

# PRESENTATIONS - FUNDAMENTALS - © Chris Snuggs

**OBJECTIVES:** What is the objective of your presentation?

- ❑ **For the long-term assignment** It is NOT to teach the subject. It is in fact, to 'sell' the subject - to stimulate interest in it, to encourage the listeners to read your report.
- ❑ **In a 'soutenance de stage'**, it is not to give all the facts; it is not to inform the jury about the company, it is to 'sell' yourself, your professional development & competence.
- ❑ **In a business presentation**, it is to 'sell' the idea, the project or the product.

Whatever the objective, **in all cases you are selling yourself**. The listeners won't be convinced by the 'product' unless they are convinced by you. So **EVERYTHING** about you is vital: **appearance, dress, confidence, command of the language, use of technology, attention to detail, consideration of the audience** (by not being too long or boring!!) etc etc

## **SPECIFIC POINTS**

- ❑ Remember the difference between a 'presentation' and a 'lesson'. The former should be shorter, more concise and more concrete. You are "selling" your topic. You are not trying to teach the audience exhaustively about it. When the time is restricted to 30 minutes, therefore, it is not just because time is short, but because **this is really the maximum you should need for the purpose**. Any longer, and it becomes a lesson.
- ❑ The MOST important aspect in a presentation is your personality! If you lack charisma, enthusiasm and the ability to interest and motivate people, then you must work on this!! **IT IS POSSIBLE** to improve your personality by focussing on **MICRO-SKILLS**:
  - **SMILE :ENJOY (OR PRETEND TO ENJOY) THE EXPERIENCE**
  - **DON'T GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU ARE APOLOGISING** EITHER FOR YOUR OWN PERFORMANCE OR FOR THE BORING NATURE OF THE TOPIC
  - **BE CONFIDENT: YOU ARE THE EXPERT ON THE TOPIC - MAKE THE AUDIENCE FEEL THIS**
  - **DON'T MOVE ABOUT TOO MUCH** - IT INDICATES NERVOUSNESS
  - **LOOK AT THE AUDIENCE AND SPEAK CLEARLY IN SENTENCES**
  - **VARY THE PITCH** of your delivery : **DO NOT SPEAK IN A MONOTONE.**
  - **BE INTERESTING** : ADD SOME DRAMA, ADD A JOKE, ASK SOME QUESTIONS, TELL A REAL-LIFE STORY
  - **RAISE THE VOLUME OF YOUR VOICE** : YOU ARE NOT IN A CONVERSATION AT THE COFFEE-MACHINE : YOU HAVE TO SPEAK LOUDER AND MORE CLEARLY THAN NORMAL - **YOU ARE GIVING A PERFORMANCE!!!**
  - **ENSURE STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION IS CLEAR & LOGICAL**
- ❑ - **Don't read verbatim from notes : improvise from headings. (THIS IS FUNDAMENTAL)**
  - Don't put your notes on the desk - you have to look down too far to read them.
  - **DO NOT USE A4 NOTES ..... PUT THEM ON SMALL CARDS IF NECESSARY**
- ❑ **POWERPOINT** (much more on this elsewhere)
  - Exploit it : don't just put list of words and headings, but include charts, graphs, photos, diagrams where you can.
  - Do NOT put loads of text on the screen - put keywords you can TALK from.
  - **PUT ALL FIGURES INTO SOME KIND OF CHART.**
  - **STATISTICS: USE COMPARISONS** - don't tell us that there are 80,000 miles of railway line in China without giving the figure for a few other countries, either in total or in terms of miles per inhabitant or in some other meaningful way.
  - **CHECK COLOURS: DON'T PUT RED HEADINGS ON A BLUE BACKGROUND.**
  - Link display to what you say and **GIVE THEM TIME TO ABSORB GRAPHICS**