

Material Imprimible

Presentaciones formales

## Módulo 4

### **Contents:**

- Answering questions
- Dealing with hostile and aggressive questions
- Finishing a presentation
- Using closing techniques
- Giving virtual presentations
- Using a presentation planning checklist effectively
- Practising presentations

### Answering questions - Tips

- ✓ Thank questioners

Especially if the audience is shy or disengaged, speakers should thank listeners who ask questions. That may encourage others to formulate questions as well. For example:

- “Thank you for your question”.
- “Glad you asked that question”.
- “You’ve raised an interesting topic. Thank you”.

- ✓ Check if the answer satisfies the asker

It is advisable to check if the asker is satisfied with the answer by asking:

- “Does that answer your question?”
- “Is that the kind of information you were looking for?”
- “Is your question answered?”

- ✓ Make a connection between a sentence asked and a point in your presentation to reinforce and clarify your speech.
- ✓ Give succinct, short and to the point answers
- ✓ Do not interrupt questioners while they are formulating a question.
- ✓ While you are listening to a question, move away from the questioner to make the audience feel included.
- ✓ While you are answering a question, keep eye contact with all the attendees.
- ✓ If the answer to a question took a while, summarize what you were saying before the question and only then move on.

### Answering questions – Different scenarios

- ✓ You couldn't hear the question. Then, ask the questioner to repeat the question. For example:
  - “Sorry, but I couldn't hear your question. Could you repeat what you asked me?”
  - “I'm afraid I missed your question. Could you speak louder?”
  
- ✓ You didn't understand the question. Ask the questioner to rephrase the question. For example:
  - “Sorry but I didn't get it. Could you reformulate the question?”
  - “Sorry but I am not a native English speaker. Could you speak more slowly, please?”
  - “Sorry but I'm not completely sure what your question is. Could you rephrase it?”
  
- ✓ The question lacks enough details. Ask for more details. For example:
  - “Sorry but could you elaborate on it?”
  
- ✓ You are not absolutely sure what the questioner is asking. You can reformulate the question yourself like this:
  - “If I understood you correctly, what you want to know is whether the company will invest in clean energy, right?”

Sometimes speakers reformulate questions to gain time to collect their thoughts, to make the question clear to everyone or to make the question heard by all the attendees.

- ✓ Stop interruptions. Do not let listeners interrupt you while you are answering a question. For example:
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- “Could you let me answer the question? Then, we can focus on yours”.
- ✓ You don't know the answer to a question. Be frank.
- “I don't have the data at hand right now so I need to get back to you on this”.
- “I've never thought about that. Could you give me your details so I can contact you later?”
- “I'm afraid I don't know the answer to your question but I will try to find out for you. Can I have your email address?”
- “Sorry but I'm not familiar with that topic. Why don't you give me your phone number and I will contact you with someone who knows about that topic?”
- “I've never been asked that question before so give me a minute to consider that”.
- “Let me think of the best way of answering that question”.

You may offer a parallel answer focusing on what you know, rather than saying "I don't know".

- ✓ You're asked an off-topic question, that is, a question that is not connected with the topic of your presentation. Possible answers:
- “We're not really covering that topic today, but I can refer you to our website where you'll find that information”.
- “For me, that's an intriguing topic. However, I think it might be best if we talk about during the break if that's ok with you”.
- “Sorry but that goes beyond the scope of this presentation. We could touch on it later when the presentation is over”.

- ✓ You're asked a too complex question. It is not advisable to answer this type of questions because it will take too long and most listeners will not be able to understand the answer. Possible responses:
    - "I'm afraid that would take a long time to explain. If you give my assistant Melany your contact details, I'll be more than happy to send you information".
  
  - ✓ You want to refer forward. It might not be convenient to answer a question about a point that you will explore later. You can tell the questioner:
    - "If you don't mind, I would rather discuss that point later when we get to the third part of this talk".
    - "That's a good question and I'll be answering it later in today's presentation".
    - "Thank you for your question. Can I answer it at the end?"
  
  - ✓ Another speaker will cover that point.
    - "My colleague Julian Hopper is an expert in that field. I think he will shed some light on that topic later".
  
