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Teacher: Dr. Abdelkader Makhoulf

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PLANNING A PRESENTATION

Presentation technique and preparation

“The human brains starts working the moment we are born and never stops until you stand up to speak in public”

George Jessel

Exercise 1

This article, from *Financial Times*, is about presentation technique. Scan the text to identify seven examples of bad technique and five characteristics of good technique. You do not have to read the article in detail or understand every word to do this.

When incompetence is “tantamount to fraud”

by John Kirkman

Not long ago, I went to a two-day conference. The fee, travel, and hotel accommodation cost nearly \$300.

The conference offered 20 papers. Of those, nine were rendered partly or wholly incomprehensible by poor design or inept handling of visual aids. Of the 20 speakers, 12 overran their allotted time, so the programme on both days fell behind schedule. To cope with this, the chairpersons asked some speakers to cut short their planned presentations. They did.

Incompetent presentation is tantamount to fraud. Here are extracts from my notes on that conference.

Speaker 1 got slides out of sequence with talk, distractingly putting them up before she reached the relevant point in her script. Read inexorably through the script, stumbling over written word-clusters she could not articulate.

Speaker 2 put up transparencies on overhead projector, with comments: “You won’t be able to read these.” Correct! Had an electronic watch that beeped at 15 minutes, commented that the beep meant time was up; went on speaking. Overran by 10 per cent.

Speaker 3 used first five allocated 15 minutes to tell an anecdote relevant to talk. Overran by 27 per cent.

Speaker 4 was warned twice by the chair about time to stop; so he spoke twice as fast to try to finish with slides whistling to and fro at a rate that made reading impossible. He confused himself as well as us by putting a slide that “should not have been here”. Overran by almost a third.

Speakers 2, 3 and 4 all began by stressing what they could not do in 15 minutes, thereby reducing substantially what they could do.

Things got worse. One speaker began by belittling himself and insulting us: “I will just put up this slide to keep you occupied while I go through boring facts.” He offered an example, but could not find it: “I have some figures somewhere ... (fumbled in notes) ... but I can’t find them, never mind.”

Day two brought no relief. We were offered overhead transparencies made by photocopying A4 pages in a small typeface. One illustration, 11 columns – five rows of figures - was put up with no comments other than: “There are the figures.” I was sitting about halfway back, 50-60 feet from the screen. The figures were utterly unreadable.

One speaker’s monotonal mumble defeated even the halter microphone he was asked to wear because we could not hear him.

Another speaker did not know whether or not he had a slide to illustrate his point: “I think we have a slide for this. It is slide 6. Oh, no. sorry. Well, we will go on.” How we supposed to follow, if he himself was lost?

My notes have favourable comments on only three speakers, and those notes make an important point: the value of being simply competent. My comments on speaker eight illustrate that point: “Vigorous, organised, enthusiastic, clear. Content not new or exciting, but mere competence of presentation made it seem easily the best so far.”

I knew before I went to the conference that the presenters were not professional lecturers, so was I expected too much? I was not looking for outstanding oratory, merely for competent presentation, constructed for the period allocated, and delivered with simple clarity.

It is possible to learn to be a competent speaker. Competence (not brilliance) rests more on acquired skills than on inherited flair. But most presenters at this conference had made little effort to learn how to protect their own reputations and those of their employers.

The Financial Times

Vocabulary notes

**tantamount to fraud* = almost the same as dishonestly taking someone’s money

** *inept* = incapable, amateurish

*** *allotted* = made available, given

Exercise 2

What are the key considerations involved in *preparing* a presentation?

Exercise 3

Part 1. Listen to the introductions from three different presentations and complete the table

	Presentation1	Presentation2	Presentation3
Presenter's name			
Presenter's position/ function			
Topic of presentation			
Who is the presentation for?			

Part 2. Listen again. This time try to complete the missing information in the sentences below.

Presentation 1

1. _____, let me thank you all for being here today.
2. Let me _____ myself. My name is ...
3. I'm here today to _____ our new semi-automatic shelving system.
4. My talk is _____ relevant to those of you who _____ for the different parts we supply.

Presentation 2

5. I'm happy that so many of you could _____ today at such short _____.
6. As you can see on the _____, our _____ today is project documentation.
7. This is extremely _____ for all of us who are directly _____ in international project management, right?

Presentation 3

8. I'm _____ that you all have very tight _____, so I appreciate you taking time to come here today.
9. As you _____ know, my name is I'm the new _____ manager here at Weston. Ltd.
10. Today's topic will be very important for you as _____ since _____ your help to evaluate and select candidates for training.

Exercise 4

Part 1. Identify the right category for the sentences from exercise 3, part 2.

