

Oral Presentations

some basics

by

Keith Cormier

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What is the context of my speech?
Location? Time constraints? Audience?
Format?
- What is the purpose/goal of this speech?
- What was most difficult about this concept/idea? Most interesting?

Yet more...

- How can I incorporate an example of how this idea/concept is used in the “real world”?
- How will I create an introduction that will engage my audience?
- What is the best way to conclude my presentation?

The Body of the Presenter

- How you use the space that you have available is important.
- How much contact can you have with your audience and are you able to freely move about?
- What types of visual aids are available to you?
- How do you deal with anxiety?

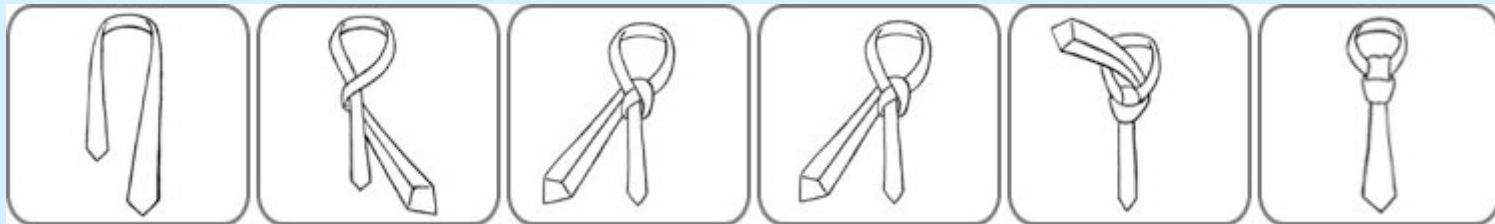
Body Language

- Effective body language is finding the correct balance between too much and too little.
- Your hands are effective tools for directing attention. Use them but don't abuse them.
- Eye contact is a vital part of any person-to-person communication. Try not to stare.
- Feel free to move about in your "area" but avoid wandering. If your audience has to turn in their seats to see you, you've gone too far.

Visual Aids

- Visual aids assist in your presentation. They should never upstage you or be the sole focus of the presentation.
- Visual aids make the abstract concrete. Equations, diagrams, reactions, complex procedures. Sometimes you can't describe things properly; you just have to show them.

Tie the Tie



Visual Aids

- Simplicity is beauty. Also much easier to work with.
- Powerpoint and other “slide-show” presentation aids are powerful tools, but sometimes do more harm than good. Avoid large blocks of text and overly complicated diagrams.

Do use a clear and consistent format.

Nervousness

- Practice as many times as possible, this gives you the chance to feel the rhythm of the presentation and correct any difficulties.
- Before you speak, tighten and release your muscles. This gives the extra adrenaline something else to do.
- Take a few slow deep breaths before starting to speak. Breathing is key!

Nervousness

- Know the room.
- Be at your physical and mental best when speaking.
- Don't expect perfection