  - ✓ You can't answer the question because you will be sharing confidential information or because another person should disclose that information.
    - "I'm afraid I'm not in a position to answer that".
    - "That's not actually within my area. You should probably speak to the head of Human Resources".
  
  - ✓ You are asked a multi-part question, in other words, a question that includes many queries. Answer the easiest one first.
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- “I’ll answer the question about the impact of 3D printing on medicine first if I may”.
- “Let me answer those questions one at a time”.
- “Sorry, I forgot the second part of your question. What was it?”
  - ✓ If the audience has too many questions, you can stop them by saying:
    - “If you don't mind, I'd like to move on, because there are many things I want to share with you”.
  - ✓ You are asked a sensitive question and you do not want to talk about that topic. Say:
    - “That’s a good question. What does everyone else think?”
  - ✓ After answering a question, you forgot what you were saying.
    - “I totally lost what I wanted to say. Just give me a minute to collect my thoughts”.
    - “Sorry but my mind went blank and I forgot what I was going to say next. I hope it will come back to me in a minute”.
    - “I lost my train of thought. Where were we?”
    - “I've just remembered that we we're covering assessments types”.
    - “I'm afraid it's not coming back to me so let's move on”.

### Asking questions

- ✓ Question, topic, query. Indicate you have a question, the topic you want to address and your specific query.
- “I have a question about performance assessment. What criteria is used to evaluate employees?”

- ✓ Ask for clarification if you did not understand the answer.
  - “Sorry but I didn't follow what you said about the third representational system?”
  - “Could you give me an example of distributive negotiations?”
  
- ✓ Check understanding if you are not absolutely sure.
  - “So, what you are saying is...?”
  - “Do you mean that...?”
  
- ✓ If your question is not answered, tell the speaker:
  - “I'm afraid that's not what I really wanted to know. What I'm interested in knowing is...”
  - “Maybe I didn't ask my question in a clear way. What I meant was...”
  
- ✓ If everything is clear, tell the speaker:
  - “That's clear now. Thank you”.

## Q&A

- ✓ When the Question and Answer session is about to start, indicate so by saying:
    - “Now, I'll be happy to answer any questions you have”.
  
  - ✓ Say how long you will be answering questions or how many questions you are going to answer.
    - “We'll have 10 minutes for questions”.
    - “I'm going to take 2 questions before this presentation is over”.
  
  - ✓ Assume there will be questions.
    - “What questions do you have?”
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- “Who would like to go first?”

Also, at the beginning of the presentation ask attendees to write down questions that they will be able to ask you when you get to the Q&A session.

- ✓ State and answer a question if nobody asks you anything.
- “Many of you may be wondering...”
- “One question I am often asked is...”
  
- ✓ Handle questions effectively.
- “Shall we start with the question from the gentleman in a black suit?”
- “Ok. The lady at the back. What would you like to know?”
  
- ✓ Indicate the end of Q&A when the time comes.
- “I’m afraid time is almost up so there’s time for just one more question”.

### **Dealing with difficult askers**

The key is not to lose it and offer answers like the following ones:

- “You’re right. I didn’t mention that point because it’s too technical/complex or because there’s not enough time. However, we can talk about it at the end of this talk”.
- “I don’t think there’s enough evidence to say for sure”.
- “That’s really a whole different discussion”.
- “That’s rather outside my area of expertise”.

If one of the listeners sharply disagrees, try to reduce tension by saying:

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- “It seems we have different points of view. Perhaps we can continue this debate later”.
- “I'd love to debate that, but I'm afraid we should move forward; otherwise, we'll run out of time”.
- “Thank you for your comment. I've never thought about it from that perspective”.

### **Dealing with hostile questions**

- ✓ Acknowledge the asker's concerns or reservations by saying:
  - “I hear your concerns”.
  - “I see your viewpoint”.
  - “I understand your reservations”.
- ✓ Change the angle or approach with the use of "however". For instance:
  - “However, after weighing up the pros and cons, we came to the conclusion that this is our best move”.
- ✓ Try to understand the reasons behind the questions.
  - “I'm not quite sure I understand what you want to know. Can you ask it in another way?”
  - “I think I don't fully understand your question. What do you mean by that?”

### **Dealing with aggressive questions**

Do not repeat aggressive words or words with negative connotation. Keep calm and reformulate the question leaving out negative or aggressive language and making it neutral.