1. saying what the topic is: _____
2. welcoming the audience: _____
3. saying who you are: _____
4. saying why the topic is relevant for the audience: _____

Part 2. Identify the right order of the headings from exercise 4.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Exercise 5

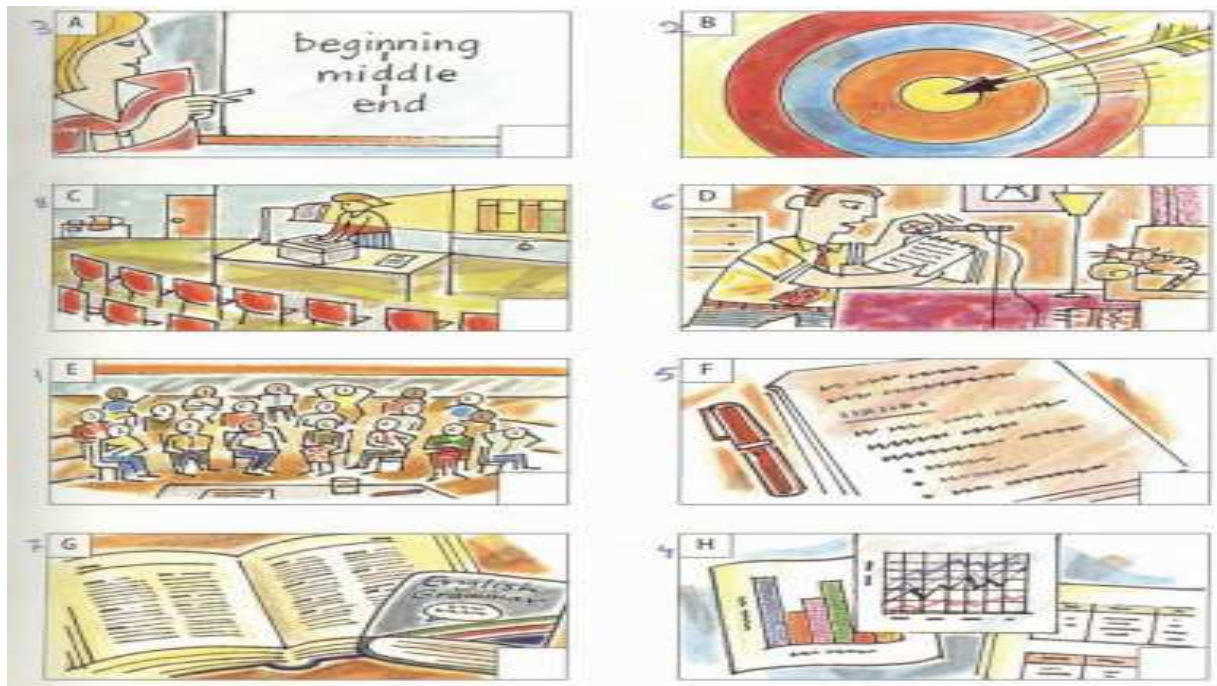
Listen to a group of management trainees talking about the preparation of presentations. They mentioned eight key areas, each represented by one of the pictures below. Number the pictures in the order in which they are mentioned.

Tapescript

GEORGE: Now let's think about the preparation of the presentation. What has to be ... what do you have to do to prepare it?
SARA: The most important thing is to know about the audience, find out about ...

LUIGI: Yes but you need to make sure about your objectives first, so decide on the objectives – what you want the talk to achieve.
SARA: Yes, but to do that you need to know about the audience – their knowledge, what they want to know, everything like that.
LUIGI: Yes, all that's important ...
HAL: Yes, true ...
GEORGE: So, audience and objectives.
OTHERS: Yes / right / okay etc.
HAL: Then the third thing is you have to sort out the content, collect information, organise it, decide on a structure.
SARA: Yes, get a good structure, I agree ... Then once the structure is ... is okay, you need visuals, any graphs and that sort of thing ...
GEORGE: Yes, the visual supports.
SARA: Then, well, you *could* write it all out. At least the introduction – just to practise it. Some people write out everything, some don't. It depends.
GEORGE: Yes, I think that's a good point. But practice is really very important. A key ... key part of the preparation is to actually to practise it, to give the presentation – practise ... until you could do it just from notes. Then we ... er ... what else?
LUIGI: Check all the language, keep it simple, make sure there're no mistakes on the visuals. Spelling and all that.
HAL: And I think you should check that the room is okay and the equipment.
GEORGE: Yeah ... imagine, no slide projector, or ...
SARA: Or the OHP's got no bulb in it!

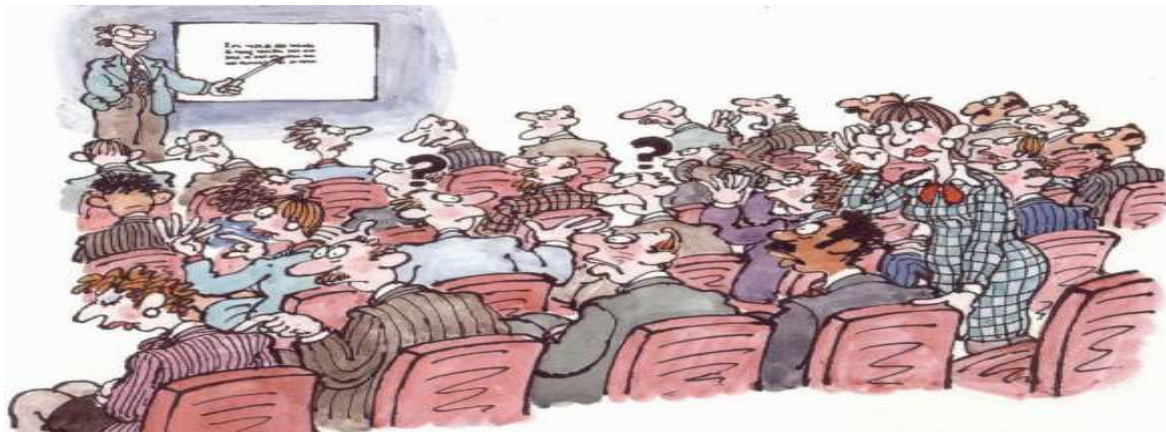
(laughter- fade)



2 How to get the audience's attention

Exercise 6

Read the comments from the audience who are listening to a presentation at an international conference. What caused the problem in each case?



