On Presentations

#infoshow Workshop

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Topics Covered

1. Preparation

2. Design

3. Delivery

#infoshow Presentation Formats

Long Presentations (15 minutes)

Short Presentations (5 minutes)

Step 1

Preparation

Preparation is key

Conceptual/intellectual preparation

Think about your topic, your audience, and consider how you want to convey your key message(s)

Emotional/mental preparation

Acknowledge the *totally understandable* anxiety that goes along with standing in front of a group of people and asking for their undivided attention

Emotional/Mental Preparation

"There are two types of speakers in the world: the Nervous and the Liar."

Mark Twain

Podium Anxiety

Stage fright/public speaking anxiety is natural and very common

> At some level, all public speakers are nervous; the best public speakers develop an an ability to focus their nervous energy in productive ways

Some level of nervousness/fear is expected and can actually be a *good* thing

> At moderate levels, fear can actually help you focus!

The audience (probably) won't notice if you're nervous

Think about: what exactly are you afraid of?

Alleviating Podium Anxiety

Remember: you are the expert!
    The more you know, the more enthusiastic you will be

Practice (with a timer!) to boost your confidence

Accept that you will be nervous
    Many times, we get nervous about *being or appearing* nervous.

Be organized
    Arrive early, have your materials ready to go, and give yourself time to
        mentally prepare

Slow down, breathe, and make use of pauses

Tip: If possible, ask a friend/classmate to be your *presentation buddy* – someone to give you feedback/reassurance that you're doing fine or remind you to slow down if you're going too fast

Conceptual/Intellectual Preparation

Know your audience

When presenting to your class, you can assume everyone shares a common base of knowledge

When presenting to mixed audiences, you need to think about what people do/don't know about your topic

Plan the presentation

Know the purpose the presentation

Know what message(s) you want to convey

Know how much time you have

Know the room (set-up, layout, technology)

Outline it

The first step of creating a good presentation is **not** opening up PowerPoint, Keynote, Google Slides, etc.

Instead, start with an **outline**:

1) Map out the story at a high level
   - *What are the main sections and in what order should they appear? Choose your storytelling structure (next slide)*
2) Add the plot points
   - *Within each section, what messages will you need to convey to tell your whole story?*
     – Write one sentence per line

Structure is Key

Organize your presentation in a logical way
> Your audience needs to be able to follow along, so make sure they have all the information they need at each step

Choose a specific way of organizing your presentation:

Chronological or sequential
- *Follow the steps of a process or sequence of events*

Three points
- *Break your topic into the three biggest points and describe each one*

Problem-cause-solution
- *Describe the problem, explain the cause, propose a solution*

Stories
- *Introduce the characters, give them something to do, provide a conflict/action, explain how they overcome it, explain what they learned (the lesson or moral)*

Structure: Opening

Sets the tone and gets the audience's attention

Types of openings:

Preview

Ask a question

Pose a hypothetical situation

Describe something new or dramatic

Make a startling statement

Tell a joke (risky)

Structure: **Middle/Body**

Present your main points one by one

Pause briefly at the end of each point

Give people time to think about what you are saying; let it sink in

Make it clear when you move to another point

"The next point is…"

"Now I'd like to explain…"

"However, it's important to realize that…"

Structure: Ending

The ending is what people will remember the most – make it memorable or impactful in some way.

Provide a memorable quote

Give an interesting or surprising finding/conclusion

Ask an intriguing question

Answer the question posed in the introduction

Offer a humorous anecdote or joke that relates to the topic

Step 2

Design

The Slide Deck

The best slide deck is one that **enhances** the presentation.

They should guide – not dictate – what you say

- *If you're reading off your slides, it's not a good slide*

They should support – not duplicate – what you say

- *Unless the point is super important, what's on the slide should be different than what you say*

If your slides look like this, you're doing it wrong!

Design the Slides

For each slide, think: what is **one key message** I want to convey?

Once you've figured that out, next ask: what is the **best way** to convey this message?

Text only? Visual only? Text + visual?

If you have multiple key messages on a slide, consider:

