

Presentation Skills

The basic structure for all presentations

- Tell them what you going to tell them (Introduction).
- Tell them (Main content - delivery of information/argument).
- Tell them what you've told them (Conclusion).

Opening and closing statements

Opening and closing statements tend to be the parts of your presentation the audience remember the best. Because of this it is important to plan these carefully and even consider having these written out in full sentences as part of your notes.

Your opening statement should hook your audience in and given them a reason to continue listening. Your closing statement should refer back to your opening statement and should provide a conclusion to your argument or what the next steps are in the research/discussion/project.

Content of your presentation

- The first step is to fully understand the brief (the task you have been set and the assessment criteria).
- Create a mindmap of what you already know (more information below).
- Research the subject.
- Formulate questions to help focus research.
- Note the sources used for referencing.


An effective way of capturing all potential topics/themes is to draw a mindmap manually or using software such as Inspiration or [Mindview](#) (both free via AppHub). Once you have created your mindmap you should pick out the strongest three or four points to cover in your presentation.

Consider using the rule of three

- Three key points/topics in your presentation.
- Three bullet points per page.
- Statements with three parts - "What happened, why it happened and what we can learn from it."
- Three word phrases/titles - "So what next?"

13 Top Tips for when for presentation confidence and success

1. Know your content and practise aloud.
2. Arrive early to test slides & familiarise yourself with the technology.
3. Talk to people in the class beforehand to ease anxiety.
4. Have water available.
5. Remember to breath (deeply = volume).
6. Stand up and keep an open posture.
7. Avoid fidgeting - all movement should be deliberate.
8. Eye contact with everyone in your audience.
9. Be personable/authentic.
10. Keep your pace steady – talking slower helps you to stay calm.
11. Don't stand in front of the screen.
12. Try some relaxation/ mindfulness exercises.
13. Smile! ("I am excited" mantra).



You can reprogram anxiety as excitement using strategies such as positive self-talk (e.g. saying "I am excited" out loud or in your head), which lead you to feel more excited, adopt an opportunity mindset (as opposed to a threat mindset), and improve your subsequent performance.

More resources

Books from the Skills Collection (Hallam Library)

- Atkin, K. (2015). *The Presentation Workout*. Harlow, England : Pearson.
- Schofield, J. (2014). *Presentation Skills in 7 Simple Steps*. London: Collins.

Online resources

- [10 Steps to Build Your Presentation Skills](#), Pearson Education.
- [Group work and presentations](#) (online module), Skills4Study Campus.

For feedback on a presentation-in-progress, book onto one of our [Presentation Forums](#) to rehearse with other students and a Skills Tutor.