



How To Make Presentations Workshop

Purpose: To provide guidelines for making presentations for the Navy League and to provide special instructions for acting as a Navy League media spokesperson.

Learning Objectives:

1. To review the fundamental requirements for making public presentations.
2. To discuss selection criteria for setting an appropriate environment for presentations.
3. To discuss effective use of presentation media - PowerPoint, video/DVD, handouts, easels, transparencies.
4. To present techniques for both asking and responding to questions.
5. To discuss presentations to the Media (reporters) - newspaper, television and radio.
6. To practice a short presentation.

Agenda:

1. Present information on preparation, delivery, and questions when making a presentation.
2. Present information on the affect of environment on effective presentations.
3. Provides tips on the use of various presentation media and job aids.
4. How to ask and respond to questions.
5. What to do if reporters (the Media) show up?
6. Complete a presentation exercise.

Limit: 1 Hour

Presentations - An Overview

Studies conducted by psychologists have identified the things that arouse fear in humans. At the top of most lists is **Fear of Public Speaking**. Many of us start to sweat at just the thought of getting up in front of a crowd to make a presentation. Consequently, there are many courses of varying length that address this fear and try to help people who find they need to speak in public. This workshop is not sufficiently long to address all aspects of public speaking, but rather is a primer on three important elements of successful public speaking: *preparation, delivery* and *questions*. An opportunity to practice a short presentation is included in the workshop.

Preparation

The benefits of proper preparation are well known - the presenter is *confident and in control*, the presenter is *credible*, the presenter will *cover all the material*, the presenter will *make the material relevant to the audience*, and the presenter will *finish on time*. To prepare for a presentation, the presenter should address content, the meeting room (facilities), and presentation media. Let's look at each of these elements in order.

1. Content. If the contents of your presentation have not been given to you (such as in the Sea Power Ambassadors Program), use the following steps to decide what you are going to say.

Step One. Answer the question "*What is the purpose of this presentation?*" The purpose determines how and what we present in most cases.

If your purpose is to **teach**, repetition is necessary: Tell them what you're going to tell them; Tell them; then Tell them what you told them. Some educators believe you need to hear something up to seven times before you will learn it. Teaching also requires that the participants know why they need the information or skill. Teaching should also include practice in the application of learning or skill. Imagine trying to teach someone how to use a computer without ever letting them touch the keyboard and mouse! Why do they need to learn to use the computer anyway?

If your purpose is to **inform**, however, the presentation takes a different form - using handouts, for example, to shorten the time of presentation so that there is more time for questions.

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Media briefings are typical of this format. Sea Power Ambassadors are also informational presentations.

You may also make a presentation to **motivate** attendees to take action. Sales presentations are a typical motivational presentation. Generally, more emotion is needed to motivate, as well as a logical, thoroughly documented presentation. The audience has to believe you are committed before they will commit. Facts are motivational! A discussion of the consequences of no action is often needed to motivate an audience to take action. Finally, facilitating action through the use of pre-printed letters or pre-formatted emails, for example, will make the presentation more successful.

You may make a presentation to **entertain**. Comedic talent is hard to develop, so you should leave the entertaining to professionals. However, you may want to include a joke at the start of a presentation to gain favorable attention.

Step 2. Complete the framework of your presentation by addressing the following considerations (these are taken from a Train-the-Trainer course and therefore focus on teaching):

- A. Gain and keep their attention - Your method may be non-verbal, verbal, or media; *you can't reach an audience that isn't paying attention!* A non-verbal method can be as simple as standing up (a position of authority) and waiting for quiet. Calling the group to order is a verbal method, especially if you have a microphone (louder than everyone else). Telling an appropriate joke is also a verbal method. Media methods include turning on the projector (and dimming the lights), or turning on the sound system connected to the microphone.
- B. Inform the audience of the expected performance - what are you going to teach them or tell them? What are they expected to do?
- C. Relate the subject to past knowledge and experience - how is this subject relevant to the audience? Why should they care? How could it affect them?
- D. Present the information - public speaking is best delivered from an outline so that the presentation doesn't become your reading of a prepared speech. A successful format for organizing/outlining your thoughts is the reliable **Facts - Discussion - Action** approach, or **FDA**.
- E. Facilitate the learning process - Another feature of memorable presentations is the injection of the personal

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experience of the presenter into the presentation. A presenter must be *sensitive to the needs of the audience*. For example, a presentation must be purged of jargon and abbreviations so that any listener can understand the message. Additional techniques to facilitate learning include *active listening* and *questioning skills*. These techniques are explained later in this workshop.

