HOW TO DELIVER A PRESENTATION

Action List

1. Prepare yourself **mentally**: remind yourself that you have a good presentation they want to hear.
2. Familiarise yourself with the **room**, if possible: how many will attend the presentation, where will they sit in relation to you, where is the presentation equipment positioned?
3. Check your **preparations**: ensure your notes and visual aids are in order and any equipment is working.
4. **Introduce yourself** and explain your role.
5. **Ask questions** — for example, about their particular areas of interest — and adjust your presentation in light of the responses.
6. Start your presentation with an **overview** of its structure and the key points you intend to make.
7. **Encourage questions**; explain that you will try to answer them as they arise, but will postpone complex answers till after the presentation.
8. Cover the **key points** in turn; show visual aids only when relevant.
9. **Speak clearly**; concentrate on speaking slowly if you are nervous and use pauses for emphasis.
10. Project positive **body language** with a confident, open posture; smile.
11. Talk to the **audience**, not the images behind you when using a screen or projector: turn equipment off when not in use so the audience is not distracted.
12. Continually scan the audience, maintaining **eye contact**; watch for inattention, fidgeting and other signs of boredom.
13. Use questions and names to recapture attention and **involve** them.

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14. **Respond** to the audience; be ready to change your approach in light of their degree of interest.
15. Finish the presentation with a **summary** of the key points; stress the benefits of taking action.
16. Provide any **handouts** after the presentation, when they can no longer distract the audience and may remind them of your message.
17. Deal with any remaining questions and ask for **feedback**.
18. Establish the **next step**, and note any follow-up action required from you.

Cardinal Rules

Do:

- check your **preparations**
- **involve** your audience and respond to them
- project confidence and **enthusiasm**
- maintain **eye contact**
- deal with **questions** immediately
- establish the **next step**

Don't:

- worry about being **nervous** — use it as a source of energy
- read from a **script**
- speak too **quickly**
- provide **handouts** until after the presentation

Other related Action Lists:

- Preparing your sales pitch

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