

Oral Presentation – Key Tips

Decide what you want to communicate

Research and select main points. Do not have too many points. Prepare a strong (easy to follow, and memorable) introduction and conclusion.

Concentrate on communicating your points

Use examples. Use **visuals** – Remember: “A picture paints a thousand words.” Use statistics, but use them sparingly.

Make sure that what you put on a visual aid is readable by your audience and is uncluttered. Only put your main points on visual aids – not long paragraphs.

Communication strategies that can be used include repetition; asking questions of the audience (rhetorical questions); and using signals, for example, “Later on I will let you in on a well-kept secret about presentations.”

Decide how you will present material and practise

Don't read from your power-point or visual aid. This is boring for your audience as they can read faster than you can read out loud to them.

Don't write out more than you absolutely need. Use nouns (or your power-point) to trigger your ideas.

Do not expect to master a new (or newish) skill without practice. Practise out loud and practise often. You could book a room (for example, a study room in the library) to practise. You could also book a learning advisor to help you analyse your task, to assist with structure, or to practise.

Be totally familiar with your introduction.

Record your speech.

Time yourself.

Pay attention to the following:

Pace: Speak slowly and clearly with pauses. It is very tiring to listen to someone speaking without pauses. Vary your pace for interest, and to underline the point you are making.

Pitch: High pitched voices can indicate nervousness and are more difficult for an audience to listen to. Practise speaking at a lower pitch.

Volume: Speak loudly enough for those in the back to hear.

Body Language: Pay attention to gestures you make; some gestures can be distracting while others can help you connect with your audience; and remember eye contact is important.