Presentation Tips and Strategies for Students

You may wish to share the following tips on audience engagement and effective multimedia presentations with your students.

Tips for Engaging Your Audience When Making Oral Presentations

1. Clearly identify the points you want to get across and focus your presentation around them.

   a. Ask yourself, "What am I trying to communicate?" Make sure your slides clearly illustrate these key points.

   b. Choose details and supporting evidence that will be interesting to your audience.

   c. Use analogies and metaphors to explain complex ideas

   d. Outline your presentation so you have a road map.

2. Engage your audience early in the presentation.

   a. Tell a relevant story.

   b. Relate to a recent event.

   c. Include a relevant visual.

   d. Describe the relevancy and/or context of the topic or issue.

3. Demonstrate confidence by showing your knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion about your topic.

   a. Practice delivering your presentation within your time limit.

   b. Don't read your "speech".

   c. Include acknowledgment and references for evidence taken from other sources.

   d. Practice transitioning between ideas.

   e. Dress appropriately for the presentation.

4. Take charge of your audience.

   a. Make natural eye contact with your audience.

   b. Use gestures and movement to transition or emphasize ideas.

   c. Use your voice to emphasize ideas. Vocal variety in terms of volume (loudness/softness), tempo (speed), and pause (giving the audience time to process or think about the idea) can help a speaker.

   d. Use repetition and rhetorical questions strategically to emphasize key points.

5. Integrate media into your presentation.

   a. Use the slides to "cue" talking points.

   b. Actually refer to the slides.

6. Provide a sense of finality

a. Be sure to emphasize and /or recap the main points.

b. Wrap up your presentation with a take home message: a key point or conclusion that you want everyone to remember from your presentation.

Tips for Effective Multimedia Presentations

1. Plan your presentation before you begin developing it.

   a. Create a storyboard that outlines your key points and how you will convey them.

2. Be selective about what you put on slides; use only what you need to enhance your key points.

   a. Make sure your presentation has a key focus.

   b. Key Words or phrases.

   c. Images that appeal to the audience and reinforce your points.

3. Design the presentation/slides so they are easy to read and follow.

   a. Use a consistent design throughout.

   b. Use clear and large fonts that can be read throughout the room.

   c. Limit the number of words on each line.

   d. Use special effects intentionally and for emphasis. Don't overdo it.

4. Choose images and other visuals carefully and selectively.

   a. Images can create emotional connections with your audience.

   b. Images taken from other sources (including the Internet) must be attributed. Often these images have low resolution and don't transfer visually.

5. Be familiar with the technology and have a backup plan.

   a. Be familiar enough with your presentation so you can deliver it without the media, if necessary.

Strategies for helping students improve their presentation skills

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