

Top Ten Presentation Hints

by

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1. Your audience will only remember about 30% of your presentation – better to pick the 30% yourself than use overkill. If you have 20 slides, cut it to 6 or 7.
2. Control the presentation – avoid depending on a slide show or multimedia presentation for your message. Stop periodically and turn up the lights – either with a blank slide on the screen or with projector light off.
3. Plan to speak “naked” (i.e. no props) – good presentations are charades with words. Practice making the audience “see” what you are saying without using slides or handouts.
4. If you give them a handout, they will read it over and over and not listen to you. Same goes for the slide you leave up while you talk – think about the magazine in the bathroom you have read over and over. Give handouts to the audience as you talk to them.
5. Make sure your presentation is multi-textured – some talk, some diagrams and/or graphic representations, interaction, some print, “toys.” (Note: A “toy” is a concrete representation of an idea.)
6. Observe white space parameters – limit lines on a slide; use white space to focus on message.
7. Ask only questions you already know the answer to, but don’t insult their intelligence. Not “do you want to save money?” (“Of course, you idiot, why are you asking me that?”) But instead, “What are the two biggest challenges in your job?” (Makes sure you already know what they are.)
8. Don’t surprise anyone with a question. Reflective processors what to think of an answer before they speak. You’ll put them on the spot and they might answer badly. Mention instead a conversation you were having with one and refresh his/her memory, so the point can be shared.
9. People have an attention span of 15 minutes at most. Shift gears (“texture”) at least every 15 minutes.
10. The people in your audience:
 - Don’t know – how important technology is to them
 - Don’t know you or how valuable you are to them.
 - Don’t care – they may think their situation is OK as it is.
 - Don’t have time – the people in the audience are paid to do everything BUT listen to your presentation. Give them value.