1. "What on earth is he talking about?" "I've no idea!"
2. "Hey, Sarah! Wake up! He's finished!"
3. "Read that! I can't read that! I'd need a pair of binoculars!"
4. "Speak up! I can't hear a thing!"
5. "Summarise four main points? I only noticed one! Have I been asleep?"

Possible answers

- a) Technical level of talk is too high / speaker is saying something completely wrong or incomprehensible.
- b) The talk is boring, too long, or delivered monotonously, no changes in pace, volume, tone, etc.
- c) The visual is too small or too detailed.
- d) The speaker is talking too quietly.
- e) The structure of the talk was not clear.

Exercise 7

Look at the following situations.

1. A medical congress in Tokyo with papers on new techniques in open heart surgery.
2. The Purchasing and Product Managers of a Taiwanese company interested in buying some production equipment from your company.
3. An internal meeting of administrative staff to discuss a new accounting procedure.
4. A staff meeting to discuss a charity event for earthquake victims.

Imagine you have to give a brief presentation in one of the situation. Make brief notes on the following

1. Will your talk be formal or informal?
2. What are the audience's expectations in terms of technical detail, expertise, etc.?
3. What is the audience's probable level of specialist knowledge? Are they experts or non-experts?
4. How long will your talk be: five minutes, twenty minutes, half a day, or longer?
5. What is your policy on questions? Will the audience interrupt or will they ask questions afterwards? Will there be any discussion?
6. How will you help the audience to remember what you tell them?

5. **Key answer for the first situation** (A medical congress in Tokyo with papers on new techniques in open heart surgery.)

- Key**
Tokyo medical congress
- a) Probably very formal.
 - b) High expectations in terms of technical support, a fair amount of detail and clearly a lot of expertise.
 - c) High level of specialist knowledge – audience are experts.
 - d) Depends on congress organisation – probably less than an hour.
 - e) Depends on congress organisation – probably questions follow.
 - f) Use of visual supports with key information, plus later publication of Congress Proceedings.

3 The introduction

Exercise 8

Part 1. Listen to the beginning of four presentations and identify which introduction contains

	A	a rhetorical question
	B	an interesting fact
	C	an anecdote
	D	a problem to think about

Part 2. Listen again. This time try to complete the missing information in the sentences below.

1. _____, I was sitting in the waiting room at the dentist's the other day and I _____ something interesting in one of the _____ that was lying there.
2. _____ you worked in a small to medium-sized company and were _____ for making people in your company aware of health and safety issues. How would you _____?
3. _____ that the number of possible ways of playing the first four moves per side in a game of chess is ...?
4. So, let me start by _____. Why should we introduce a double quality check here at Auto Spares&Parts ...? Well, I'm here today to _____.

Experts say that the first few minutes of a presentation are the most important. If you are able to get the audience's attention quickly, they will be interested in what you have to say. Here are a few techniques you can use to start your talk.

Ask a rhetorical question

Is market research important for brand development?

Do we really need quality assurance?

Start with an interesting fact

According to the article I read recently, central banks are now buying euros instead of dollars.

Tell them a story or anecdote

I remember when I attended a meeting in Paris ...

At a conference in Madrid, I was once asked the following question: ...

Give them a problem to think about

Suppose you wanted to see a new call centre. How would you go about it?

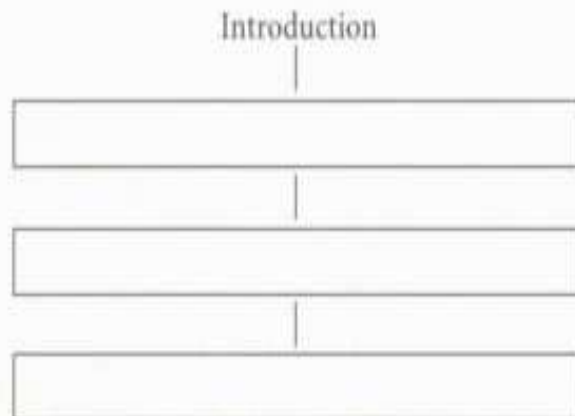
Imagine you had to reorganise the sales department. What would you be your first step?

1 In any presentation the beginning is crucial. Certainly some things are essential in an introduction and others are useful. Here is a list of what could be included in an introduction. Mark them according to how necessary they are using the following scale:

Essential		Useful		Not necessary
1	2	3	4	5
Subject / title of talk.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduction to oneself, job title, etc.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference to questions and /or discussion.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference to the programme for the day.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference to how long you are going to speak for.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference to the visual aids you plan to use.				<input type="checkbox"/>
The scope of your talk: what is and is not included.				<input type="checkbox"/>
An outline of the structure of your talk.				<input type="checkbox"/>
A summary of the conclusions.				<input type="checkbox"/>

Listen to the beginning of a presentation on the marketing plans for a new telecommunications system produced by Telco.

- a) Is it a good introduction?
- b) Why? Why not?
- c) Label the structure of the talk.



Tapescript

Thank you for coming today. As you know, I want to talk about the marketing plans. Brand identity is a key issue and what it means is how we are seen by our customers and how our products are recognised and what our consumers think of us as a company. And I should also say, what they think of our products and the name ... what Telco means for them. And advertising is part of it of course, though not something I am going to talk about now except to say that as for brand image, it's important in that area too, advertising that is.