### Dealing with criticism

If an attendee criticises your company, research, methods, etc., keep your composure and try to understand the questioner's point of view.

- “Can you help me understand why you think in that way?”
- “Could you give me specific examples?”

If an attendee makes a widespread accusation against an industry, professionals in your field, etc., only speak for yourself.

- “I can't speak for all doctors, but I can tell you what I have done to take care of my patients”.

If the criticism is against your company, use the Past/Present/Future rule

- “You're right. In the past our delivery times weren't up to standard. However, we're increasing the number of our distribution centres. That means that by the end of this year our delivery times will be reduced to 48 hours”.

### Dealing with strong emotions

When a questioner sounds angry, hurt or frustrated, it is advisable to empathise before offering an answer.

- “I don't blame you for feeling in that way given the experience you've just described”.

Once you have answered the question, move on. Break eye contact with the attendee and do not encourage follow-up questions.

- “Thank you for your question. Does anyone else have a question?”
- “Thank you for sharing your concerns with us. Now I would like to give someone else a chance to ask a question. Anyone?”

## Finishing a presentation

- ✓ Signal the end as people usually pay more attention when they know that something will be finished soon.
  - “This brings me to the end of my talk”.
  - “I think that covers everything I wanted to share with you today”.
  
- ✓ Summarise your main points to help attendees remember them.
  - “Before this is over, let me restate the main takeaways”.
  - “Let me sum up what we talked about today”.
  
- ✓ Highlight a key point that you do not want anyone to forget.
  - “To end, I'd like to stress the following point”.
  - “The following point is crucial because it marks a new phase in our field”.
  
- ✓ Make a final statement to create an impact.
  - “I'm 100% sure we have a bright future ahead so let's roll up our sleeves and take this company to the next level”.
  - “I'm sure that our new product is bound for success”.
  
- ✓ If there is a Q&A session at the end, invite questions.
  - “Let's move on to Q&A”.
  - “I'm sure there are some questions you want to ask me, so who would like to go first?”
  - “I would like to open the floor to questions for five minutes”.

Remember not to finish your presentation with questions because they may drain the enthusiasm from listeners.

## Closing techniques

- ✓ To quote is to use another person's words to make a strong impression.
- “Remember what Mark Twain said: ‘The secret of getting ahead is getting started’”.
  
- ✓ A call to action is about encouraging the audience to do something.
- “There’s one thing I’d like to ask you to do”.
  
- ✓ A surprising fact or statistic will recapture the attention of the audience and remember a key point.
- “Did you know that Americans read for personal interest for 10 minutes or less per day?”
  
- ✓ If you asked the audience a rhetorical question at the beginning of the talk, you can revisit it.
- “Do you remember the question I asked you at the beginning of the talk? Let’s revisit it”.
- “Now we have arrived at where we started”.
  
- ✓ Go back to the story or personal anecdote you told the audience at the beginning of the presentation and let them know how it finishes.
- “Today I told you a story about xyz. Let me remind you what it was about”.
  
- ✓ If you said a phrase many times during your presentation, ask the audience to complete it for you.

- "Talent wins games but teamwork and intelligence", then you pause and wait for them to say "win championships".
  - ✓ Twofold approach is about letting the audience know what bad things may happen if they do not follow your recommendations. Then tell them what good things will take place if they do.
  - ✓ Show a picture for effect.
  - ✓ Play an inspirational video.
  - ✓ Make reference to a well-known movie or book so that listeners can see your talk from a different angle.
  - ✓ Ask a provocative question to make people reflect.
  - ✓ Use the title of your presentation as your closing words to bring your talk full circle.

### **Thanking the audience**

Thank them before the presentation is over.

- "I'd like to finish by thanking you for taking time out of your busy day to listen to this talk".
- "I sincerely appreciate that I've had this opportunity to share my thoughts with you".

### **Virtual presentations - Important considerations**

- ✓ Log in ahead of time to set everything up.
- ✓ Ensure technology works well.
- ✓ Pay attention to the setting and ensure it is silent and free of interruptions. The background should be uncluttered and plain.
- ✓ Some attendees will be late. While you are waiting, you can ask attendees to say their name, why they are participating in that presentation or what they expect to learn. You may also prepare two

openings. One for punctual attendees such as a poll and another one (the grand opening) designed for everyone.

