

Module 4: Presentation Skills to Engage an Audience

Best ways to be presented to engage the audience: provide skills, techniques and tips on how to bring the presentation alive. Participants present in the group for feedback and mutual support, concept of “Knowledge Parties” as methodology to learn from each other

Module 4: Introduction & Overview

Introduction - Short Description of the module

By this module we would like to teach participants giving inspiring and engaging presentations starting from the self-assessment, through planning and preparation, engaging the audience, handling stress and using visual aids. Some theory and techniques will be presented but the idea is to make it as much interactive as possible offering participants the opportunity to put the skills into practice (also by giving and receiving feedback from the peers). By providing participants with the basic knowledge on presentation techniques we would like to improve their confidence, which will later help them to easier connect with the local communities. By this module we would also like to make the participants familiar with the concept of “Knowledge Parties”.

Benefits/Competences/Skills/ Learning Objectives of the Module

The objective is to enhance participants presentation skills so they can:

1. Present with confidence and authenticity (know how to handle stress and use body language)
2. Know how to plan and prepare the presentation in an effective way
3. Know how to improve audience attention
4. Engage audience by using different tools and methods

Overview and timeline

<i>Module 4: Presentation skills script and timelines</i>		
Topic		Time: minutes
Intro+ agenda		10
Handling stress		15
Body language		15
	Video: How to sound smart	10
Building relationship with audience		
	Video: Public speaking tips	10
	Some theory & tips	10
	Knowledge Parties	15
	Activity 1 Intercultural Dialogue	35
	icebreakers and energisers stories and metaphors	15
	Introduction to Improv Activity 2 Improvisation	40
Presenting and feedback from peers	Activity 3 What can you bring to the table?	60
	Total length	(approx. 4 h)

Module 4: Activities

I. Handling stress

Question to participants: Are you aware of your body reactions towards stress? Can you share your personal experience?

The speech anxiety you feel is a normal reaction. Millions experience it, from pre-speech nerves or "butterflies," to extreme self-consciousness to full-blown panic. Some people rank the fear of public speaking higher than the fear of death! Fear of public speaking can manifest itself in many ways—but a reliable symptom of stage fright is the physical response the speaker experiences.

Some of the typical reactions are: galloping heart rate, rapid and shallow breathing, shaky voice, trembling hands, nausea, sweating.

TIPS for controlling stress and anxiety:

1. Accept that being nervous is not a bad thing, it just means you do care about giving a good presentation.
2. Remember that nerves are your friend – they tell you something important is going to happen
3. Take a few deep breaths as it can work wonders for calming nerves. Try relaxation methods.
4. Don't try to be perfect (no one is), be yourself instead and the audience will appreciate that.
5. Remember that you are a subject matter expert here and you know much more about the topic than your audience
6. Remember that you often look more confident than you may feel.
7. Don't worry if you miss out things, the audience will not be aware of that. And believe, they want you to do well.
8. It may not be you – the reactions/distractions of the audience might be caused by something else (tiredness, no fresh air in the room etc.)

9. Visualise your success - Close your eyes and picture yourself delivering your talk with confidence and allow your mind to help turn your picture into a reality
10. If you still feel stressed, don't be afraid to say that – it is human and hiding stress makes it even worse
11. Avoid caffeine and alcohol
12. Recognize and learn how your body reacts to stress

Additional hints:

if your body reaction is

- trembling hands – avoid holding sheets of paper with notes in hand
- motor ticks – avoid holding the pen and clicking, move around
- sweating – use appropriate cloth

Body language

Body language is an essential part of public speaking success. Your non-verbal signals will impact on the way your message is received, how engaged your audience is, and what they think of you as an individual. Even if you've prepared the best speech in the world, if you aren't animated, open or active then your audience won't know what you've said.

First impression

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression”

The research shows that it takes around 7 seconds to form a first impression. Any extra information you learn about the other person after those 7 seconds will be filtered through this first impression that you formed.

Ask yourself some questions:

- What's the first thing you want them to experience?
- What kind of first impression do you want to make on them?
- What's the mood you want your introduction to create?