Now listen to a second example of an introduction to a presentation.

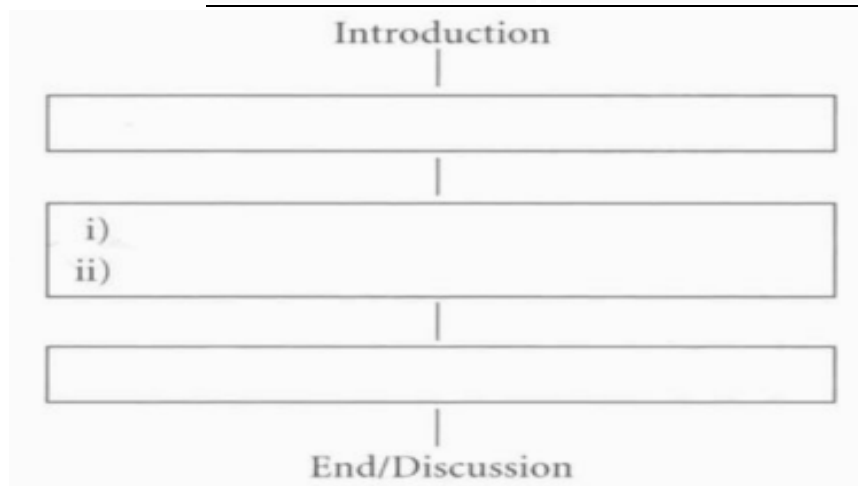
This one is about plans to develop a new production plant in Taiwan.

As you listen, think about these points:

a) Is it a good introduction?

b) Why? Why not?

c) Label the structure of the talk.



Tapescript

Okay, thanks. I'm here to talk about the Design Proposals for the Production Plant at Taipei. My talk will be in three parts followed by a 30 minute discussion. I'm going to start with the background to each proposal – something about our negotiations with the Taiwanese government – then in the second part I'll go over the main characteristics of each proposal, Proposal One and Proposal Two. Then in the third part I'll highlight some key considerations we have to bear in mind. Finally, I'll end with an invitation to ask questions or make any comments you like. We'll discuss matters arising from the talk ... Okay? So to begin with, a few words on the history (fade)

Work in pairs. Each of you should suggest a possible phrase for each of the prompts below.

- a) Greet your audience.
- b) Introduce yourself.
- c) Give the title of your talk.
- d) Describe the structure of your talk.
- e) Explain that the audience can interrupt if they want.
- f) Say something about the length of your talk.
- g) Say a colleague will be showing a video later.

Now listen to the recording of a model introduction based on suitable phrases for a-g.

Tapescript

a) Good afternoon everyone. b) My name's Arnold Layton. I'm a (geophysicist) for (Elf Aquitaine), with special responsibility for (analysing new fields in the North Sea). c) I'm going to talk about (some recent research into new methods of detecting oil in shallow waters). d) I've divided my talk into three parts. First, (research that we have done). Then (I'll report on some published research from other companies), and finally (I'll talk about what this may mean for our exploration activities). e) Please interrupt if at any time you have any questions or something is not clear. f) My talk will last about (half an hour). g) Later my colleague Jacques Flambert will be showing a video on (*fade*)

Practice

Give a one minute introduction only to a talk on any topic you like! If you cannot think of a topic, choose from the list below

Your home town	Your favourite sport	Tourism
Your first ever job	Eating out	Holidays
A thing you really like	Your previous job	Your hobbies

Exercise 9

Match more formal and less formal expressions.

More formal	Less formal
1. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.	A. In my talk I'll tell you about ...
2. Today I would like to ...	B. I know you are all very busy ...
3. Let me just start by introducing myself. My name is ...	C. OK, shall we started?
4. It's a pleasure to welcome you today.	D. Today I'm going to talk about ...
5. In my presentation I would like to report on ...	E. It's good to see you all here.
6. The topic of today's presentation is ...	F. As you know I'm ...
7. I suggest that we begin now.	G. What I want to do today is ...
8. I'm aware that you all have very tight schedules...	H. Hi, everyone.

Most formal and many informal presentations have three main parts and follow this simple formula:

1. Tell the audience what you are going to say! = **Introduction**
2. Say it! = **Main part**
3. Tell them what you said! = **Conclusion**

The purpose of the presentation is not only to tell the audience who you are, what the talk is about and why it is relevant to them, you also want to tell the audience (briefly) how the talk is structured. The most common way to structure a presentation is to have three main parts, and then subdivide them into (three) smaller sections.

Exercise 10

Complete the missing information using words from the box.

a. after	e. finally
b. all	f. start
c. areas	g. then
d. divided	h. third

I'll be talking to you today about the after-sales service plans we offer. I'll (1) _____ by describing the various packages in detail. (2) _____ I'll go on to show you some case studies. (3) _____ I'll discuss how you can choose the best plan to meet your customers' needs.

I've (4) _____ my talk into three main parts. First of (5) _____, I'll tell you something about the history of our company. (6) _____ that I'll describe how the company is structured and finally, I'll give you some details about our range of products and services.

I'd like to update you on what we've been working on over the last year. I'll focus on three main (7) _____: first, our joint venture in Asia; second, the new plant in Charleston. And (8) _____, our redevelopment project.

