



We support groups of young people in schools and colleges around the country to tackle the issues they care about, by involving them in creative, youth-led community projects

For more information:

www.youngtimebank.org.uk

helpdesk@youngtimebank.org.uk

How to Succeed at Public Speaking and Presentations!

Public speaking does not come naturally for most people - even the most experienced speakers get nervous. However, it is an incredibly useful skill and a tool to give you the power to influence other people.

When you are giving a presentation it is important to have a very clear message.

Ask

yourself these questions so that you know exactly what you want to say:

- What is my overall aim in giving this presentation?
- What are the main points of my presentation? – 3 main points is usually enough
- What do I want the audience to think or do differently as a result of my presentation?

A very simple plan for a presentation would be something like this:

Intro				Main points
Aim	Main Point 1	Main Point 2	Main Point 3	Aim
Main Points				Conclusion

1. Introduce yourself
2. State your aim and your main points right at the beginning
3. Introduce your 1st point clearly and use simple points to expand on it

4. Repeat for each of your main points
5. Sum up all of your main points and repeat your aim
1. Conclude briefly, and memorably if possible

Using visuals

PowerPoint or overhead slides to support your presentation can be a good way of making it more interesting; however do not be tempted to over do it as this may leave the audience confused or they may spend more time looking at the screen than listening to you.

A few tips to using PowerPoint:

- Use your spell check!
- Less is more: Don't overcrowd with text
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A few tips to using PowerPoint (cont):

- Be consistent, use the same colours and font
- Use big writing so everyone can read it
- Try using pictures and images instead of words
- Use the slides to emphasis key points – do not display your whole presentation

You may also want to give handouts to your audience. The same rules apply. We recommend that you hand papers out after you have spoken so that people are not tempted to concentrate on them and not you.

Preparation

First of all, check that the technology works. Before your audience arrive rehearse with your visuals so you can move from one slide to the next smoothly.

We all feel most relaxed when we are with our friends and family talking about something we love. We become more animated and full of energy. When we are going to do a presentation most of us will get a sense of fear. This will make your body tense, making it difficult to be yourself. The more you know about your subject the more relaxed you will feel and the better your presentation will be – and remember, the audience want to listen to you and want you to do well.

A few simple exercises before you start will reduce the impact of your fear:

Get your body feeling free and energised.

- Go for a quick walk and let your arms swing freely.
- Stand tall and try not to let your middle sink.
- “Shuggle” shake your shoulders to release any tension, shake your arms and hands
- so that they stay alive throughout your presentation.

Breathe deeply to relax and to make your voice stronger

- Put your hands on your rib cage; breathe deeply so that your hands are pushed outwards. Release the breath with an ‘f’ sound. If your shoulders are still tense give yourself another shuggle.
- If you get really tense it might be worth lying on the floor for five minutes. Concentrate on relaxing every part of your body and then focus on your breath.

Breathe slowly in and out.

Warm up your voice

- Smile – you will feel better about yourself. If you are happy then your audience will be happy.
- Try humming your favourite tune, clearly and confidently. Try humming the tune at
- a lower and higher pitch.

Words

- Peter piper the pickled pepper picker picked a peck of pickled peppers. It will get your mouth going so you will be less tongue-tied and give you energy in your voice.

During the presentation

- Speak slowly – if you feel yourself speeding up then pause for a few seconds. Those seconds might feel like hours to you but they won’t to your audience.
- Keep some water with you to slow you down and clear your throat when it dries up.
- Keep your head up as much as possible and look at your audience.
- Emphasise points with hand gestures. People remember what is said far better if it
- is accompanied by a movement.

Be yourself, take it slow, relax and have fun.