

## **Presentation Skills**

### **Issues to look out for and to address prior to future presentations**

- **Voice**

Introduce yourself and ask people to let you know by raising their hand if they can't hear you properly and or you are speaking too quickly

Good projection of voice

Avoid mumbling

Avoid speaking too quickly or too slowly

Do not have your back to the audience or talk towards the screen or overhead projector (OHP)

Be careful about overuse of phrases like 'ok' or 'right' or 'em'

- **Body language**

Keep good eye contact with your audience

**BUT**

Ensure you do not 'stare' at one particular member of audience

Do not turn head from one side to the other too quickly when trying to look at the audience. Think of a 'lighthouse' effect i.e. a light that slowly scans around a harbour area.

Do not fiddle with a pen/pencil or money in a pocket while presenting

Do not wave your arms around as you present

Carefully consider your hand gestures and how they help or hinder a presentation

- **Room layout**

Look at where the OHP is and how it projects onto a wall or screen

Can you stand just to the side of it so that everyone in the audience can see your presentation and you can also refer to it during your talk?

Check before you start presenting if using an OHP that the OHP is in focus and your acetates are clear and easy to read for people sitting at the back of the room. A minimum font size of 22-24 for a word document should be used for a presentation. If possible use larger font size.

If using PowerPoint, seek guidance from a template presentation, which will automatically set up an appropriate font size. As with an OHP, carefully consider where you stand so that you do not block the view of your audience.

- **Style of acetates/PowerPoint slides**

Check both background and font size

Ensure that text is clear and not too many words or phrases

Always consider putting less rather than more text on a slide

Keep things simple. If you chose a background do not put lots of other things into the slide, which then makes it difficult to, actually read the text.

Decide if you would put up a slide with all the points on it or if you would initially cover up/ only click in one line at a time on PowerPoint. You need to practice this and ask a friend to give constructive feedback on how they would view your presentation as part of an audience. It can be off putting to use particular formats e.g. Put up a whole acetate with everything on it & try to talk through things. Meantime, the audience may be reading down to points later on your slide. If however you choose to cover part of the OHP, you need to practice this well in advance, so that you do this well and don't stand in front of the screen and block the audience view.

With a PowerPoint presentation, practice with different slides. Try putting all the information on at once and also using the technique of clicking in individual lines. Remember to check that the sound is off or you may have a line which appears on the screen which 'roars on' like a car coming to a halt!

**DO NOT CONSIDER** trying to use **BOTH PowerPoint and an OHP** at the same time or even at different times but during the same presentation. Too much technology is too off putting for the audience and is too much to cope with in a presentation. Decide which one you are most confident with either OHP or PowerPoint and use only one!

Switch off your mobile phone and if possible, ask the audience to do the same. You should explain how long you think the presentation will be and let the audience know whether you will take questions during or after the presentation.

### **For a training audience or a continuing professional development (CPD) evening**

If you intend to give the audience a handout, you should tell them this and either give it out at the beginning or explain that you will email everyone a copy or say when and where a paper copy will be available. The ideal situation is that everyone has a copy prior to the presentation so that they know they do not need to copy lots of information down and they can then concentrate on the actual presentation. If you expect the audience to take notes, then you may need to provide them with a handout, which has the slides with space for extra notes to be made during your presentation.