Exercise 11

Fill in each gap with a suitable preposition from the box below

A	about	E	of
B	at	F	on
C	for	G	to
D	into	H	with

1. Thank you _____ coming all this way.
2. I've divided my presentation _____ three parts.
3. First of all, I'll give you an overview _____ our financial situation.
4. First, we'll be looking _____ the company's sales in the last two quarters.
5. In the first part of my presentation I'll focus _____ the current project status.
6. Point one deals _____ APG's new regulations for Internet use.
7. Secondly, I'll talk _____ our investment in office technology.
8. After that I'll move on _____ the next point.

Exercise 12

Part 1. Listen to a project manager of a construction company who makes a presentation for his colleagues. Identify the right order of the sentences below.

	A	This morning I'd like to update you on the current status of work at the construction site. The information I give you today should help you with planning your next steps.
	B	For those of you who don't know me, my name is Gordon Selfridge. Let me just write that down for you. OK. I'm the project manager in charge of Bak Tower building project in Dubai.
	C	I've divided my presentation into three parts.
1	D	Hello, everyone.
	E	Then I'll move on to the problems we're facing with our local suppliers.
	F	First of all, let me thank you for coming here today. I'm aware that you're all busy preparing for the annual meeting this week, so I appreciate you taking time to be here.
	G	I'll start off by showing you some photos of the building site and discussing the progress we've made since January.
	H	My talk will take about 30 minutes. Please feel free to interrupt me at any time with questions.
	I	I'll end with some ideas for reducing labour costs that we've been looking into.
	J	Oh, and don't worry about taking notes. I'll be handling out copies of the PowerPoint slides at the end of my talk.

Part 2. Number the items presented below in the order Gordon mentions them.

A. reducing labour costs	D. update on current status	G. problems with local suppliers
B. welcoming & introduction	E. handout after presentation	H. questions during presentation OK
C. 30 minutes for presentation	F. progress made since January	I. three main parts

Exercise 13

The Good and the Bad. In the exercise below, there are four good and six bad beginnings. Put a tick (Ö), if you think the beginning is good, or a cross (x), if you think it is bad. Explain why

		Ö	x
1	I'd like to begin my presentation with quite a lot of statistics, so please pay attention as it is quite a complex subject as well.		
2	I heard a great joke on the radio this morning. There was an Englishman, a Frenchman and a German, or was it an Italian? Anyway ...		
3	If you have any questions, or you don't follow anything I say, please feel free to interrupt me at any time.		
4	Ladies and gentlemen, it is an enormous pleasure and an immense honour for me to be here with you today. I am overwhelmed by the occasion and I know I speak not only for myself, but for my whole department when I say those simple words which express our gratitude – thank you so very much.		
5	I don't know whether you've heard about the reorganisation, or how much you may know, so I'll start at the beginning. In 1965 ...		
6	My presentation will last for about an hour and I hope we'll have time for questions at the end.		
7	Good morning, everyone. I am here today to explain how the reorganisation of the company will affect you.		
8	First of all, I'd like to apologise as I haven't had a lot of time to prepare this presentation.		
9	Can you raise your hands if you can hear me at the back? Thank you, and as I have a quiet voice, please raise your hands during my presentation if my voice drops too much.		
10	I'm not a native speaker of English so if you don't understand anything I say, please feel free to interrupt me at any time.		

Language Checklist

Structure (1) The introduction to a presentation

Greeting

Good morning / afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

(Ladies and) Gentlemen ...

Subject

I plan to say a few words about ...

I'm going to talk about ...

The subject of my talk is ...

The theme of my presentation is ...

I'd like to give you an overview of ...

Structure

I've divided my talk into (three) parts.

My talk will be in (three) parts.

I'm going to divide ...

First ...

Second ...

Third ...

In the first part ...

Then in the second part ...

Finally ...

Timing

The presentation will take about two hours ...
but there'll be a twenty minute break in
the middle. We'll stop for lunch at 12
o'clock.

Policy on questions / discussion

Please interrupt if you have any questions.

After my talk there'll be time for a discussion
and any questions.

Skills Checklist

Effective presentations – planning and preparation

Audience

- expectations
- technical knowledge
- size
- questions and / or discussion

Speaker's competence

- knowledge
- presentation technique

Content

- what to include
- length / depth (technical detail)
- number of key ideas

Structure

- sequence
 - beginning, middle, end
- repetition, summarising

Delivery

- style
 - formal / informal
 - enthusiasm / confidence
- voice
 - variety / speed
 - pauses
 - eye contact
 - gesture / movement
 - posture

Visual aids

- type / design / clarity
- relevance

Practice

- tape recorder
- script or notes

Room

- size / seating
- equipment (does it work?)
- sound quality

Language

- simple / clear
- spelling
- sentence length
- structure signals

PRESENTATION ORGANIZATION

Structuring your presentation

1. Tell the audience what you are going to say! = **Introduction**
2. Say it! = **Main part (Middle)**
3. Tell them what you said! = **Conclusion**

Think of your presentation as a story. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. At the beginning tell your audience what you are going to say. In the middle tell your audience you are saying it. At the end tell your audience you have said it. To do this, use the Three Ss technique: **SIGNPOST, SIGNAL and SUMMARIZE.**

Signpost

- Tell the audience your topic.
- Tell them how long the presentation will last.
- Tell them the main points you will make.
- Tell them if and when they can ask questions.

Signal

- Tell the audience when you are beginning each point.
- Tell the audience when you have finished each point.
- Your audience will know where you are in your presentation and this avoids confusion.

Summarize

- Summarize your main points.
- Make a conclusion. For example, what should we learn from the presentation?
- Invite questions.