Remember that it is not only what you say that creates the first impression about your presentation, but also:

- the room where you are presenting
- the lighting
- the music (if you choose to play the music)

- the items the audience may find on their chair
- pre- presentation images on the screen
- the way you are dressed
- the way you open your presentation (start with bang!)
- your body language - ensure it is positive (wear a smile)

Pose of your body (might be optional for digital ambassadors)

- Stand straight with your shoulders back and feet shoulder width apart.
- Place your hands either side of your body so that you can easily make hand gestures when you need to.
- Face the audience as much as possible. If you're in a large room, tilt your whole body towards different parts of the audience so everyone feels included.

Power pose - our body language governs how we think and feel about ourselves, and thus, how we hold our bodies can have an impact on our minds. In other words, by commanding a powerful stance, we can make ourselves actually feel more powerful.

Eye contact

Making eye contact with your audience builds a connection between you and them and they feel more valued by you. This makes the audience more likely to respect and listen to you because they feel important. It also makes the audience trust you more because people tend to avoid eye contact when they're lying.

- When talking to a large number of people, maintain eye contact with one audience member for 4 or more seconds before moving to another member of the audience for 4 seconds, and so on.
- Make eye contact in a 'Z' formation - look at one person at the back left corner of the room, then the back right, then to the front left, and finally to someone at the front right. Be careful not to just repeat the Z formation with the same audience members each time you do it - you want to connect with as many members of the audience as possible.

Hand gestures

Gestures amplify your stories and will help you come across as more genuine and believable. They're an essential element of our non-verbal communication in showing others how we feel, and in turn how we make them feel.

- Think of your hand gestures as a storytelling tool; put verbs into action by acting them out with your hands.
- Don't overdo it - gesture sparingly and focus on action words. Make your gestures strong and defined.
- Use symbolic gestures to communicate numbers and position, eg. 2 fingers for the number 2 and a raised hand for stop.
- Use descriptive gestures to communicate movement, eg. shapes, size, length, etc.
- Use emotional gestures to communicate feelings, eg. hands clasped together to show pleading, hands raise either side of your head to show despair.
- When using visual aids, point and turn slightly to look at the relevant data, and the audience will automatically follow your hands and eyes.

Movement

Moving around the stage is a great way of showing your audience you are confident in what you're saying and including everyone in the conversation.

- Don't pace around the stage every 30 seconds - this is distracting to your audience. Wait at least 3 minutes before moving to another area of the stage.
- Time your movement on stage with a change in topic - this is a way of physically marking the transition.
- Move towards the audience when asking questions or making an important point.
- When you're walking to another side of the stage, try to avoid turning your back to any areas of the audience as this disconnects them and can come across as rude.
- Avoid swaying or rocking on the spot - either walk to another area of the stage or don't move your entire body at all.

Facial expressions

People depend on facial expressions to interpret motives and emotions so an audience will respond better to you if you are expressive. This is a bit like acting - you want to emphasise your expressions so that everyone in the audience can interpret meaning from them.

You could film yourself speaking and identify artificial or unfriendly facial expressions you make when telling a story and replace them with more genuine, believable expressions. Try to practice speaking with your face to show happiness, sadness, anger, and surprise. Your face should reflect the emotions within your stories.

Mannerism

Mannerisms are the nervous habits most people have that detract from your message and can make the audience feel uncomfortable. Common habits you have that you might not be aware of are fiddling with your hair or suit, putting your hands in your pockets, and excessively using filler words such as 'um,' 'so' and 'like'.

Voice

Your voice is the best tool in your delivery toolbox. You must learn to use it effectively to enhance your presentation.

1. 4 P's: Pace, Pitch, Power, and Pauses

Be conscious of all four major vocal variables, and work all of them into your speech:

- 1) **Pace** — One of the easiest ways to incorporate variable pace is to **slow down through key statements**.
- 2) **Pitch** — A convenient way to hit different pitch points is to **play with different emotional content**. A *sad* voice takes on a different pitch than a *content* voice, which is distinct from an *excited* voice, and so on. Stories are good speech building blocks for many reasons, including how they bring a speaker's voice alive through different emotions.

- 3) **Power** (Volume) — Don't overdo it with changes in volume. Again, align your variations in volume with emotional content. Anger or joy tends to bring out a **loud voice**. Fear or sadness calls for a **quiet voice**.
- 4) **Pauses** — There are a multitude of ways to incorporate pauses in a meaningful way. For this speech, keep it straightforward. Make sure you've got **short pauses** following every sentence, and **longer pauses** at the ends of paragraphs or transitions within your speech.