- F. Summary and Closing - You should close by "telling them what you told them", then if possible, take questions. Finally, thank your audience for their attention.

Completion of Step 2 is critical to your success in making a presentation.

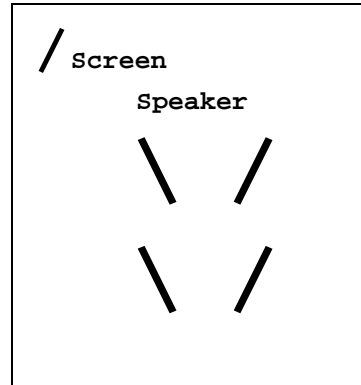
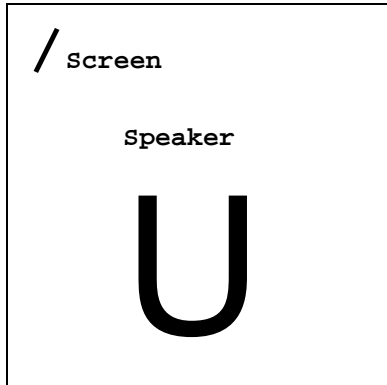
Step 3. Practice your presentation, preferably using a "safe" audience - a spouse or close colleague. Your practice presentation is used to verify that your presentation can be delivered in the time allotted. You may need to adjust your outline to stay within the time requirements of your presentation. Additional practice evolutions should utilize any media that supports your presentation, as noted in the Delivery section of this workshop.

2. The Meeting Room. An excellent presentation made without consideration of the meeting room can be a failure! Why? Here are some meeting room problems that can undermine your presentation:

- The room is very large and no microphone with speakers is provided.
- The room is too small for the attendees, resulting in people standing around the walls or in the hallway.
- The room can't be darkened for a PowerPoint presentation.
- There are other activities in the room (another meeting, frequent passing out of materials or staff personnel servicing the refreshments).
- There is background noise, such as air conditioning equipment, passing traffic, loud activities in an adjacent room (e.g. singing, cheering) or people gathering outside the meeting room for a social/break.
- The room is uncomfortable - too hot, too cold, stiff chairs.
- The room is arranged so not everyone can see and/or participate in the discussion.

The *ideal meeting room setup* for groups of up to 25 attendees is an Open-U for the tables/chairs, with the projector in the

front of the U and the screen located in the corner of the room, as high up the wall as possible. Larger groups may require a "classroom" setup; arrange the tables and chairs in a chevron pattern with a space to walk down the center.



3. Presentation Media. Presentation media include anything you use to enhance your presentation - PowerPoint slides, 35mm slides, overhead transparencies, video/DVD/film, pictures, flipcharts and handouts. Most people learn visually, so pictures, graphs and tables to supplement your words are useful. Media are also used to maintain interest in your presentation. However, if you dim the lights, you don't want your media to put your audience to sleep! Therefore, careful adherence to the following guidelines is recommended.

Guideline 1. Use media that are *appropriate for your purpose*. The characteristics of media that should be considered are:

- Motion - Motion can be shown in video, DVD, film, or bringing the actual object or a model to the presentation. Instructor movement, including motion demonstrations, can enhance your presentation. If motion is critical to understanding your presentation use one of these media options.
- Color - Color is used to maintain attention and enhance recognition. A change in color draws attention to the material being presented at the time. Related items in your presentation can be grouped by color. Color is appropriate for slides, flipcharts, whiteboards and overheads. **Caution:** A dark blue background is popular for PowerPoint slides, but these slides are very hard to see unless the room is completely dark.
- Sound - The presenter's voice is a "sound system", as are audiotape, video/DVD/film soundtracks and internet sound media.

Guideline 2. Choose a medium that is within your time, skill and budget limits.

Guideline 3. **Never show media you haven't reviewed thoroughly!** You don't want to be hesitant or embarrassed by your own material.