Business practice

1

Signposting phrases

Title

My presentation is entitled ...
I'd like to talk about the current project.
I'd like to give you an update on my current project.

Duration

My presentation will last about three minutes.
I'll talk for about three minutes.

Main points

I'll make three main points: first ..., second ... and finally ...

Questions

If you have any questions, please feel free to interrupt.
If you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them at the end.

Signalling phrases

My first point is ...
That was my first point.
My second point is ...
That was my second point.
My final point is ...
That was my final point.

Summarizing phrases

Summary

In this presentation I have made three main points. First ..., second ... and finally ...

Conclusion

In conclusion, I think ...
That is the end of my presentation.
Thank you for listening.

Questions

If you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them now.
If there are any questions, I'll be pleased to answer them.
Any questions? (*informal*)

Thanking

Thank you.
Thanks for your attention.

2

Test yourself. Cover the sentences opposite and then complete the sentences with words from the box.

If	conclusion	last	entitled	answer	would
----	------------	------	----------	--------	-------

- 1 If you have any questions, I will be pleased to them.
- 2 In, I think we have to choose the Belmont site for the office.
- 3 My presentation will about 15 minutes.
- 4 My presentation is *How we go and stay green.*
- 5 I like to give you an update on the project.
- 6 you have any questions, please feel free to interrupt.

3

Prepare your own presentation.

Think of a work topic. Make notes. Write down:

- The topic
- The three main points you want to make

Then practise introducing your topic. Remember the four things you have to do.

- Title
- Duration
- Main points
- Questions

Take your first point. Write three things about it. Then practise.

- Introduce it with a signalling phrase.
- Finish it with a signalling phrase.

Now write a summary. Remember these four points:

- Summary (*your key points*)
- Conclusion (*why it's important*)
- Questions (*invite questions*)
- Thanks (*thank the audience for listening*)

4

Deliver your presentation. Make it about one to two minutes long. Record it and then play it back. If possible, ask a friend or colleague to review and comment on it.

Focus on these points:

- Did you include all the **signposts** (title, duration, main points, questions)?
- Did you include the **signalling** points (introducing and closing each point)?
- Did you include the **summarizing** points (summary, conclusion, questions, thanks)?

Dealing with questions and interruptions

Briefing

Here we look at how to answer questions *during* and *at the end of* a presentation, and how to deal with interruptions.

To answer questions, use the **Four Answers** technique:

- 1 Thank
- 2 Repeat
- 3 Answer
- 4 Check

Why use the Four Answers?

Thanking the questioner is polite and makes them feel good. Repeating the question gives you time to think. It also allows you to rephrase the question to make sure you have understood it correctly. It also gives you the opportunity to make sure everyone in the audience has heard the question. When you have answered the question, ask if the question has been answered sufficiently.

How to stop interruptions

If someone interrupts you and you want to finish your sentence, politely ask them to let you finish what you want to say first. Keep control of your presentation. Don't let members of the audience take control.

What to say when you don't know the answer

If you are part of a team, refer the question to a member of the team who does know the answer. If more information is available on your website, refer the questioner to the website. Offer to get back to the questioner later with an answer.

Thanking and repeating

Thank you for the question.
The question was ...
If I understand, you want to know ...
If I understood correctly, the question was ...

Answering and checking

The answer is ...
Does that answer your question?

Dealing with interruptions

Please, just let me finish.
If I could just finish what I was going to say.
Can I answer that question at the end of the presentation?
Could we deal with that at the end of the presentation?

Saying you don't know the answer

I'm afraid I don't have the answer to hand.
Can anybody in my team answer that question?
Can I refer you to our website?
If you give me your details after the presentation, I'll get back to you.

Test yourself. Cover the sentences above and then complete these sentences.

- 1 If I have correctly, the question was this.
- 2 I'm I don't have the answer.
- 3 If you give me your email address, I'll get to you.
- 4 Could I you to our website?
- 5 Can anyone in my help me here?
- 6 Could we with that at the end?

Practice You are at the end of your presentation and ready to take questions.

You: Say you have finished. Ask if there are questions.

Questioner: Yes, I have a question about costs. How can you be sure you can keep to budget?

You: Thank, repeat question, answer it and check.

Questioner: Well, I'm not convinced. I think you'll go over over budget.

You: Offer to make information available to audience member after the presentation is over.

Questioner: Thanks. That would be very useful. I have another question.

You: Acknowledge the question.

Questioner: What happens if you do go over budget?

You: Say you are confident that will not happen. Check you have answered the question.

Questioner: Yes, thanks.

Preparation and Delivery

How to prepare

Poor preparation means poor performance.

Aims

- How to prepare for an international presentation
- How to manage international expectations of presentations
- How to deal with nerves before and during a presentation
- How to do a team presentation
- How to prepare visuals for an international audience

All good presenters do two things before any presentation. They prepare and they practise.

Here are some tips to help you prepare and practise your presentation. First, we'll go through three key principles in turn:

- Know what you want to achieve
- Know how to organize
- Know your audience

Know what you want to achieve

Most presenters want to do at least one of these things in a presentation:

- Exchange information (you might do this when updating colleagues on progress)
- Change behaviour (you might do this in a motivational presentation)
- Sell a product or service

Know how to organize

We have already focused on the Three Ss technique for presentations in 4A. Here are five other things to think about:

- 1 **Message** Summarize the key message of the presentation in one sentence. This is what you want your audience to remember as a result of your presentation. Use it at the beginning and end of your presentation.
- 2 **Main point(s)** Decide on three main points that will develop your key message. These will be the main points in your Three Ss structure.
- 3 **Motivation** Ask yourself: *Why will my audience be interested in this?*
- 4 **Take-aways** What will your audience take away from your presentation? Emphasize the take-away value in your summary.
- 5 **Examples** Can you think of any memorable short stories or anecdotes to tell to illustrate your points?

