



Marketing Analysis and Market Planning

Handout 6

Guidelines to Keep in Mind When Delivering a Speech

Guidelines to Keep in Mind When Delivering A Speech/ Presentation

Speaking Clearly

Ways of speaking clearly and interestingly include the following aspects:

- Show enthusiasm and energy, varying your voice and looking into the audience's eyes
- Try to use a conversational style as if you were talking to people individually
- Listen to yourself and be aware of how and what you are saying, so that you can self-correct as soon as you notice you have become too slow or too fast or too quiet or too loud and so on. Check also for the natural rise and fall in the tone of your voice – people tend to adopt a strange monotone when anxious.
- If you can hear stress in your voice, pause and relax and slow down you're breathing.
- You need to know if the people at the back can hear you – ask them – and then keep up that level of volume.
- Don't read the audience a paper. Speak to them!
- Avoid physical mannerisms such as touching your ears or scratching your nose.
- Avoid verbal mannerisms such as “the thing is”, “with regard to this”, “ok”...
- Don't turn away or look down when you speak and as such let your words disappear.
- Do not drop the end of your sentences.

Body Language

- Keep in eye contact with people in the room. This may necessitate looking far to your left or to your right. Eye contact connects you with everyone. You will have noticed in the past how awkward it is to talk to someone wearing very dark or reflective sunglasses. It breaks the communication flow. Allow 1 to 3 seconds of eye contact per person, that is, enough to connect with him or her but not enough to make them feel “picked on.”
- Don't stand stiffly but allow your hands and body to move in a natural way. Natural hand gestures as you would use in ordinary conversation are equally normal in this situation.
- Also move a few steps forward and backwards and sideways. Be aware of any cables or other obstacles before doing so! The audience will follow your movements, which will help them to stay focused on what you are saying.
- Gestures need to be natural, appropriate and varied. It is normal behaviour to walk and easily swinging your arms at your sides, so do it, since this will relax you. For some reason, we become self-conscious of our hands when speaking to an audience, but hand gestures are helpful to involve the audience and to appear relaxed. Variety is however the key, since repetitive motions become noticeable.

- Facial expressions should be genuine and appropriate. Variety and smiles help you and your audience to connect. Smiling also puts more life into your face and eyes. Be aware of distracting mannerisms.
- Speak with emphasis and energy. Your voice should have four main qualities. (1) Being loud enough to be heard by the entire audience, (2) Clear and easy to hear (3) Expressive – support the message that you are transferring (4) Enjoyable – good to listen to. Speak a little louder than normal. Demand attention by varying volume, tone (pitch) of voice and speaking rate.
- Use pauses to deliberately draw attention to key concepts. Pause to give yourself and the audience time to think about what was said.
- Avoid:
 - Putting your hands in your pockets
 - The handcuffs behind your back
 - Crossing your arms
 - The fig leaf position
 - Language that can offend your audience
 - Wringing your hands and cracking your fingers and twisting your rings and clicking your ball pen and jingling your keys