



Effective Communication in the Workplace

Handout 6

Questions to Ask when Preparing Your Presentation

The Following Questions Might Be Helpful

- What are they thinking about the subject?
- To be quite basic, how much do they already know about the subject – what is their level of technical interest and understanding? You will have to go into more details and explanations if they are relatively unfamiliar with what you are going to talk about.
- Why would they attend?
- What's in it for them?
- If you try and look through their eyes, would they be attending with an expectation of you which you are not yet prepared for or able to meet?
- How interested would they be in your objective?
- What values do members of your audience hold?
- What is important to them? Be careful if you are trying to transfer a tried and tested presentation into a new type of audience.
- What needs do you believe the audience has?
- What internal political or financial constraints will limit their capacity to get involved with your proposals?
- Do they have a budget to finance the recommendations you are going to make?
- What do they think of you, as a result of previous interaction with you? Is there anything you must make sure to do differently?
- How many will be attending, that is, what size of group will you be addressing, and what will the venue be like?

Planning for the Duration of The Presentation

A lecturer may ask himself “how long does the subject need?”, but a presenter need to ask “ How long can the audience spare?”

Most people are worried that they will not have enough to say. There seems to be some sort of guilt about giving short measure. Consequently, the great danger at this stage is of having too much to say.



In planning it could be helpful to mark the paragraphs of your script with A,B,C in terms of importance. Should your time run out you can easily cut the “C” paragraphs without sacrificing critical contents.

In planning your time keep in mind that the use of visual aids will “spread” your timing.

A presentation that runs too long upsets everybody. Should you not plan right, and your presentation go to long you will find yourself going too fast, cutting on interesting, but less essential parts and consequently making the whole presentation more indigestible.

Selecting Techniques Most Applicable for The Specific Type Of Presentation

A lecturer should not rely on a sole method of instruction. A well-structured lecture would have more than one method of delivery. Remember that variety is necessary, but don't go overboard.

A Presenter on the other hand should not use more than two methods / techniques for presentation as this could confuse the audience and take up too much time.

The experienced lecturer/ presenter will be able to look at a topic and decide on a number of methods that can be used independently, or in combination, for maximum benefit to the delegate.

The presenter must make the decision on which method to use of instructions based on the delegate's requirements and not on what the presenter feels like doing.