Guideline 4. Vary the stimulus throughout your presentation. If your presentation consists of words and handouts, you should move about as you speak to vary the stimulus. Don't pass out all your handouts at once - introduce them as you address the material on each handout. Drawings on a whiteboard or flipchart provide variation. Use boldface, underlining and italics to highlight critical points.

Guideline 5. Keep your media professional.

- If you prepare media by hand, make sure your lettering is large and readable from the back of the room (go back and check!).
- Avoid all-caps lettering, as it is cold and impersonal. Also avoid fancy fonts.
- Use active verbs.
- Leave lots of white space so your material isn't cramped or cluttered. Excessive use of highlighting, italics and underlining also appears cluttered.
- PowerPoint slides and flipcharts should have no more than three bullets per page or slide.
- Each bullet should contain only one idea or message. Use short sentences with key words to achieve clarity.
- Remove all jargon, abbreviations and acronyms - you're speaking to civilians!
- Screens for videos or PowerPoint should be large enough that all can read the text and see the graphs, tables or pictures.
- Line graphs are used to show trends, pie charts or bar graphs are used to show comparisons. Stacked bars or multiple bars are hard to see and even harder to explain. Ditto for pie charts with more than five slices!
- Avoid using more than three colors on a slide, flipchart or transparency. **Caution:** Light colored letters (e.g. yellow, pink) are hard to read against any background color. Lettering should be dark against a lighter background.

Guideline 6. Provide copies (handouts) of your slides, transparencies or PowerPoint presentation to allow the audience to "follow-along" and annotate their copy.

Guideline 7. Set up all media in advance of the presentation.

- Make sure you know how to use all equipment and that the equipment is in good working order.
- Verify you have a spare bulb for all projectors.
- Tape the extension cord to the floor so you don't trip over it.
- Cue a video to your starting point (no-one like to watch the FBI Warning) and set the sound level so someone in the back of the room can hear.
- Check lighting from various points in the room to make sure there is no glare and the screen is visible and readable.
- Project slides to set the focus.

Delivery

Effective presentations are summarized in "**The Three P's of Presentations - Prepare, Preview and Present**". By paying attention to the details we improve the chance that our presentation will be memorable for the audience and that we will achieve our objective.

Prepare. Many of the preparation steps have already been discussed. Here's a summary:

- Enhance your presentation with media notes that remind you to add personal experiences - make it real for the audience!
- Set up equipment in advance and check for outlets, extension cords, spare bulbs (make sure the spare works!) and the location & operation of light switches/dimmers. If you're using an extension cord, tape it to the floor so you won't trip over it. Make sure you have a clear path to move between equipment and the podium.
- Check that your transparencies, slides and flipcharts are in the correct order.
- Learn how to operate all equipment you will use.

Preview. These steps were included with preparation and are summarized below:

- Step through your presentation in the room you will actually use. Check for visibility and readability from

back corners and side walls. Adjust the screen or the room arrangement until everyone can see your material.

- Check lighting for the presentation - can you adjust the level of illumination? Is there glare? If necessary, cover windows and unscrew selected light bulbs to get the right lighting.
- Set up focus. Cue videotapes. Adjust sound levels. Make sure your voice can be heard everywhere in the room (or get a sound system, if you can't be heard).

Present. Presentation guidelines and techniques are summarized below in six categories: *general, flipcharts, overhead projectors, slides (including PowerPoint), videotapes, and whiteboards/chalkboards.*

1. General. These guidelines apply to all presentations.

- **Face your audience.** Make eye contact with people in the room and try not to turn your back to them. Don't stare at your media - it makes you look confused or uncertain.
- **Use a pointer appropriately.** For flipcharts, stand to the side and use your hand as a pointer. For overhead transparencies, use a pen as a pointer and touch the pointer to the projection surface, not the screen. For slides, touch the pointer toward the projection screen, not to the projector lens or notebook screen. An LED/laser pointer can be used with slides or overhead transparencies.
- **"Drain and explain" visuals.** Summarize the entire visual first, then discuss each point in more detail. *Don't read the visual word-for-word!* Give examples or share personal experience about the subject to enhance your presentation.
- **Set your expectations for the audience.** Will you accept questions at any time, or should questions be held to the end? Do they need to take notes, or is the information in the materials or a handout? Can people leave if they need a break?
- **Avoid distractions.** If you have previewed the material you won't get caught "looking for the next slide" or trying to start the VCR. *Watch your hands!* If you put them in your pocket, you may fiddle with your keys or loose change and the noise becomes a distraction. If you're not sure you can keep your hands out of your pockets, remove everything from your pockets before you do the presentation. If you are holding a pointer, don't let it become a distraction by waving it around between