Additional exercise: Choose a phrase and ask participants to read it loud in different ways. What emotions does it bring? Alternatively, pre-record the same phrase using a different tone of voice.

2. Align Your Voice with Expressive Gestures

One of the best ways to bring out your most expressive voice is to use expressive gestures, particularly facial gestures!

If you participate in teleconference calls or webinars, you may have learned this trick. Even though nobody can see you, it really helps to stand up in your office and give body, hand, and facial gestures as you talk on the phone. Your voice will naturally come alive, as if synchronised with your gestures.

The same trick applies to face-to-face presentations as well. If you are expressive with your face and other gestures, your voice tends to naturally align.

VIDEO:

<https://youtu.be/8S0FDjFBj8o>

How to sound smart in your TEDex Talk

Duration: 6 min

Participants are asked to watch and observe how the speaker uses the voice to engage the audience.

Bibliography:

Your speaking voice

<https://www.toastmasters.org/~-/media/B7D5C3F93FC3439589BCBF5DBF521132.ashx>

II. Building a relationship with your audience:

6 Public Speaking Tips To Hook Any Audience

<https://youtu.be/k8GvTgWtR7o>

Ask participants to watch and remember as many techniques to hook the audience as possible.

TIPS:

1. Unusual opening, referring to current affairs, providing surprising facts
2. Predictions, trends, insights, quotes
3. Quizzes, discussions, quizzes, challenges
4. Pictures, photos, graphs
5. Refer to audience members by name
6. Use cultural references
7. Change of media and variety of visual aids (audio, video etc.)
8. Humour and conversation
9. The art of improvisation
10. Anecdotes, stories, metaphors, analogies, ice breakers

Refer to different learning styles:

- o **Visual Learning**

The Visual learning style is learning by seeing. You learn visually whenever you gain information from sight.

- o **Kinesthetic Learning**

Kinesthetic style is learning by doing. You learn in this manner whenever you capture new information through physical activity.

- o **Auditory Learning**

Auditory style is learning by hearing. Learners with strong auditory ability are able to hear and comprehend without missing much.

KNOWLEDGE PARTY

The concept – the event format that focuses on storytelling while sharing knowledge and inspiration.

- Ice-breakers
- Stories
- Interaction
- Informal atmosphere
- Learning from each other
- Fun
- Networking
- Dialogue
- Reducing stereotypes

Explain to the participants the idea and the objectives of knowledge parties within the DICA project:

1. aimed specifically at local residents (with focus on addressing loneliness) and having as target outcome developing long-term buddying pairs to provide befriending and mutual assistance
2. aimed at business, public sector and NGOs (providing the skills for staff to work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds)

ICE BREAKERS AND ENERGIZERS

Ice breakers – activities to welcome attendees and warm up the conversation among participants in a meeting

Energizers - quick, fun activities to liven up the group and increase the energy level

Present to the participants 2-3 examples of the icebreakers/energizers

Library of facilitation techniques:

<https://www.sessionlab.com/library/energiser>

<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Energisers.pdf>

STORIES

Curiosity is a strong human drive and curiosity can be a powerful in terms of focusing people's attention on us and what we are saying. Storytelling is

intrinsic and familiar in human nature. The moment I am being told a story, then you have my attention. How compelling the story is will depend on how much I want to know what happens next.

How to tell a great story?

1. Immerse your audience in the story.
2. Tell a personal story.
3. Structure your story (beginning, middle, end – normal, explosion, new normal)
4. Create suspense.
5. Bring characters to life.
6. Show. Don't tell. Use sensory information. Let people feel it.
7. Fill the story with emotions
8. Build up to S.T.A.R. moment (Something They'll Always Remember).
9. End with a positive take-away/impact.

METAPHORS

A direct comparison between two unrelated or indirectly linked things is called a metaphor. Metaphors create vivid images in your reader's head – making it easier to understand and remember your message. They are also a subtle way to influence.

Eg. "Time is money"

Metaphors are great for creating impact and making something memorable. So making use of them is a technique often used in marketing and advertising. But it's just as effective for making impact in your presentations, speeches and even in everyday discussions. With metaphors, you help people get the idea quickly and efficiently.

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation theatre (often called just improv) is the form of theatre in which most or all what is performed is created spontaneously by the performers, thus unplanned and unscripted. The players come on stage and do not know what is going to happen. Usually they get a theme or suggestion from the audience. The presenter asks for example about a place, a situation, a feeling etc. These suggestions are then a trigger and guide for the emerging scenes. A story develops from the spontaneity and mutual inspiration.