- ✓ Set ground rules. For example:
    - “Please, mute your mic unless you want to say something”.
    - “Liz will be checking the chat box and will let me know if there are any questions”.
  - ✓ Use body language effectively. Look at the camera to give the impression that you are looking into the eyes of your listeners.
  - ✓ As you cannot rely on body language information, often ask listeners questions to check they are following you.
    - “So far so good?”
    - “Does that make sense?”
    - “Is that clear?”
    - “Does anyone have any questions?”
  - ✓ Tell listeners what you are going to do and check.
    - “Now, I’ll share my screen”.
    - “In a few moments we’ll be watching a video about xyz”.
    - “Can everyone see the picture I’m sharing?”
  - ✓ Ask specific questions to ensure listeners are looking at what you want and to encourage participation.
    - “What do you see next to the picture of the man on this slide?”
    - “What adjectives come to your mind when you look at the photo in the right-hand corner of the slide?”
  - ✓ If you shared a document before the presentation, guide the audience to find the information you will be concentrating on.
    - “Now, let’s turn to page 5”.
    - “What if we all go to slide 3 of the presentation I sent you yesterday?”
    - “Is everyone looking at slide 5?”
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## Virtual presentations - Technical problems

- ✓ If listeners are unmuted, tell them:
    - “There’s a lot of background noise. Could you mute your mics, please?”
  
  - ✓ If an attendee is speaking while muted, tell them:
    - “I think you're muted, Amelia”.
  - ✓ If the audio quality is poor and it is hard for you to understand what one of the listeners is saying, tell them:
    - “You sound choppy/distorted/robotic”.
  
  - ✓ If you can only hear half of what one of the listeners is saying, tell them:
    - “You're breaking up. Could you say that again?”
  
  - ✓ If it is impossible to understand what a listener is saying, look for an alternative means of communication.
    - “Sorry but the line has gone bad and I can't hear your question. Could you type it in the chat box?”
  
  - ✓ If one of the listener's image gets stuck, inform the listener like this:
    - “You’re frozen, Marjorie”.
  
  - ✓ If you are not sure if one of the listeners is still connected, ask them:
    - “Are you with us, Marjorie?”
  
  - ✓ If your audience does not participate and does not ask you questions, make the most of a break to invite listeners to formulate questions. For example:
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• “Now we're going to have a 10-minute break. If you have any questions, just type them in the chat box and I'll answer them after the break”.

- ✓ To create a good atmosphere, offer a digital goodie, such as a downloadable file with exercises or resources.
- ✓ Record your presentation, especially if you are delivering a virtual one for the first time. Play it back and concentrate on the aspects that worked well and those that you need to improve.

### **Presentation Planning Checklist**

#### PRESENTATION PLANNING CHECKLIST

##### ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

Date and time: .....

Length: .....

Q&A? If so, how long? .....

Company? Special event? .....

Other speakers? .....

Venue: .....

Seating arrangement: .....

Equipment needed: .....

Virtual presentation – Any software? .....

Backup: .....

Audience

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Number of people: .....  
Age: .....  
Nationality/Mother tongue: .....  
Educational background/position: .....  
How much do they know about the topic? .....  
Attitude towards the topic: .....  
Interests and expectations: .....  
Handouts  
What kind? .....

## CONTENTS

Topic: .....  
Purpose: .....  
Message: .....  
Main points: .....  
Research sources: .....  
Outline initial ideas: .....  
Write a draft: .....

## INTRODUCTION

Attention-grabber: .....  
Welcome the audience: .....  
Introduce yourself: .....  
State the topic: .....  
Explain relevance: .....  
Indicate organization: .....  
Timing: .....  
Questions: .....  
Handouts: .....

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## BODY

Repeat topic: .....

Section 1: .....

Point 1: .....

Point 2: .....

Section 2

Point 1: .....

Point 2: .....

## CONCLUSIONS

Signal the end: .....

Summarize key points: .....

Highlight one point: .....

Make your final statement: .....

Invite questions: .....

Closing technique: .....

## QUESTIONS

What questions can I expect?

.....

.....

.....

