Comprehensive Presentation Skills Course

Description: As the name of this course implies, it provides the information you need to prepare and deliver all kinds of business presentations. It is designed as a tutorial, and should be taken as you prepare for your next presentation.

In this course you will learn the skills and techniques to effectively prepare your next presentation, manage your nervousness, and engage your listeners in what feels like a two-way conversation. You'll also learn to ensure that what you say is actually heard. The final section focuses on techniques for managing the ebb and flow of interactive presentations.

As you work on your real-life presentation, you will learn how to:

- Analyze your audience quickly and efficiently (and organize the content to meet their unique needs)
- Craft a persuasive story and communicate it effectively
- Improve the look and effectiveness of your visual aids
- Assess your own communication style (and work with it for maximum impact)
- Manage nervousness when it strikes
- Connect with listeners and engage them in the conversation
- Listen
- Manage questions, interruptions, difficult people and situations
- Balance the needs of the presentation with those of the audience (even when they derail your presentation)

Job aids:

When the course is over, you will have your presentation ready to go. You'll also have re-usable job aids to help you through future presentations. They include: Preparation Worksheet, PowerPoint Preparation Tool, Working with your Default Assessment, Answering Questions Decision Tree

Who should take this course:

This course is useful for all business presenters because it offers new ideas and strategies for preparing for and delivering all kinds of business presentations.

Course Duration:

- 2:45
- 4-5 hours active time
- 3-month license

Contents: Session 1 - Preparing Your Presentation

Your listeners will appreciate it when your presentations are thoughtfully and appropriately prepared. This session focuses on organizing your presentation so that it’s listener-focused, concise and easy to follow. It includes strategies and tools designed to help you understand how to:

- Clarify your goal
- Identify your listeners' wants and needs (and why to bother)
- Develop your message and visuals so that they focus on listeners (not you)
- Be concise
- Prepare and deliver a straightforward introduction that gives listeners a sense of direction, purpose and reason to listen
- Be appropriately persuasive given your topic and your audience
- Organize the information in the body of the presentation for greatest impact
- Craft a clear, actionable conclusion
Session 2 - Working with Your Default

Ever wonder why some people have no trouble preparing their presentations while others struggle and fret and still don't quite succeed? The reason is because everyone has a unique default approach to the preparation process. What works for one presenter may not work for you. This session provides you with the insight to understand how to:

- Assess, understand and work with your default
- Capitalize on your strengths
- Overcome your weaknesses

Session 3 - Improving Your Visual Aids

Don't let the look of your slides undermine your credibility. Well-designed slides not only demonstrate respect for your listeners, they also sharpen your message and increase retention. This session helps you develop audience-friendly visual aids (or fine-tune the ones you already have) so that they support you and your key messages. This session provides guidance on how to:

- Improve the visual impact of slides
- Use slide titles to set up the conversation
- Organize content on slides to focus attention (both yours and the listeners')
- Apply these concepts to handouts and leave-behind decks

Session 4 - Managing Nervousness & Engaging Listeners

Nervousness is no fun. In this session you will uncover the roots of your nervousness and learn how to:

- Control it
- Stay focused (and on track in spite of it)
- Engage listeners in the conversation and why that one skill is key to reducing anxiety
- Settle your racing thoughts
- Stay in the moment (so you can manage the unexpected)
- Make your presentations feel and sound more conversational (and why this matters)
- Preserve your natural personality and communication style when presenting

Session 5 - Your Default During Delivery

Long rambling explanations, presentations that lack purpose, presenters that are too controlling and never deviate from their "script." These issues and others affect a presenter's ability to succeed. This session builds on the insights presented in Session 2 and applies them to the delivery process. This session will show you how to:

- Deliver clear and concise explanations (even if you tend to be long-winded)
- Be flexible (even if you'd rather not)
- Overcome the desire to say things perfectly
- Stay on course to keep your listeners on track (even if you aren't a linear thinker)

Session 6 - Helping Listeners Listen

Just because you've said it doesn't mean that the audience heard it. This session focuses on the skills and techniques you need to help your audience listen to and understand the message. You'll learn how to:

- Ensure listeners understand the point of each slide
- Control where listeners focus (and why it matters)
- Explain complex graphs and spreadsheets
- Help listeners see the big picture
- Focus listener attention, even when you're seated, on conference calls, webinars or using handouts

Session 7 - Handling Questions

Most business presentations are interactive. Handling questions can be tricky, though, especially when they're complicated, off-topic, or out of step with the presenter's agenda. This session will help you
understand how to:

- Maintain everyone's attention during Q&A
- Stay focused on the goals of the agenda
- Move back to the presentation after an interruption
- Know when it's OK to skip ahead
- Manage time effectively
- Avoid a defensive, knee-jerk reaction when things heat up

Session 8 - Managing an Orderly Conversation

No matter how much preparation goes into them, presentations are unpredictable. That's why we think of presentations as orderly conversations. Orderly, because they are carefully prepared and have a goal. Conversations, because they're spontaneous and unpredictable. To succeed, then, presenters need to exercise an appropriate level of control and flexibility. This session will give you the insight to do that. It focuses on how to:

- Adapt to your personal preference when it comes to Q&A and group interactions
- Encourage equal participation from everyone (and why this matters)
- Meet your presentation's goals even if listeners pull you off course
- Decide on the fly how much detail to go into (and how flexible you should be)
- Manage the situation when difficult people take control

Session 9 – FAQs

As comprehensive as this course is, you may have questions specific to your job, situation or experience. We've compiled a lengthy list of common questions and concerns we've heard over the years, and we answer them in this session. It's broken down into 16 categories to make it easy to navigate:

- Preparing content
- Preparing for other people and vice versa
- Practicing & memorizing
- Dealing with nervousness
- Getting through the first few minutes
- Presentation tools & gadgets
- Dealing with natural speech patterns
- I've been told that I should...
- Presentation styles
- Delivering difficult slides and content
- Questions & interruptions
- Dealing with challenging people & situations
- Reading the audience
- Handouts & product samples
- Conference calls and web meetings
- Presenting to executives

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