

Make Great Presentations Checklist

Below is a list of suggestions to help guide students and improve their (group or individual) presentation skills. These categories also align with the Presentation Center Comments Tool so it is easy to reference and compare. Remember to keep suggestions positive and respectful! These categories are based on criteria from the rubric used by many professors in the Anzell School of Business.

Content – Know your material well

- Have an agenda, introduction, or outline
- Open with a statistic, attention-getter, or other hook
- Offer appropriate background information at the appropriate time
- Reinforce main points
- Make sure all the information is relevant
- Refer to research and references throughout to present yourself as an expert
- Include recommendations and reasoning where needed

Organization - Plan the flow of your presentation

- Introduce all presenter(s)
- Relate each segment of the presentation to the others
- Include transitions between sections and ideas
- Organize your presentation to deliver your message effectively, to make sense to the audience and to maximize your time with your audience
- Present a purposeful conclusion to summarize what you want your audience to take away from the presentation
- Invite questions from the audience

Delivery - Use powerful techniques to convey your message effectively

- Speak with conviction to sell the audience your message
- Moderate volume - not too loud or too soft
- Avoid distracting habits like “umms” and “likes”; pause to collect your thought before speaking
- Timing is important- try working from a timetable to stay on track
- Pace the speed of your speech; take a deep breath or pause to slow down
- Do not read directly from notes or slides unless delivering a direct quote
- Cite any sources/quotes as you go, “according to...” or “this is illustrated by”
- Stay on topic, stay relevant

Delivery (continued...)

Body language:

- Position – Claim your space confidently; It's okay to move around the room but don't hide in a corner
- Posture – stand straight and avoid fussing with clothes or materials
- Gesture to the slideshow to make a point or tie-in your words to your slides
- Make eye contact or seeming eye contact with your audience (look at a person's brow or hairline)
- Scan audience now and then

Visual Aids – Use your slideshow to support the message

- Keep slides clean, clear, and easy to read. Choose colors and font sizes wisely
- 5/5/5 Rule: Try for no more than 5 words per line, 5 lines per slide, or 5 slides in a row that are text heavy
- Choose appropriate art, videos, or graphics for audience - keep it professional and easy to follow
- Use images for humor or to emphasize a point (as needed)
*Creative Commons and Pixabay have great free resources. Remember to include attributes
- For data presentation – choose effective charts or diagrams
*Microsoft offers recommendations or try stephanieevergreen.com/qualitative-chart-chooser/
- Use animations or transitions sparingly and only to enhance your presentation
- To stand out above the rest, provide a fact sheet, important statistics, executive summary or list of references to hand out at the end of your presentation

Other tips and things to note:

- Dress for success and you are more likely to be a success
- Be (or act) confident
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Stay focused on your message
- Keep an eye on timing by using timetable
- A strong start and finish make a big difference
- Practice, practice, practice