

Making a presentation

The material included will help you develop and improve your skills in giving presentations and meaningful short talks on the aspects of your studies and research, and the aspects related to your future jobs. It will also help you develop confidence in speaking and improve speaking fluency.

Introductions

1. Which of the items on the checklist below would you include in the introduction to an internal presentation to colleagues?

Checklist

- your name and position
- the title/subject of your presentation
- the purpose of your presentation
- the length of time you will take
- the main parts or points you will cover
- any visual aids you will use
- when the audience may ask questions
- a reference to the audience: a human touch

2. How would you introduce yourself at the beginning of a presentation? Which of these would you include?

- First name
- Surname
- Position/job title
- Department
- Job responsibilities

3. Use introducing yourself phrases and produce a fluent introduction of yourself.

Good morning. My name's

Ladies and gentlemen. It's an honour to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished audience.

Let me start by saying just a few words about my own background.

4. Use the following to introduce other people.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's my privilege today to introduce...who is going to be talking to us about...

Let me introduce my colleague to you.

5. Choose from the following to introduce the subject of your presentation.

I'd like to *talk (to you) today about ...*
I'm going to *present the recent ...*
 explain our position on...
 brief you on...
 inform you about...
 describe...

The subject of my *talk*
 focus *presentation*
 topic *paper (academic)*
 speech (usually to public audience)

6. When giving a presentation it is essential to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve.

E.g. Do you want to inform your audience about essential facts, or to persuade them to accept your proposal? This main purpose or aim needs to be briefly stated in the opening part of a presentation.

Use the following expressions for stating the purpose/objective:

We are here today to *learn about*
 decide...
 agree...

The purpose of this talk is to *update you on...*
 put you in the picture about...
 give you the background to...

This talk is designed to *act as a springboard for discussion.*
 start the ball rolling.

You can state the purpose right at the beginning or by building up gradually, leaving your statement of purpose until the latter part of the introduction. Both ways can be equally effective.

7. State the purpose of your own presentation using one of the following:

In my presentation today I'm going to explain the technical problems involved in...
This morning I'd like to review progress on...
In my presentation I'll be proposing two new techniques which we need to incorporate in...

In my presentation today I'd like to summarize the main findings of the study.

8. Create more impact by changing the normal word order. Begin your statement of purpose with the word "what".

What I'm going to explain this afternoon are the technical problems involved in...

What I'd like to do this morning is present the results of our study.

What I'll be proposing in my presentation are two new techniques which we need to incorporate in...

9. Inform the audience about the length of your presentation. Choose one from the following:

I shall only take ... minutes of your time.

I plan to be brief.

This should only last ... minutes.

10. Many successful introductions include information about the main points to be developed during the presentation, and the order in which the presenter will develop these. This is called **signposting**. Your introduction should contain some kind of signposting for the audience. Signposting your presentation will help you define the limits of your presentation, and focus the audience on the aspects of the topic you want to talk about.

Tell them what you will be talking about, and in which order you will develop your points. Use expressions for signposting your presentation, outlining its development and organizing the information.

I'll be developing three main points. First, I'll give you...Second,...Lastly,...

I've divided my presentation into four parts/sections. They are...

The subject can be looked at under the following headings: ...

We can break this area down into the following fields:...

11. Invite questions while introducing your talk.

I'd be glad to answer any questions at the end of my talk.

If you have any questions, please feel free to interrupt.

Please interrupt me if there's something which needs clarifying. Otherwise, there'll be time for discussion at the end.

12. In order to create interest, involve your audience. When giving a presentation it is very important to engage the attention of the audience right at the beginning of the presentation. One way to do this is to make your introduction as interesting and lively as possible.

- Illustrate the points of your presentations with examples or stories from life.
- Ask the audience questions to involve them in the presentation. This is particularly appropriate for informal presentations when you have a small audience.
- With larger audience use rhetoric questions – questions which encourage the audience to think, but which you answer yourself.
- Use words like *you*, *your*, *us*, *our* to make your audience feel involved in your presentation.

Remember that the presenter of even a highly technical information can start with some unusual statistics to engage his audience's attention.

