Public Speaking... Yes You Can!

Nonverbal and Vocal Skills

- 93% of communication is nonverbal.

- Your message matters, but not if you're staring at the floor.

- What are nonverbal and vocal skills that we need to consider when giving a presentation?

    o Eye contact

    o Posture

    o Facial expressions

    o Hand gestures

    o Movement

    o Volume/projection

    o Pitch, rate, tone

    o Tone

    o Pausing – no "fillers"

    o Articulation

    o Appearance

Preparing Presentations

- **Be Clear about the Purpose of Your Presentation.**

    o What is the format/style of the presentation (e.g., discussion or formal talk)?

    o What information does the audience need or expect?

    o Will you be presenting new information or building on previous knowledge of a subject?

- **Know your Audience.**

    o What is the size of your audience? What are your audience demographics?

    o Is the audience likely to be friendly and/or interactive? Formal or informal?

- **Know Your Time Constraints**

  - How long are you expected to speak?

  - Long presentations allow you the freedom to explore your topic more in depth and engage the audience.

  - Short presentations should be kept to only <u>essential</u> points.

  - How much time is allotted for Q&A?

  - Speak **SLOW** – 100 words per minute (normal conversation occurs at 300 words per minute)

- **Preparation is key to delivering good presentations.**

  - Start early and avoid procrastination

  - Clarify your topic and identify the main points you wish to address

  - Research supporting data for each point

  - Create an outline or "idea network" to help you relate and transition between your main points

- **Arrange your main points in a logical sequence.**

  - How will you engage the audience at the beginning?

  - Provide an overview of your main points (determine the most essential points)

  - Arrange from most important to least important

  - Determine transition elements (How do the points relate?)

  - Conclude with main points… again.

- **Using Visual Aids**

  - Use key phrases only

  - Layout of slides is important – keep important information near the top

  - Limit punctuation and avoid using all capital letters

  - Avoid fancy or hard-to-read fonts

  - Use contrasting colors for text and background

  - Consider your audience when choosing a template

  - Limit the number of slides you use

  - Use photos, charts and graphs

  - Avoid excessive use of transition/animation elements

- **Other Essential Tips**

  - An involved audience is an engaged audience

  - Keep your hands out of your pockets and do not chew gum or mints

  - Be prepared enough to allow for spontaneity

  - Avoid highly technical or specialized terms

  - Convey enthusiasm for your topic

  - Prepare for technology difficulties

  - Forecast questions that might be asked and practice responding – the ability to think on your feet is crucial

- **Handling Audience Questions**

  - Always repeat the question. Or if necessary, ask for the question to be repeated.

  - Take a moment to reflect on the question.

  - If you can't answer the question, just say so – don't fake it. You can:

    - Offer to research the answer and get back to them.

    - Suggest resources that would lead to the answer.

    - Ask the audience.

  - After answering, ask the person who asked the question if you answered sufficiently.

- **Practice Makes Better**

  - Practice in front of others and solicit honest and constructive feedback

  - Videotape yourself and watch for what needs improvement

    - Difficult to do, but very effective!

  - Practice with your visual aids and plan for using more than one method

  - The more you practice, the less nervous you will be before and during your presentation!

    - Try to channel nervous energy into performance energy! Nervousness is normal!