Know your audience

Try to find out something about your audience before you meet them online or face-to-face. Use the acronym AUDIENCE to help you find what to research.

A	Audience	How many? From where?
U	Understand	What do they know already?
D	Demographic	Age, gender, social background, professions
I	Interests	What do they want to know?
E	Environment	Will they all be able to hear and see me easily?
N	Needs	What are their needs?
C	Customize	How do I need to adapt my presentation to their needs?
E	Expectations	What do my audience expect to learn or hear?

Together with these principles, good presenters use four techniques to keep their audience listening:

- 1 **Hooking** A hook catches a fish. It also catches the attention of the audience. What is your hook?
- 2 **Flagging** Tell your audience what is important.
- 3 **Bridging** Make a clear bridge between your points.
- 4 **Looping** Refer back to a point you made earlier in the presentation in order to reinforce it.

Listening

1 Listen to the start of a presentation about the future of energy resources and answer the questions.

- 1 What is the presenter's key message?
- 2 What are the presenter's main points?
- 3 What is the audience's motivation for listening to the presentation?
- 4 How does the presenter illustrate his message?
- 5 How does he loop?

2 Listen again and complete these sentences.

- 1 Can you a world without energy?
- 2 So do we manage and develop our energy resources better?
- 3 Well, the first we have to do is to conserve our energy resources better.
- 4 The second thing I want to is we have to develop new forms of energy.
- 5 The third point I want to make is that managing and developing energy resources is at three levels: economically, socially and personally.
- 6 So, back to where our company comes in ...

Tapescript

Speaker: Good morning, everybody. What I want to do in this presentation is set before you the main challenge we face in the twenty-first century. We have to manage and develop our energy resources much better than we are doing now or experience a radical change in the way we live and a significant reduction in our quality of life.

Can you imagine a world without energy? Without electric light, heating and air conditioning, hot running water, TVs and computers? Well, it's possible if we don't meet this challenge.

So how do we manage and develop our energy resources better?

Well, the first thing we have to do is to conserve our energy resources better. How many of you have got your laptops still switched on while I speak? Yes, quite a few of you. Well, we've got to find ways to be more energy efficient and to reduce unnecessary energy consumption.

The second thing I want to say is we have to develop new forms of energy that will meet future needs, not only in the developed world but in developing countries where demand is expected to soar in the next ten years. And this is where our company comes in.

The third point I want to make is that managing and developing energy resources is crucial at three levels: economically, socially and personally. So today, I'm talking to you not just as colleagues in the energy industry but as consumers of energy.

So, coming back to where our company comes in, what I want to focus on now in the rest of the presentation is what we can offer in terms of developing new energy resources.

Practice

Hooking – getting the audience's attention

Let me tell you how to increase your profits.
I'd like to offer some ideas on how to increase productivity.
I want to share with you my experience in the financial markets.
Imagine a world where you couldn't use your mobile phone. What would you do?
Can you imagine a world where you couldn't use your mobile phone?

Flagging – emphasizing what's important

This is a really crucial point.
This is the most important point I want to make.
This is vitally important.
Make no mistake. This really matters.

Bridging – linking one point to another

Another important point is motivation.
Following that, we need to discuss how to engage our staff.
Let me turn now to my next point.
This brings me to my final point, what needs to change and how.

Looping – reinforcing what you have said before

As I said earlier, motivation is very important.
You may remember I mentioned motivation.
I said I would discuss efficiency savings. This is the right moment to do so.
Coming back to what I said before ...

Prepare your own presentation.

Think of a work topic. Make notes. Write down:

- your main message
- the points that will develop the message
- your audience's motivation for listening to you
- a hook for your audience
- the take-away value for your audience

Now think how you will:

- flag what is important
- bridge points
- loop back to points

Deliver your presentation. Make it one to two minutes long.

Record it and then play it back. If possible, ask a friend or colleague to review and comment on it.

Focus on these points:

- Did you get your main points across clearly?
- Did you find a good hook to get the audience's attention?
- Did you link the parts of your presentation carefully?

PRESENTATION STYLE

There are always three speeches for every one you actually gave. The one you practised, the one you gave, and the one you wish you gave. _Dale Carnegie



Aims

- How to use effective presentation delivery techniques
- How to adapt your style for maximum clarity
- How to use your voice and visuals
- How to make sure your delivery is clear
- How to write thank you letters to presenters and organizers

1 Presentation Delivery Technique

There are six presentation delivery techniques you can use to get your audience's attention. These are especially effective at the beginning and end of your presentation.

1 Ask a rhetorical question	Begin your presentation with a question which introduces and illustrates your key message. You answer it yourself and at the end you repeat the question (we saw this in action in 5A).
2 Make a contrast	Contrast two things. Always start with the negative, for example <i>It's not this, it's THIS!</i>
3 Repeat for emphasis	Repeat key words and phrases to emphasize key points. Remember US President Obama's <i>Yes, we can.</i>
4 Sell an experience	Put the audience in a situation which brings alive the point you want to make, for example by talking about a relevant personal experience.
5 Make important points in groups of three	This technique helps the audience memorize what you want them to remember and take away from the presentation.
6 Surprise addition	Give your audience a bonus. Offer one more idea or suggestion at the end of your presentation.