Some examples of reference to the audience are:

I can see many of you are...
I know you've all travelled a long way.
You all look as though you've heard this before.

Ways of Organizing a Presentation

1. There are different ways of organizing information and ideas. Study key words and phrases for linking the parts of the presentation, sequencing and ordering.

Firstly/First of all...

Secondly/Then/Next...

Thirdly/And then we come to...

Finally/Lastly/Last of all...

Let's start with...

Let's move/go on to...

Now we come to...

That brings us to...

Let's leave that...

Let's get back to...

2. Complete the table with the proper words and phrases for linking the points of a presentation.

<i>in the same way</i> <i>generally</i> <i>to conclude</i>	<u>Comparing</u> <i>similarly</i>	<u>Contrasting</u> <i>But</i>
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<i>in brief</i> <i>as a result</i> <i>for instance</i> <i>especially</i> <i>however</i> <i>actually</i>	<u>Contradicting</u> <i>in fact</i>	<u>Concluding</u> <i>in conclusion</i>
	<u>Summarizing</u> <i>to sum up</i> <i>in short</i>	<u>Generalizing</u> <i>usually</i> <i>as a rule</i>
<u>Giving reasons/causes</u> <i>therefore</i> <i>so</i> <i>that's why</i>	<u>Giving examples</u> <i>for example</i> <i>such as</i>	<u>Highlighting</u> <i>in particular</i>

Summaries, conclusions and closing courtesies

1. Choose one from the following to signal the end of your presentation.

That brings me to the end of my presentation.

That completes my presentation.

Before I stop/finish, let me just say...

That covers all I wanted to say today.

2. Without a good conclusion a presentation is not complete. One way to end a presentation is to summarize briefly your main arguments and draw conclusions for the audience.

Start summarizing with the following words and phrases:

Let me just run over the key points again.

I'll briefly summarize the main issues.

To sum up...

Briefly...

3. Building up a conclusion use the following concluding phrases:

As you can see, there are some very good reasons...

In conclusion...

I'd like to leave you with the following thought/idea.

4. A persuasive presentation will often include recommendations and/or call for action from the audience. Use the following when recommending:

So, I would suggest that we...

I'd like to propose...(more formal)

In my opinion, the only way forward is...

5. Notice how recommendation and call for action vocabulary is used.

My suggestion

Our proposal would be/is to set up a project group.

The recommendation

We recommend

I'd like to suggest setting up a project group.

I propose

We suggest

I recommend you set up a project group.

We propose

6. Remember that *thank you* words are the obligatory part of the closing formalities.

Thank you for your attention.

Thank you for listening.

I hope you will have gained an insight into...

7. Don't forget to invite questions at the end of your talk.

I'd be glad to try and answer any questions.

So, let's throw it open to questions.

Any questions?

8. Look through the conclusion to the presentation. Notice how the presenter builds up the conclusion. Reviewing the main findings of the study and giving conclusions, he/she brings the presentation to an end.

At this stage I'd like to summarise the main findings of the study. First, the manufacturing data centres. Given the rapid growth in business in our plants, there is and will be a major need for new computer applications. So our recommendation is to leave them as they are.

However, with the administrative data centres we have a very different situation. Their organisation is not cost-effective, and is creating problems of duplication. We therefore recommend a thorough reorganisation.

We've looked at three options. First, to set up three regional data centres, but this represents only a partial solution to the problem of duplication and, as we've seen, is really not viable.

The second option, to expand one of the existing regional data centres in Bristol, Barcelona or Frankfurt, would achieve an efficient use of our resources, but there are physical problems such as lack of space, and the time factor.

So, the option which we strongly recommend for more detailed consideration, is to subcontract all administrative computing to an outside supplier of computer services.

I've detailed cost breakdowns for the three options, which I'll be passing now. And, of course, I'll be pleased to answer any questions.

Thank you all for your attention.

9. Divide the ending of the above given presentation into the following stages.

- summary introduction
- review of the situation for manufacturing data centres
- recommendation
- review of the situation for administrative data centres
- options review
- final recommendations
- audience reference to documentation
- asking questions
- thanking the audience