

Factsheet - How to nail that presentation

Taking the time to prepare for your presentation can help calm your nerves and allow your presentation to run more smoothly and help you feel more confident. Here are few tips and suggestions to help boost your preparation.

Keep your presentation simple

When putting your presentation together, remember that simpler is better. Consider the “10-20-30” rule - use 10 or fewer slides, keep it under 20 minutes and make your font size at least 30 point. Try and keep your main ideas to three or less key points. This ensures your presentation is clear, crisp and to the point. Don't forget much of the effectiveness of your presentation lies in your voice, explanations, and body language, not the presentation materials themselves.

Outline your presentation

Having an outline of your presentation can help you stay focused on the main points of your presentation, so you do not deviate. When creating your outline, make sure to include an opening statement that quickly welcomes your audience and grabs their attention and mention the key points at the beginning and end of your presentation to ensure the audience remembers the most important message.

Practice your presentation ahead of time

Practicing your presentation ahead of time can help give you added confidence on the day of your presentation. Rehearse your presentation early and as often as you can. Consider presenting to your family and friends and asking them for feedback. If you can, try to rehearse in the same room where you'll give your presentation to help you feel more familiar with the space and setup. Try to also rehearse with any technology you plan to use during the real presentation to help avoid any unexpected mishaps.

Read and revise your presentation

While it's important to rehearse your presentation, it's also important to make changes that can make it more impactful. Consider why the audience would care about certain points you're making. Also, consider how what you're saying is relevant to the overall presentation. Don't be afraid to make modifications as needed to ensure your presentation flows and is easy to understand.

Write with your audience in mind

As you rehearse your presentation, think of what your audience may or may not already know. If you're speaking to highly skilled professionals, you can avoid explaining basic terms. However, if you're speaking to people who are new to your industry or topic, then you may need to explain unique industry terms or deliver your presentation in a way that's accessible for your audience. Revise your presentation as needed to ensure everyone in your audience will be able to understand what you're saying.

Take cues from professional speakers

To help you perfect your presentation, watch online videos of professional speakers giving a presentation. Consider how they keep their audience engaged. Look at their body language and the tone of voice they take during their presentation. Consider the overall look of their presentation and make changes to yours as needed.

Arrive early

To give you more time to prepare, plan to arrive early or if presenting online via Teams log in early and check your device settings. This gives you time to set up your equipment and technology. Arriving early also helps if you've never been to the location where you're making your presentation.

Practice your hand gestures

When you stand to give a presentation, it's important to know what to do with your hands while you speak. Be aware of your hands while you rehearse and think about your hand gestures and their relation to what you're saying. If you plan to move, make sure to move along with your words. You can even use your hand gestures and where you pace or walk to prompt what you need to say next.

Take some deep breaths

Instead of letting your nerves get the best of you, take time to yourself before your presentation. Take a few deep breaths to help you regain your composure. Even taking just a few minutes can help you feel more relaxed and give you the confidence you need to give a strong presentation.

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