



10 Tips for Making High-impact Presentations – Communicating with Conviction and Diplomacy
May 15, 2014 Protiviti Webinar – Post-webinar Handout

<p>1. How do you encourage participant interactions on a conference call with a large group of people and nobody wants to speak up?</p>	<p>Set the ground rules, framework, and expectations concerning participation at the meeting’s start. Tell the audience you’ll be asking questions and want their input; pause between questions to allow time for people to formulate their responses.</p>
<p>2. What suggestions do you have for a person making a presentation in a different language that is not his/her official language?</p>	<p>Keep the message simple. Speak slowly. Use analogies.</p>
<p>3. I am quite comfortable talking to people. Just one problem - I am a white board person not a person who can sit and talk/present. How can I get over that? Would it be rude to stand up and talk?</p> <p>I prefer to stand when presenting but the culture of the group I present to is to always sit. Is it best to go with the culture and sit or make them uncomfortable by standing?</p>	<p>Depending on the situation, standing may be a good idea so people can see and hear you. Standing will also make it easier to project your voice. However, not every room has a white board. And, if you are in a room other than your office, using someone else’s whiteboard can be perceived as overly assertive. The whiteboard may offer you an opportunity to organize your thoughts, i.e., the writing creates a delay that enables you to determine your message. In cases where you cannot access a whiteboard, buy yourself some “think time” by restating the question before responding. If you have been asked in advance to speak about a particular topic, create a handout that contains the drawings you need to make your point.</p> <p>However, if you are a junior ranking person in the meeting, it may make political sense to comply with the culture. On the other hand, if you are the CAE, CCO or other leadership position, standing while making your presentation is a way of conveying your style and making it easier for others to see and hear you.</p>

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4. How should a novice presenter try and deal with nerves?

In order to project your voice so that others can hear you, you need to breathe naturally. Unfortunately, stress causes you to breathe shallowly. Shallow breathing makes it difficult to project your voice. One way to calm yourself is to do breathing exercises.

Practice your breathing by using the following 2 exercises:

1. Exhale
2. Inhale slowly while counting to 5
3. Exhale slowly while counting to 5

Repeat this exercise several times.

Another exercise is to:

1. Exhale
2. Inhale, until you cannot inhale anymore air
3. Exhale, slowly while counting out loud.

Repeat this exercise several times. Each time you should look to count to a higher number. Do not speed up your counting in order to reach a higher number.

The purpose of these exercises is to improve the placement of the air you inhale and to increase air support. The key to both of these exercises is keeping your shoulders from moving up as you inhale. Quite often, when we take deep breaths we tend to pick up and drop our shoulders as we inhale and exhale. Raising your shoulders actually forces you to take shorter breaths. When you inhale, place your hand directly below your stomach. You should feel the air first filling your diaphragm and then your chest. If you raise your shoulders when you inhale, you are only filling your chest cavity with air.