This is quite different from the precisely planned and prepared presentation where you follow the script and know the agenda. Here you have to listen, interact and respond on spot.

Some of the abilities one can develop through improvisation are:

- o Confidence and self-acceptance
- o Ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances
- o Awareness of one's strengths and areas of opportunities to develop
- o Ability to create and sustain rapport
- o Ability to communicate non-verbally
- o Ability to physically blend in and feel comfortable in any environment
- o Narrative ability and how to engage hearts and minds through story
- o Ability to take risks and overcome fear of failure and being judged

More about the benefits the art of improvisation can bring here:

<https://www.covertheatre.com/about-improv>

Some improv's rules that might be useful:

- Say YES. Now, obviously in real life you're not always going to agree with everything everyone says. But the Rule of Agreement reminds you to "respect what your partner has created" and to at least start from an open-minded place. Start with a YES and see where that takes you.
- THERE ARE NO MISTAKES, only opportunities. In improv there are no mistakes, only beautiful happy accidents. And many of the world's greatest discoveries have been by accident.
- Focus on the HERE and NOW
- GIVE and TAKE
- LISTEN, watch and concentrate
- Tell a STORY

Bibliography:

Public speaking tips: <https://youtu.be/k8GvTgWtR7o>

Improvisation: <https://www.covertheatre.com/about-improv>

Activity 1: Listening, learning from each other, inter-cultural dialogue

1. Activity description (method) in steps:

Participants are asked to work in pairs (each pair should be formed of ppl from different cultures).

- They have to teach a colleague from the pair one simple sentence in their native language
- They have to learn from the colleague one interesting fact about their culture or their personal story. The participants are provided with the list of questions (check the appendix below) they might want to ask but they can also come up with their own question. 20 mins
- Participants share what they have learned in front of the whole group. 15 mins

2.Duration: 35 mins

3.Materials needed / tips for applying the methods:

Paper and pens for the notes, handout with questions (appendix 1)

Use breakout rooms

Supporting material for practicing/understanding/implementing the method (Exercises, Case studies, Videos, Interactive resources) :

Appendix 1: List of questions

Bibliography:

Activity 2 – Improvisation, story swap

Activity description (method) in steps :

One person starts telling a story.* When the facilitator claps their hands and shouts, the person picks another person who takes over telling the story exactly where they left off, and then they continue swapping throughout the

story. This activity trains improvisers to listen, yes and, and not plan too far ahead.

*suggestion: the first person who starts needs to use the word "culture".

Duration

40 min

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods

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**Activity 3 – What can you bring to the table?
Presenting and Feedback from Peers**

Activity description (method) in steps

10 min (preparation)

40 min presentation

Each participant is asked to give a short presentation (3 mins) of one element of their culture. The participants present and the peers observe and write down the feedback (overall impressions, what was good, what could have been done differently, body language etc).

Duration

10 min (preparation)

40 min presentation

10 min feedback from peers

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods

Jamboard with an image of a table
e.g. [What can you bring to the table?](#)

Supporting material for practicing/understanding/implementing the method
(Exercises, Case studies, Videos, Interactive resources)

Self-assessment on module

Bibliography:



Appendix 1: Activity 1 – Intercultural dialogue

Questions:

1. How do people greet one another in your culture? Shake hands? Embrace or kiss?
2. What sports are popular in your country?
3. What popular game did you play as a child?
4. Can you describe the most important (or most celebrated) holiday of your culture.
5. What is considered most disrespectful in your culture
6. What would you say is, from your perspective, the most commonly held misconception about people of your culture?
7. How would a visitor be welcomed to someone's home?
8. What are the norms around weddings?
9. What are the norms around births?
10. How are gender roles perceived?
11. How is space used (e.g., how close should two people who are social acquaintances stand next to one another when they are having a conversation?)
12. How is time understood and measured? (e.g., how late can you be to a business appointment before you are considered rude?)
13. What is the strangest food you have ever eaten?
14. Is there any specific expression in your language that cannot be translated to English? Can you explain its meaning?
15. If you could choose one famous person from your country who would that be and why?
16. What is your funniest/worst experience related to cultural misunderstanding (any faux faux, a slip of the tongue etc.)?