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# Oral Presentations: Advice and Tips

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# Advantages of Written Messages

- ❑ Present extensive or complex financial data
- ❑ Present many specific details of law or policy or procedure
- ❑ Minimize undesirable emotions



# Advantages of Oral Messages



- ❑ Use emotion to help persuade audience
- ❑ Focus the audience's attention on specific points
- ❑ Answer questions and resolve conflicts quickly
- ❑ Modify a proposal that may not be acceptable in its original form
- ❑ Get immediate reaction or response



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# Planning your presentation

- ❑ Choose the most effective kind of presentation for the audience and situation
  - ❑ Adapt ideas to audience's attitudes, interests, and experience
  - ❑ Use a strong opening and closing
  - ❑ Use visual aids or other devices to
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# Organizing your presentation

- Provide an overview of your main points
- Signpost your main points in the body of your talk





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# Sample Outline

- ❑ Interesting opening
  - ❑ Description of topic
  - ❑ Definition of any special terms
  - ❑ Brief description of how information was gathered
  - ❑ Presentation of main ideas
  - ❑ Conclusions
  - ❑ Questions
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# Effective delivery

- ❑ Make direct eye contact with the audience
- ❑ Use conversational style
- ❑ Use notes and visuals effectively
- ❑ Handle questions effectively





# Delivery Tip



- ❑ Maintain eye contact
- ❑ Speakers who looked at the audience often during a 7 minute speech were judged more honest, friendlier, more experienced than speakers who delivered the same speech with less eye contact.



# Why use visuals?

- ❑ To create the best impression.
- ❑ In a study, presenters who used visuals were judged “better prepared, more persuasive, more professional, more credible, and more interesting” than speakers who did not use visuals.



# Tips for using visual aids

- ❑ Face the audience
- ❑ Don't block the screen
- ❑ Elaborate on the topics presented on the screen
- ❑ Don't turn lights off and on repeatedly
- ❑ Don't project visual until you are ready to talk about it





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# Designing visual aids

- ❑ Keep the information brief (35 words or less)
  - ❑ Make only two or three points per screen
  - ❑ Use informative titles
  - ❑ Type large type (30 pt. minimum) and lots of white space
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# How to dispel nervousness

- Prepare ahead of time
- Use your nervousness as energy to be harnessed
- Consciously contract and relax your muscles



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# Reducing anxiety

- ❑ Take several deep breaths before you begin
- ❑ Look at the audience before starting to speak
- ❑ Concentrate on presenting and performing



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# How not to sabotage your presentation

Don't give your listeners snow blindness:

1. *Avoid a white background and a light, narrow font.*
  2. Use boldface font whenever possible.
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## Avoid Snowblindness #2

Also avoid yellow letters on a white background, and

Black letters on a dark background.

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# Just because it's an option, doesn't make it a good idea:

- ❑ PowerPoint lets you
- ❑ Create a slide that has
- ❑ As many as 15 points
- ❑ Or more on it,
- ❑ But just because you
- ❑ Can fit seven or eight
- ❑ Bullet points on half a
- ❑ Slide doesn't mean
- ❑ That your audience
- ❑ Will thank you for
- ❑ Cramming as much
- ❑ Information as possible on one
- ❑ Single slide that they
- ❑ Have to decipher from
- ❑ The back of the room.

# What do you do when you have too much material for the time?

- ❑ Reduce the length of the presentation
- ❑ Don't gallop through the text
- ❑ Galloping=droning=sleeping listeners





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# Sources

- Kitty Locker. *Business and Administrative Communication*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 1999.
  - Hugh Hay-Roe. “How to Sabotage a Presentation.” *InterCom* (Feb. 99): 22-23.
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