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<p>5. I totally 'get' how these steps are critical for the auditee-level meetings. However, do these (or, do they) steps change when presenting to audit committee? I'm considering the concept of giving them a summary of what they are going to hear, etc... they already received the materials and with those materials there is an executive summary. So, I find the beginning of my presentation in the AC meeting due to their already having read the materials; they don't like repetition; they have short attention spans as there is so much covered in the AC meeting. Ideas or suggestions? Thank you</p>	<p>If they've read the material, your comments should be summary-oriented, point out observations or conclusions or trends they might not have noticed. Your comments should also address the conclusions you want them to draw.</p>
<p>6. Do presentation aids such as handouts increase or decrease the audience's focus on the presenter's message? Is it sufficient for the Agenda to be in the electronic meeting invitation? Why kill trees with handouts? Does it make sense to use advance materials to expedite the discussion items? Should presentation slides always be printed off as handouts? If so, how do you keep the audience from being distracted by reading ahead? What suggestions do you have to prevent people from thumbing through your handouts before you've gotten to that particular page? Should the agenda be a standalone document or included in the presentation?</p>	<p>Handouts strengthen verbal messages because they reinforce them by using a different medium: image. Make sure participants receive the information with sufficient time to review it.</p> <p>Studies show participants remember more when they can take notes. Sending materials ahead enables participants to review and prepare and it makes the actual meeting time more productive and participatory.</p> <p>Expect participants to read ahead --- if you want to have a “surprise” message, make it a verbal one. Make sure your message embellishes, not repeats, the printed one.</p>
<p>7. How would you handle it if you notice negative body language in the participants when you are presenting?</p>	<p>Participant body language may or may not be a reaction to your message. It may be a reaction to room temperature or odor. However, pause, restate your message using different terms --- more simple, more clear --- and see if body language changes. If it doesn't, seek input by saying “what reactions or questions do you have?”. Be sure to restate the question in terms you understand before responding.</p>
<p>8. How do you manage the flow of a meeting and time with the one person in the room that asks an excessive amount of questions and dominates the conversation?</p>	<p>It depends on whether the questions are germane and if the rest of the audience views the questioner as their representative and is interested in the answer. Are the questions addressing information that a reasonable person would expect to be addressed by the meeting objective? If the answer to these questions is yes, then you should answer the questions. If the answer is no, then you should suggest discussing the questions during a separate meeting.</p>

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<p>9. What suggestions do you have for teleconferences? As you cannot see the body language, I find it is difficult to sense how the message is being received.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double check that all participants have the necessary handout materials in hand well in advance of the conversation, e.g., agendas. • Ask all participants to introduce themselves. • Stick to one speaker at a time. • Skip the sound effects by making sure that attendees use the mute button until they speak. • Keep a running list of who is responsible for what as topics are discussed and action plans are determined. • Stay on topic. • Instruct everyone to identify themselves before speaking. • Try to speak slightly more slowly than usual, with an emphasis on clarity. • Repeat essential numbers and figures, and feel free to ask others to repeat them when they are providing information. • If you come up with an important point or question, write it down and wait for a pause in the conversation to raise this issue. • Be sure to take detailed minutes and distribute them immediately after the meeting.
<p>10. Any guidance on how much prep time relating to how much presentation time?</p>	<p>Preparation is a function of the presentation goal and the message. It typically is a minimum two times the presentation length. However, this preparation time can be longer if the presentation involves coordination with other speakers, animated PowerPoint presentations, lighting, and audio.</p>
<p>11. Would you recommend Toastmasters for speaking practice? There is a club right by our office and they are open to having guests and members.</p>	<p>Yes. They enable folks to get practice developing and delivering a variety of presentations.</p>
<p>12. What does WIIFM stand for?</p>	<p>What's In It For Me – the station everyone tunes in to.</p>
<p>13. How is the best way to skip a confrontation in middle of a meeting of an analytic audience that questions everything or almost everything you say?</p>	<p>The challenge is to manage your reaction. Remind yourself that the questioner is not attacking you; this is the person's style. If you cannot provide accurate answers, say so and offer to get back to the person after the meeting. Also, if you don't understand the point or goal of the questions because they seem so picayune, ask the questioner why this information is important before you respond.</p>

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<p>14. What do you do if someone becomes very argumentative over something you are discussing?</p>	<p>First, you need to stay calm. Consider why the person is reacting this way. It's natural to be upset when hearing bad news. Let the person vent, if it seems needed. DO NOT try to get the person to "calm down" or "be reasonable." If you are concerned about a violent reaction, make sure you have provided for your own safety and security. Either have a witness present or alert security in advance. If appropriate, once the shock has abated, offer the person resources he/she can pursue. Forgive yourself for being the bearer of bad news. You are not causing the distress...the news is.</p>
<p>15. How do you refocus the meeting to your presentation when the audit committee members and management engage in back and forth conversation that deviate from what you were planning to present?</p>	<p>Tangents are always a challenge. First, though, you need to make sure it's truly a tangent (see answer to #8). If this behavior continues, speak separately with the Audit Committee chair and the CEO to determine their level of satisfaction with the meetings.</p>