- uses. Ideally, you should only pick it up when you're using it. Finally, don't become a distraction by stepping in front of images projected on a screen - always stand to the side!
2. Flipcharts. Flipcharts are an effective way to supplement your presentation, collect action items, present your agenda, and to illustrate points during your presentation. Here are some guidelines.
 - If you prepare flipcharts in advance, number them in the order of presentation.
 - Place rows of tape on the easel, then tape the flipchart before tearing it from the pad to tape to the wall.
 - Don't stand in front of the easel and block your audience's view.
 - Reveal the information when you need it, not before.
 - When you have finished with a flipchart, cover it.
 - Take the time to write in large, legible letters. If your writing doesn't meet these criteria, ask someone else to write for you (the scribe).
 - Again, don't stare at the flipchart. Talk about the material, not to the material!
 3. Overhead Transparencies. Overhead transparencies are versatile and can be used extemporaneously. But there are some cautions to their use.
 - Project a transparency before you start and set alignment - the transparency is right-side-up, centered on the screen and without glare or light leaks. You may need to tilt the screen slightly, top side toward the audience, to eliminate glare and "keystoning".
 - Position yourself and the projector so you won't walk between the projector and the screen.
 - Handle transparencies by the edges so you won't project your fingerprints.
 - Don't leave a transparency projecting after you have finished discussing it. Use a "dark slide" or turn off the projector.
 - Use the revealing technique when there are multiple bullets on a transparency. Using a thick sheet of paper to cover the transparency, reveal one bullet, discuss it, then reveal the next bullet, discuss, etc.
 - Use a clear transparency to summarize notes, questions, etc. from your presentation. Collect these notes & questions on a flipchart or whiteboard, then write on the clear mylar.
 4. Slides/PowerPoint. Slides are good for showing complex

images through the use of pictures, which show the dimensions, depth, color and other characteristics of an object. Here are some guidelines for their use.

- Always preview your entire set of slides (35mm or PowerPoint) to check for lighting, glare, visibility and focus. Make sure all slides are oriented correctly (top side up).
 - Touch 35mm slides by their edges, not on the film surface.
 - Use a black slide to start and finish your presentation so you're not projecting light onto the screen.
 - Slides are best used in rapid succession to avoid hypnotizing your audience - no more than 20 seconds per slide, 10 or 15 second each is better. The entire slide show should be prepared with rapid projection in mind - i.e. one bullet per slide. Use multiple slides to reveal your bullets since you can't cover the upcoming bullets as you did with transparencies.
 - Try to have a remote device for switching slides. By doing this you can move about, walk up to the screen and use the pointer, etc. (don't stand in the projected area, as for transparencies) If no remote device is available, have a second person switch your slides for you.
5. Videotapes. Videotapes and DVDs are excellent for making a "canned presentation", especially if you are not a polished public speaker. They also have some guidelines for use.
- Elevate the monitor so that everyone can see. The best location should allow everyone a clear view.
 - Adjust room lighting, focus, color and sound when previewing the tape/DVD.
 - Cue the tape/DVD to start at the beginning before showing it.
 - Never try to speak over a tape/DVD; pause and make your point or comments, if necessary.
 - Avoid long tapes or DVDs, as they often put your audience to sleep. 10-15 minute segments are best.
6. Whiteboards. Whiteboards can be used to guide discussion, summarize, collect action items, or draw pictures during a presentation. Here are some guidelines for their use.
- Learn to write on the board while facing your audience. To point to anything on the board, stand with your back to the board and point while facing the audience.
 - Write legibly using large letters, evenly spaced. Ask the audience if your writing is readable.
 - Use color to organize ideas or highlight critical words.

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- Use whiteboard (dry erase) markers only - check them before the session to make sure they haven't dried up. Cap your markers when not in use. Make sure you have a few spares in case one dries up.
- Clean off areas after their use - obtain cleaning materials before the session.

