will warm up the “crowd.” ALWAYS avoid tasteless, vulgar, racial, or offensive humor. Jay Leno is the master of bad humor that is not offensive.

Effectively using humor will have your audience eating out of your hand.

7. Time will be monitored closely, so practice and watch your time.

But do not rush your presentation. Use pace in your presentation and give the audience a chance to keep up with your material and line of reasoning.

Keep the message simple. Be careful of too much information. Audiences can only absorb one key message per presentation, therefore focus.

End your presentation early, surprise your audience.

THIS IS SHOW BUSINESS, SO BE PREPARED TO ENTERTAIN!

Common Mistakes

1. The ums, ahs, ohs, aus....
Also watch “you know”
 - A. Be prepared, it builds confidence
 - B. Do not feel the need to keep every second occupied with sound
 - C. Silence can be extremely effective in punctuating a comment. Therefore, do not be afraid of silence spots.

2. What to do with your hands? This is probably the most challenging aspect of public speaking
 - A. Gesture! Let your hands animate your message.
 - B. Keep them by your side and inactive when you are not gesturing.
 - C. Never put them in your pocket (except as a brief gesture) and never grasp the lectern, giving the appearance of holding on for dear life.
 - D. Do not count-off with your fingers.

3. What to do with your feet?
 - A. Plant them while you speak. Do not rock on them and try not to sway back and forth.
 - B. Feel free to move around, but avoid the walk and talk.
 - C. Never speak to the audience with your back to them; it is rude and can destroy your rapport with them.

4. Watch the time, this can be a serious violation.
 - A. Practice, practice, practice
 - B. Arrange your presentation in a modular fashion, such that you can “cut and run” if you run out of time.
 - C. End early, surprise them.

5. Project your voice into the entire audience. There is nothing worse than a speaker who mumbles or cannot be heard.