

How to Prepare for On-camera Delivery

Studies have shown that an audience bases their judgment of the quality of a speaker as follows:

Body Language: 55%

Vocal Qualities 38%

Words 7%

Over 93% of your perception as a speaker is from factors other than what you say!

Eye contact

The eyes communicate powerful cognitive messages. Presenters should not underestimate their ability to persuade an audience with their eyes. Following are tips to achieve better eye contact with an audience:

- When speaking from notes, follow these rules:
 - Look at your notes
 - Absorb one idea
 - Make eye contact with individuals in the audience
 - Speak your full idea
 - Repeat this pattern

Facial expressions

Facial expressions also communicate cognitive messages and emotions. They enhance your verbal communication by producing "feeling tone," the impression that you care about what you're saying.

The following tips will help you use facial expressions to increase your persuasiveness:

- Smile before you begin speaking
- Don't be either mechanical or melodramatic; act naturally
- Think about what you're saying and react with facial expressions to match or enhance the thought

Hand gestures

Hand gestures are important to emphasize words and emotions, illustrate verbal messages, or even replace verbal messages altogether.

Following are tips on using better hand gestures:

- Keep your hands by your side or neutrally in front of you, unless you can use them to make a point.
- Avoid doing the following with your hands:
 - Putting them behind your back
 - Putting them in your pockets
 - Putting them in front of you
 - Using them to fidget
- Keep most gestures at chest level
- Think about what you're saying and react with hand gestures to match or enhance your message

Posture

Posture is an important element of your body language because it can communicate your message with confidence.

Following are tips for achieving better posture:

- Before your presentation, sit or stand straight
- Walk confidently
- Assume the "basic speaker stance," which is as follows:
 - Feet 12-18 inches apart and turned slightly outward
 - Weight evenly distributed over the balls of both feet
 - Body leaning slightly toward the audience
 - Hands at sides
 - Elbows loose

Improvising

No matter how well you prepare, problems sometimes occur. If this happens, you must improvise to salvage your presentation.

It is important that you remember the following when problems occur during your presentation:

- Problems should be ignored, if possible
- Extra audience attention should not be called to the problem
- Quickly solve the problem, but if you cannot, move on
- Avoid breaking the flow of your presentation when a problem occurs

Microphone problems

- Check connections, recheck and make sure you can hear through the headphones. Don not continue if the microphone isn't working.
- If you experience feedback, popping noises, or distortion, you may be too close-
-move back

Evaluate your presentation afterward

Once you finish presenting, evaluate yourself within 24 hours. If you have ideas on how to strengthen your material, make the changes immediately while the ideas are fresh.

If you have ideas on how to strengthen your performance, make notes and implement these ideas with your next presentation.

Review any evaluations that you receive. Do not dwell on negative comments, but focus instead on your overall scores and averages in each category.

Pointers on Vocal Quality

Vary your pitch, tone, volume and pace

The **pitch** of your voice is its "highness" or "lowness." Varying your pitch is a way to add color, excitement, and emphasis to your speech. Nervous speakers sometimes have tension in their vocal chords, resulting in an unintentionally higher pitch. Relaxation and breathing exercises can help with this.

The **tone** or quality of your voice says a lot to your audience that words can never convey. Does your voice sound warm or cold? Does it sound conversational or formal? Do you sound friendly, happy, angry, or nervous?

You've heard the word "monotone," right? That's what you sound like when you don't vary the tone of your voice. When you adjust your tone to match the ideas and emotions in your presentation, your audience receives a deeper level of understanding as well as a deeper connection with you.

Volume is the loudness of your voice. Use varying volume for emphasis, and remember to adjust your volume to the size of the venue you're speaking in.

One way to really grab your audience's attention is to drop the volume when you want to make an important point. Lowering your volume forces the audience to give extra concentration to what you're saying.

Use **silence and pauses** to maximize your message and to create drama. Silence gives you and your audience a nice break - it allows them to process what you've been saying, because it's hard for our brains to hold too much information at one time. It also gives them a break from your voice. A pause can be used to emphasize a point, to really let something sink in.

One more thing to mention about volume: keep your sentences strong from start to finish. Some people's voices fade out at the end of a sentence or idea, leaving the audience grasping to hear the final few words. Make sure to punch the beginnings and endings of sentences so they don't disappear and leave your audience in confusion.

Pace is the speed at which you speak. You can speed up or slow down for emphasis. Sometimes nervous speakers will race through their talk, finishing too early, and leaving the audience out of breath and lost, because they missed half of what was said. Breathing and relaxation can help you control and moderate your pace. Slow down your pace when you have something particularly important to say - you don't want to race through your critical points.