## SLIDES

Style, size and colour? .....

Figures, graphs, pictures? .....

How many? .....

Are the slides simple enough? .....

Do the slides aid in emphasising key points? Yes/No

Have I checked grammar and spelling? Yes/No

### Organizational aspects

Write down:

- The title of the presentation
- The date and time of the presentation. That may affect the audience's level of alertness.
- The length of the presentation. That will help you decide what points you will have time for discussion.
- If there will be a Q&A session and how long it will take.
- The name of the company who has invited you to deliver a presentation. Do research to collect information about the inviting company (mission, values, projects, etc.). If your talk will be given as part of a special event, find out what kind of event will be and if there will be other speakers. If so, investigate who they are and what topics they will talk about.
- Venue where the presentation will be made, what seating arrangement they will make and if there will be a stage.
- What equipment (flipchart, projector, microphone, stationery, etc.) you need and what equipment will be available to make proper arrangements.
- What software you will need if you are going to give a virtual presentation and if you have the necessary permissions.
- What kind of backup you will make. Preferably copy the slide show to a pen drive and upload it to the cloud.
- The number of participants. It will determine what kind of interaction and activities you can do.

- Age, nationality and mother tongue
- Educational background and position. This will influence on what contents you will prepare.
- How much do they know about the topic to avoid saying what they already know.
- Attitude towards the topic. Ask yourself: will they support my point of view or will I have to use strong persuasion?
- Interest and expectations. You should try to live up to them.
- Handouts. Think what kind of handouts you will need.

## Contents

Write down:

- The topic of your presentation
- Purpose of your presentation (share information, train people, etc.). That will determine how you will organize the presentation and what material you will include.
- Message
- Main points that will support the message
- Topics to investigate and sources you can gather information from
- Initial ideas. Create an outline of the first ideas that come to mind.
- Draft of the presentation. Decide if you need to add, remove or rearrange contents.

## Introduction

- Choose an attention-grabber that suits the audience and the context of the presentation.
- Choose the right words to welcome the audience.

- When introducing yourself, choose the information about your work history that will increase your credibility among listeners.
- Indicate the topic and its relevance
- Write down the main sections of your talk and what you will cover in each of them.
- Indicate how long the presentation will last.
- Concerning questions, the options are a Q&A session at the end of the talk or the possibility of asking questions during the talk
- About handouts, check if you know the verbs needed to hand in something to participants.

### Body

- Remind people what the topic is in a way that differs from the one used in the introduction.
- Write down what each section will be about and what points you will address in each section.

There is no need to memorise your speech but if you have a hard time using signposting language, it is advisable to write them down when you complete your checklist.

### Conclusion

- Include signposting language to aid you in signalling the end of the presentation, summarise the key points, highlight one of them and make your final statement.
- Revise different ways of inviting the audience to ask you questions and what you can say if there are no questions
- Make a note of the closing technique you intend to use.

- Also, make a list of the questions the audience may ask you and how to answer them.

### Preparing slides

Important questions:

- Style, size and colour? Slides should be uncluttered, readable and eye-catching.
- Figures, graphs, pictures? Those are meant to help the audience understand and remember concepts
- How many? Your message will determine how many slides you need to get your message across.
- Are the slides simple enough? Do not include a lot of information and reduce text as much as possible.
- Do the slides aid in emphasising my key points? If not, a certain slide or slides may not be necessary.
- Have I checked grammar and spelling? If not, do it immediately

### Practising your presentation

- Practise aloud and standing
- Internalise your speech. Don't memorise it.
- Take notes of mistakes in your articulation of ideas, slides, pronunciation and so on. If you cannot pronounce certain words properly or use certain phrases, write them down to practise them more
- Time yourself. If you exceed the time given, remove material from the presentation.
- Record yourself while practising to spot problems.

- Practise in the place of delivery, if possible, to become familiar with the place.
- Present in front of people and ask for specific feedback. For example:
  - “Did the introduction gain your attention?”
  - “Is there anything you didn't understand?”
  - “Could you get the main points of the speech?”
  - “Was my pronunciation and accent clear?”
  - “Did I speak fluently?”
  - “Did I present visuals well?”
  - “Did I leave a lasting impression?”
  - “Is there anything I can do to make my delivery better?”