Questions

Asking and answering questions provides the audience to participate and improve their understanding of your material. Questions can also be a challenge to a presenter, since you don't have control of what is asked and may not be prepared to answer the question. Therefore, some guidelines are in order for asking questions and for responding to audience questions.

Asking Questions. Presenters ask questions to get audience participation and to check for understanding of the material presented. Questions asked *at the beginning of a presentation* are used by the presenter to motivate the audience or to gather demographic information about the audience. "How many of you think sea power is important for America's economy?" "How many of you have served in the military?" "How many of you have heard of the Navy League?" Questions asked *during a presentation* are used to establish relevance, encourage discussion, focus the audience or reinforce key points. "Can anyone share a similar experience?" "What's an everyday example of this concept?" "What could you do in your community to support our sea service personnel?" Questions asked *at the end of a presentation* are used to summarize and to help achieve closure. "How can you help the Navy League?" "What have we learned today?" "Is anyone ready for lunch?"

Generally, when a presenter asks questions try to make them open, rather than closed, so that you can stimulate various responses. Closed questions are looking for a yes/no answer or a specific response. Closed question limit discussion. Avoid double questions, such as "How and why would we want to do this?" Also avoid rhetorical questions that precede the answer, as they are demeaning to an audience. "How can we do this? I'll tell you how."

Finally, follow a *question sequence*: ask - pause - direct - analyze - acknowledge. Ask questions of the entire group. The pause will encourage some to respond. The longer the response, the more likely a response will be forthcoming. Direct questions to someone only if you are certain they will

respond. Polling is preferred as a direct method - "Let's see what everyone thinks." Analyze includes your response to the answer received, and may include probing and asking other participants to comment. "What do you mean by that?" Does everyone agree?" You may need to paraphrase your question or a participant's response to get more involvement. "Another way of saying that is..." The last step in our questioning sequence is to acknowledge the responses. You may want to reinforce their answers "That's correct!" or just thank them for participating. Be careful about telling someone they are wrong - it's better to ask the audience if they agree and let them tell the respondent they are wrong!

Responding to Questions. Answering questions from the audience can enhance your presentation if handled properly. Here are some guidelines.

1. Always maintain a positive tone to convey your interest. Remember, there are no stupid questions!
2. If you don't know the answer, admit it! If the participant wants an answer, get back to them later after you have researched the answer.
3. Use active listening techniques to ensure your understanding of the question before responding.
 - Give non-verbal acknowledgement - make eye contact, or move closer to the questioner.
 - Seek clarification, if necessary, to ensure you are answering their question.
 - Paraphrase the question, if necessary, to ensure everyone heard it and it is stated in clear terms.
4. Get involvement from other participants, if appropriate. "What does everyone else think?" "Would anyone like to answer this question?"
5. Use your media, if appropriate, to reinforce a point you have already made.
6. Summarize the answers after a lengthy discussion.

Media Presentations

If you are asked to speak to the media, some additional guidelines are important. Generally, give your presentation as discussed above. Hold questions to the end so you don't lose control. Answering questions requires a different strategy than presenting to an audience. You must decide what the appropriate response is for each question: answer the question correctly, decline to answer, or admit you have no answer. The *first rule* for answering media questions is only answer the question asked - no more, no less. The *second rule* is don't

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lie. It is better to be remembered as uninformed than as a liar! Also avoid obfuscation, as this only excites the reporters to "get the truth". The *third rule* is don't lose your composure - stay calm and stay in control of the situation. The *fourth rule* is don't allow questions to go on indefinitely, as you will get tired and may contradict yourself. Don't be afraid to say "One last question" and hold them to it. I'm sure you've all seen a spokesperson leaving the room with reporters shouting questions at him/her. It's OK because the presentation is over!

Exercise

Purpose. To practice a presentation.

Agenda.

1. Prepare a three minute presentation on the history of the Navy League.
2. Present your presentation to a colleague. You may use any of the media in the room.
3. Critique each others presentations using the guide attached.

Limit. 15 minutes

Experienced presenters know you must practice to become polished, exude confidence (never show fear!), yet show humility when making presentations. If you can master these ideas, you will find yourself in demand as a speaker!

Thank You and Good luck!