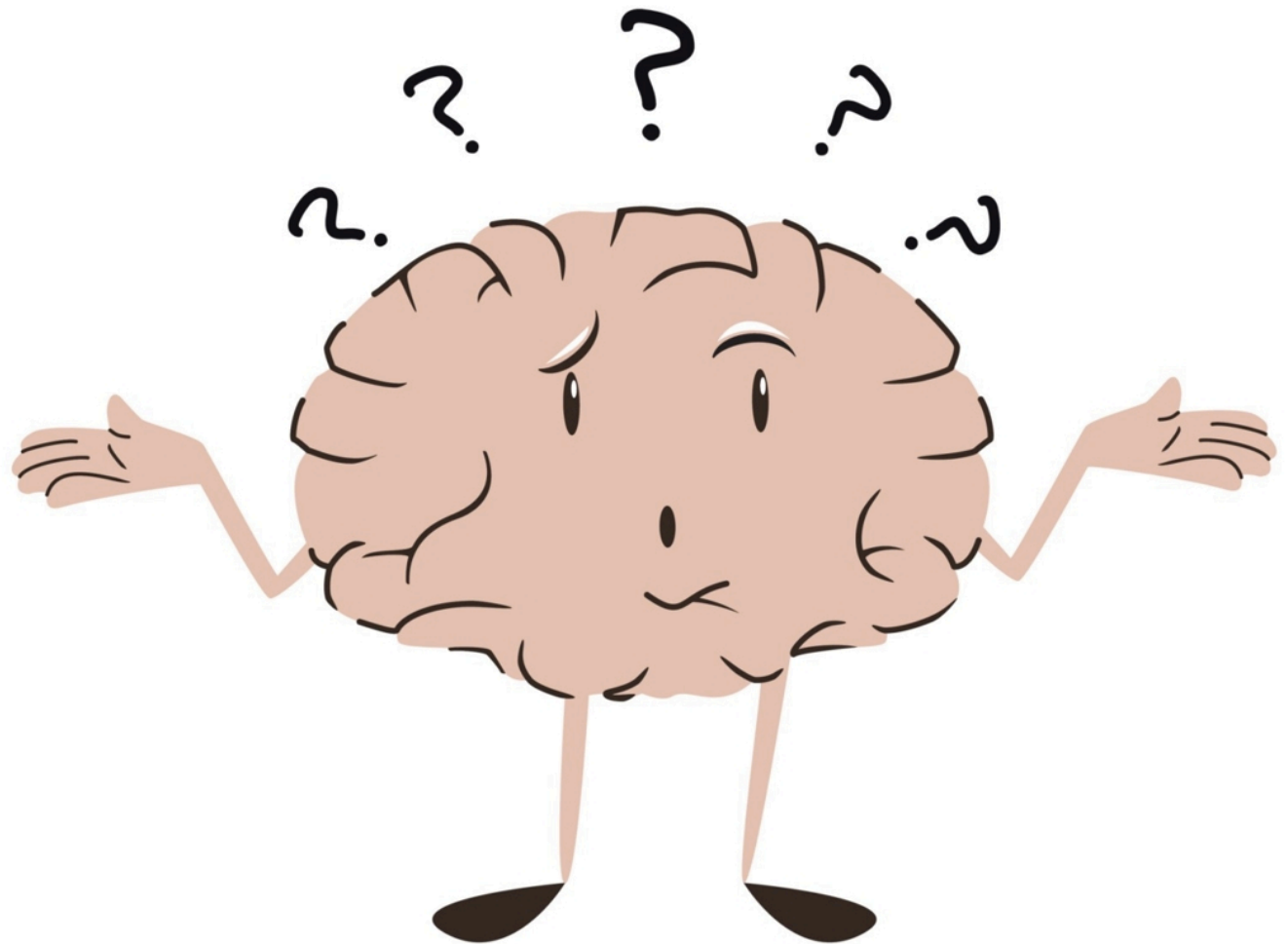Splitting them into different slides OR

Using animation so they only appear one at a time

Avoid bullet points.

(they make people angry)

Use **consistent** styles.

Choose BOLD and READABLE fonts.

graphic design is
my passion.

Pick a strong, pleasing theme (colors, layout, etc.).

Step 3

Delivery

Body Language

Face the audience – keep your hips pointed in their direction.

Look at *specific people* in the audience (but don't stare at individual people for too long)

Use *calm* gestures (but not too many)

Don't pace around too much (especially in a short presentation)

If you have notes, try not to fumble with them or play with them while you're talking

Tone of Voice

Are you speaking loud enough?

Are you speaking slowly enough?

Are you speaking clearly enough?

Vary both the volume and the pitch (but not too much!)

Pause occasionally

Actual Words

Use the right vocabulary for your audience

Be conscious of filler words (like "um" and "uh")

Be precise (avoid "kind of" and "like")

Don't be redundant by repeating yourself

Say it once and move on, unless your repetition serves a purpose (i.e., for special emphasis of important points)

Let your slides seamlessly support you

Things you don't need to say:

- *"The title of my presentation is…"*
- *"On this slide, I'm going to talk about…"*
- *"I'm now going to transition to the next section"*
- *"And that is the end of my presentation."*

"It has to feel like you're having **a live conversation with the audience**, not just regurgitating something you already thought about before. Doing that really well, especially with the backdrop of all that prep—that's the art."

-**Sally Kohn**

Author & CNN Commentator

Questions?

The End.

More Resources:
http://studentwork.prattsi.org/infoshow/for-presenters