Listening

1 A tour operator is giving a presentation to a group of travel agents about holidays in Croatia. Listen to her presentation. Which of the six techniques does she use?

Tick the techniques you hear.

Ask a question	Make a contrast	Repeat for emphasis	Sell an experience	Group points in threes	Just one more thing

2 Listen to the talk again. This time put the techniques in the order the presenter uses them.

Ask a question	Make a contrast	Repeat for emphasis	Sell an experience	Group points in threes	Just one more thing

Tapescript

Speaker: Let me start with a question. How many of you have taken a holiday in Croatia yourselves? OK, not many of you, I see.

Well, there are three things you can be sure of when you holiday in Croatia: culture, history and the good life.

So, let me take you on a journey. You arrive at the airport. A taxi takes you along the beautiful coast with the gleaming Adriatic below you, past the medieval walled city and through the pine trees to your hotel overlooking the sea.

But remember, you don't just come for sun. You also come for culture and history and fun! And that's what you find in our beautiful city of Dubrovnik.

So let me repeat it one more time. Come to Croatia. Croatia is culture. Croatia is history. Croatia is the good life.

Oh, and one more thing. Remember to bring your swimming costume. The water is wonderfully warm at this time of the year.

Practice

1 Listen and repeat these sentences.

Ask a rhetorical question

Let me start with a question. How do you engage your staff?

Let me ask a question at this point. How many of us do overtime on a regular basis?

Make a contrast

It's not what you do. It's the way that you do it that counts in this business.

You don't just come for sun. You come for culture and history and fun!

Repeat key messages

So let me repeat one more time, turnover is vanity, profit is sanity.

Remember, timing is everything.

One thing is important in presentations – practise, practise and practise again.

Sell an experience

Let me show you how this works.

I'm going to show you how good this idea is.

Let me tell you about a real-life experience.

Let me take you on a journey.

Say things in threes

So let me summarize. Revenue up, costs down, gross margin up.

Remember the Three Ss: signpost, signal, summarize.

Here are three things you can be sure of.

Surprise additions

And one more thing ...

Before I finish, let me offer you one more idea ...

I'd like to offer you one final thought ...

One final thought before we finish ...

Tasks

Prepare your own presentation.

- Choose two or three of the presentation delivery techniques that you feel comfortable with.
- Choose a topic you are interested in.
- Prepare a one- to two-minute presentation using the presentation techniques.

Deliver your presentation. Record it and then play it back. If possible, ask a friend or colleague to review and comment on it.

Focus on your use of the presentation delivery techniques. Did you use them successfully?

2 Voice and visuals

You have prepared your presentation. You have introduced some interesting delivery techniques. Now you need to focus on two things. How do you use your voice? How do you use visuals in your presentation?

Here are nine things that good presenters do.

Voice

1 Breathe before speaking	Your pitch is the tone of your voice. A very high voice can be hard to listen to. A very deep voice can be difficult to understand. If you breathe before you speak, your voice usually has a more level pitch. It also helps to breathe before you speak if you are nervous. If you are tense, your voice is usually higher than normal.
2 Stress important words	Remember that in English we stress the most important word in the sentence. Listen to the recordings which accompany this book and note how the speakers stress important words.
3 Vary your speed	Don't speak at exactly the same speed all the time. Slow down for really important points.
4 Vary the volume	Speak more softly when you want to share something personal. Speak louder to emphasize your key points.
5 Pause for effect	Use silence for dramatic effect. Don't be afraid to pause before you emphasize an important point or after you have made one. It gives the audience time to prepare for or to absorb the information.

Visuals

6 Face the audience	Talk to the audience not to the visuals or your notes.
7 Don't hide the visuals	Don't stand in front of the projector, screen or flipchart. If you write on a flipchart or whiteboard, let the audience see what you are writing.
8 Point	Use a pointer or your finger to highlight what you are referring to in your visuals. The audience needs to know where to look.
9 Talk about the visuals	Your audience can read. Don't just repeat what is on the screen or the flipchart. Refer to it, say what it shows and discuss the implications and not the text itself.

And remember: if your audience can't see what you are showing them because the image or print size is too small, DON'T SHOW IT.

Practice

1 Listen and repeat these sentences.

Introduce a visual

Have a look at this slide.
Let me show you this slide.
Look at the flipchart.

Describe what is on the slide

This slide shows ...
If you look at this slide, you can see ...
As you can see from the slide, ...

Stress important points

So my main point is ...
The reason why this is important is ...
The important thing to remember is that ...

Pause for effect

So my main point is this. [pause] The amount of air travel is not an efficient use of our resources or our time.
What's the conclusion? [pause] It's obvious.
The first point is [pause] the benefit to our customers.

2 Prepare your own presentation.

- Go back to the presentation you did in 6A. If you recorded it, listen to it again. Did you use your voice effectively?
- Plan to do your presentation again, this time referring to a visual: a slide or flipchart sheet.
- Prepare to give your presentation again and think about where you will pause, speak louder or slower, and use silence for effect. Think also how you will comment on the visual.

3 Deliver your presentation. Record it and then play it back. If possible, ask a friend or colleague to review and comment on it.

- 1 Focus on how you use your voice. Did you use it better than in 6A?
- 2 Focus on how you use your visual. Did you comment on it clearly?