

# Presentation Checklist

## Pre-Presentation

- \_\_\_ **Who is your audience? What is their knowledge of the topic?**
- \_\_\_ **How will your audience benefit from this presentation?**  
(Remember: adults want solutions to real life problems. Give them what they want)
- \_\_\_ **What are the major messages that you want people to remember?**  
(Be focused and specific. Goal: 3 – 5 major messages per one hour of presentation)
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ **Have you researched your topic recently to ensure your knowledge is current?**  
(Recent articles and books, similar presentations, Medline search, etc.)
- \_\_\_ **Plan your presentation.**
  - \_\_\_ **Do you have the appropriate amount of content?**  
(Avoid extremes; not enough or too much material)
  - \_\_\_ **Create a loose outline:**
    - \_\_\_ Introduction (Grab their attention and set the pace for the presentation).
    - \_\_\_ Major messages (Be sure to consider transitions between themes).
    - \_\_\_ Summary (Don't skimp here. This is likely what they will remember longest).
  - \_\_\_ **Build in retention factors:**
    - \_\_\_ Use visual, auditory and kinesthetic stimuli.
    - \_\_\_ Reinforce major messages frequently.
    - \_\_\_ Don't forget the 90 / 20 / 8 rule.
    - \_\_\_ Call upon learners to take action. Put new knowledge into practice.
  - \_\_\_ **Include room for audience participation.**  
(Discussion / activity / problem solving / feedback)
  - \_\_\_ **Prepare your presentation medium:**  
(Slides, overheads, flipchart, demonstration, etc.)
    - \_\_\_ Avoid busy looking visual aids.
    - \_\_\_ Test visual aid in environment similar to presentation environment.
    - \_\_\_ Avoid abbreviations and unfamiliar jargon.
    - \_\_\_ Do graphics support or distract from message?
    - \_\_\_ Avoid too many aids.
  - \_\_\_ **Polish your presentation:**
    - \_\_\_ Practice delivering presentation to someone unfamiliar with topic.
    - \_\_\_ Evaluate timing and transitions.
- \_\_\_ **Final Preparation.**
  - \_\_\_ **Review materials for accuracy and typos.**
  - \_\_\_ **Prepare handouts for learners.**
  - \_\_\_ **Ensure meeting space is setup according to your specifications.**
  - \_\_\_ **Obtain essential "extras:"**
    - \_\_\_ Spare projector bulb.
    - \_\_\_ Fresh markers and paper.
    - \_\_\_ Presentation saved to hard drive and spare disk.

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- \_\_\_ **Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to presentation.**
- \_\_\_ **Inspect room and materials one final time.**
- \_\_\_ **Control nervousness and relax:**
  - \_\_\_ Breathe.
  - \_\_\_ Stretch.
  - \_\_\_ Smile.
  - \_\_\_ Greet a few participants as they arrive.
  - \_\_\_ Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- \_\_\_ **Meet the person who will introduce you, if applicable.**
- \_\_\_ **Begin presentation.**
- \_\_\_ **Get and maintain audience's attention:**
  - \_\_\_ Make a thought provoking statement.
  - \_\_\_ Ask a question.
  - \_\_\_ Ask for a show of hands.
  - \_\_\_ Get them laughing (Avoid inappropriate humor or jokes).
  - \_\_\_ Don't open with an apology, ever.
- \_\_\_ **The first few minutes:**
  - \_\_\_ Give overview of presentation.
  - \_\_\_ Elicit audiences expectations.
  - \_\_\_ Make audience comfortable with you and the topic.
- \_\_\_ **Communicate effectively:**
  - \_\_\_ Think before you speak and speak clearly.
  - \_\_\_ Be enthusiastic. Smile.
  - \_\_\_ Make eye contact often. Don't hold it for long and don't appear shifty.
  - \_\_\_ Make sure your body language supports your words.
  - \_\_\_ Adjust tone and words per minute to audience.
  - \_\_\_ Inject your personality into the presentation.
  - \_\_\_ Repeat a participant's question so the entire audience can hear it also.
- \_\_\_ **Watch audience's body language:**
  - \_\_\_ Increase tempo and enthusiasm when they appear bored.
  - \_\_\_ Involve them when they are preoccupied.
  - \_\_\_ Give more detail when they look interested.
  - \_\_\_ Clarify when they are confused.
  - \_\_\_ Praise them frequently no matter what they are doing.
  - \_\_\_ Give them a break when they look ready to diuress.
- \_\_\_ **Foster retention of major messages:**
  - \_\_\_ Pause often, but briefly, to allow your message to sink in.
  - \_\_\_ Repeat important statements and summarize major messages.
  - \_\_\_ Ask probing questions to determine audience's understanding.
- \_\_\_ **Manage your time effectively:**
  - \_\_\_ Participants won't appreciate your going over time.
  - \_\_\_ Meeting coordinators will panic when you finish too early.
- \_\_\_ **Finish effectively:**
  - \_\_\_ The conclusion IS NOT just the end of your presentation.
  - \_\_\_ Restate the main points.
  - \_\_\_ Call participants to take action.
  - \_\_\_ Close with a quote or anecdote when possible.
  - \_\_\_ Leave the audience saying "Wow!"