

Tips for Delivering an Effective Earth+ Presentation

Preparation

- 1) Know your stuff. The more you know about your subject, the more comfortable and confident you will be when you talk to others about it. Do not limit yourself to just understanding what it says on your slides—do the research and extra study necessary to be able to give more examples, or explain ideas in different ways. **KNOWING WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO PREPARE TO DELIVER AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION.**
- 2) Write out what you plan to say, word for word. Go through what you've written and pick out a few key words from each sentence, and write those down, in order, on another sheet of paper. Throw away your word-for-word script, and use the key word list to write another one. Throw that away and write another one. Look over your key word list and make sure it's complete. That's what you will use as notes for your presentation.

Note: Usually the first things you want to do in any presentation are:

- thank the person who introduced you and whoever may have arranged for you to give the presentation
 - thank your audience for giving you their attention and time
 - tell your audience that you are happy to have this opportunity to talk to them about _____.
- 3) Think of a question related to your topic that you can ask your audience to start off your presentation. It should not be a yes or no question, but it should be something that isn't too hard for them to answer. It could be as simple as "What is something that you think is true about _____." Or, "What is a question that you have about _____."

Asking a question like this accomplishes several things:

- Your audience will put their attention on you and on the topic at hand.
 - You will have a better idea of what your audience already knows (or thinks they know) about your topic.
 - You will establish a more relaxed atmosphere in which your audience feels like they are participating in the presentation, not just listening to it.
- 4) Practice your presentation by yourself, running through the slides and saying what you plan to say aloud. You should do this at least 10 times, making it a little different each time.

- 5) Try out your presentation in front of a practice audience or one or two people.

Delivery

- 1) Get there and get set up in plenty of time. You will want to test the presentation equipment to make sure it works with your presentation.
- 2) Arrange for someone to introduce you. This can be a very simple introduction, such as " _____ is here to talk to us about _____". You can also ask the introducer to say a little more about the organization that you represent, if you wish.
- 3) If there is a little time before the presentation as people are getting seated, and you are all ready, go up and introduce yourself to some of them individually, introduce yourself and ask their names, and thank them for coming. Ask them what they already know about the subject you're talking about, and what questions they have about it. Then say something like, "I hope you enjoy the presentation", and find someone else to introduce yourself to. Getting to know people like this will help you to be more comfortable and will make them more willing to hear what you have to say.
- 4) Once you've been introduced and you start your presentation, begin as described in point #2 above. Then ask your audience the question you prepared. (Note: If you think your audience might not be willing to speak up when you ask your question—for example, if you are talking to students in school—then ask them first to write down their answers to the question, and give them a couple of minutes to do that. Then ask them to tell you what they wrote down.

As each person gives you an answer, you can simply acknowledge it ("OK", "I see what you mean", "thank you"), and then ask for another answer from the audience. Do this for five or ten answers.

- 5) Now you can go through your slides, saying what you planned to say about each one. As you do this, you can refer to your key words list, and the slides themselves, to remind you of what you want to talk about, but look at people in the audience as much as possible.
- 6) Be sure to speak clearly and so that everyone in the room can hear you. Speak enthusiastically, so that people can tell from listening to you that you are interested in what you are talking about, and that you think it's exciting or important information.
- 7) At the end of your presentation, take some questions. If you don't know the answer to a question, just say "That's a good question, and I don't really know the answer."
- 8) At the end of the Q&A, thank your audience again, and make sure they know who to contact to get more information about the topic, or about your organization.