Creating Effective Presentations

If you’ve ever written an effective document, you can create an effective presentation. Like an effective document, a persuasive, informative presentation must have a core message and clear claim statements supported by evidence.

Introduction

- **The introduction is the most overlooked part.** Don’t just focus on having good content in the body of your presentations. Recognize that the introduction sets the stage for what follows.
- State your first and last name and describe your topic and why it matters.
- Give an agenda that communicates to your audience the order of the information being presented.
- Clearly convey the core message of the presentation and its relevance; doing so now will allow you to refer to it throughout the presentation to reinforce its importance.
- Use an insightful question or a personal anecdote. The audience wants to be engaged as well as informed during your presentation. It is a presentation, not a delivering of information.

Body of Presentation and Transitions

- Differentiate your claims from supporting evidence. **Strong, clear claims** hold the audience’s attention.
- Use specific, relevant examples or striking images, statistics, and data as evidence so that audience members can retain information.
- Link your ideas together in a way that reinforces your core message.
- Think of your transitions between speakers as miniature introductions. The new speaker can restate his or her name and the core message before telling a personal anecdote or asking an insightful question.

Conclusions and Other Information

- Conclusions should clarify both what you want your audience to take away from the presentation and why the topic matters to them. Do not just rehash what was discussed; instead, state clearly what the most important topic(s) were and then make one final, resonant statement about why the audience should care about your topic.
- If your presentation has a question-and-answer period, **don’t just say “Any questions?”** Instead, actually **invite** your audience to ask questions. If your audience does not have any questions, then have some questions ready to start the conversation.
- **Anticipate** the questions your audience will likely ask you. Remember the question session is always an opportunity – regardless of the type of question – for you to restate your core message.
- **Visual aids**, when used effectively, both reinforce your core message and support your claims.

For tips on how to deliver an effective presentation, consult our “**Presenting Memorably**” tip sheet.