

Communication Skills: Lecture No. 33

Module 10

Lecture 3

ORAL PRESENTATION



In this concluding lecture of this module, I will have a detailed discussion on the body language aspect of oral presentation and give suggestions for using visuals effectively.

Body Language

Body language is very integral to giving a good oral presentation. Most of the problems associated with body language can be rectified if you carefully study yourself in a mirror. Besides, you can also make use of a video camera to record your presentation, and later, review it appropriately. There are gestures, body movements, which you might not like on you and keeping them in mind while giving the actual presentation will help minimizing negative body language.

Since body language reflects what you are saying, while giving a presentation, you need to *relax your facial muscles and keep smiling*. In particular, you should avoid looking nervous. You should speak in a natural tone. Talking very fast indicates nervousness; so, deliver your speech at a moderate pace and pause after each main point.

Maintaining *eye contact* is significant in oral presentation. At the beginning of your speech, maintain eye contact with someone who appears to be friendly and agreeable. You can easily identify such a person by the affirmative nods and enthusiastic response. Look into the eyes of such approachable people, while, in case you are afraid, look on the forehead of opponents. However, do not focus your attention only on an approachable person, then you are cut off from the rest of the audience.

Make your body gestures *open* by literally not *hiding* behind the podium. Use open palm gestures as frequently as possible. For emphasis make use of hand gestures. Dress appropriately for the occasion; formal attire is far better than the informal one that might give the impression of being too casual and uncaring.

In this regard, you can take note of the delivery tools summarized below:

Delivery Tools	
Body Language	Voice Qualities
Posture Eye contact Facial expression Hand gestures Appropriate dress	Volume Inflection Articulation Rate

Body Language: Dos and Don'ts

Always keep in the mind the flowing suggestions for what you should do and should not do with regard to body language in oral presentation.

Body Language: Do's and Don'ts
Do's
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Face the audience.• Look at each person in the audience.• Glance at notes <u>occasionally</u>.• Smile!
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Related: Get someone else to click the mouse.

Body Language: Do's and Don'ts

Don'ts

- ✗ Do not hold on to anything!
- ✗ Do not Read directly from your notes/screen!
- ✗ Do not put hands in pockets!
- ✗ Do not keep looking at the screen!
- ✗ Do not look at the professor/examiner only!

Voice Quality: Dos and Don'ts

As far as your voice quality is concerned, take note of the following:

Voice Quality: Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Speak loudly and clearly; enunciate.
- Speak slowly but with confidence.
- Emphasize important points—by slowing down and/or speaking louder.
- Make a transition to the next speaker (in team presentation).

Voice Quality: Do's and Don'ts

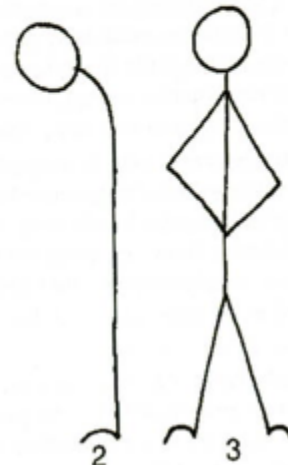
Don'ts

- ❖ Race through your speech!
- ❖ Read directly from notes/screen
- ❖ Talk too fast!
- ❖ Talk deliberately slow!
- ❖ Mumble!
- ❖ Exceed the time-limit!

Things You Shouldn't Do



Turn back on audience
Slouch,
Keep hands in pockets



I would like to reemphasize that your body language should be open. Hence, your posture should never be slouching. You should also not close your hand, fold your arms or keep your hands behind or inside pockets. Face the audience throughout your presentation, do not turn back and face the blackboard. You can glance at notes occasionally, but do not look at them all the time. Never read verbatim from your notes because you will completely lose your eye contact with the audience. For the same reason, do not read through your Power Point Presentation. Once you lose eye contact with the audience, you will lose the initial rapport you developed with them. Moreover, audience will lose interest in your speech if they see you just reading out directly from your material. They might think that you have nothing original to contribute and start indulging in chats or checking mails on their laptops/mobiles. It will be a costly blunder on your part to have, thus, led the audience astray.

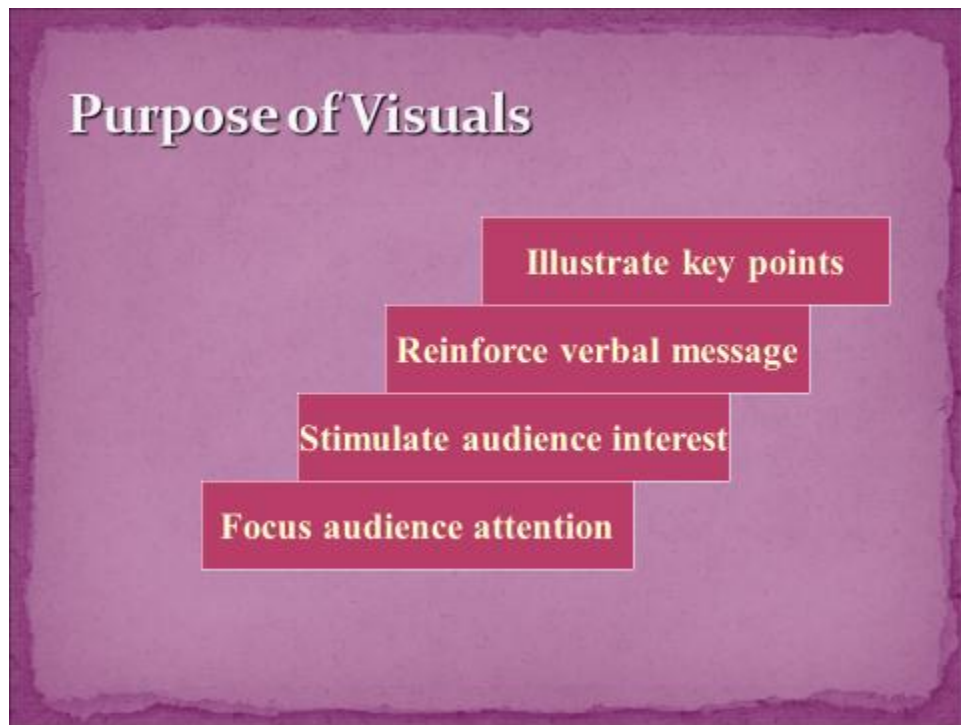
Similarly, while using PowerPoint presentation, avoid moving frequently from the podium to the computer to change slides. Soon, the audience would lose interest due to the frequent pauses in your presentation. You can avoid this situation by asking somebody to press the mouse button for transitions. However, you need to rehearse the entire presentation with this person to make the transitions smooth and effortless. Instead of relying on somebody, it would be a smart move to use a remote to change the slides. In this case, you should use a new battery and familiarize yourself with the device before the presentation.

Do not hold down to anything: people have a tendency to hold down to something because of their insecurity. Thus, people hold down to a chair or table and keep in their hand a file, a pen, a ruler, a chalk piece, a pointer or any such thing for support throughout their presentation. However, as mentioned before, you should keep your hands open since they indicate that you are free, not inhibited, and not hiding anything. Most important of all, start and finish your presentation in time. It is unprofessional to exceed the time limit. If you do so, your audience will lose interest. Their mind will be occupied with the next activity they had planned to do. So, practice finishing your presentation before time. The audience always appreciates a speaker who finishes the talk before time and leaves enough room for reflection and discussion. It also shows how caring and concerned you are about the time of others.

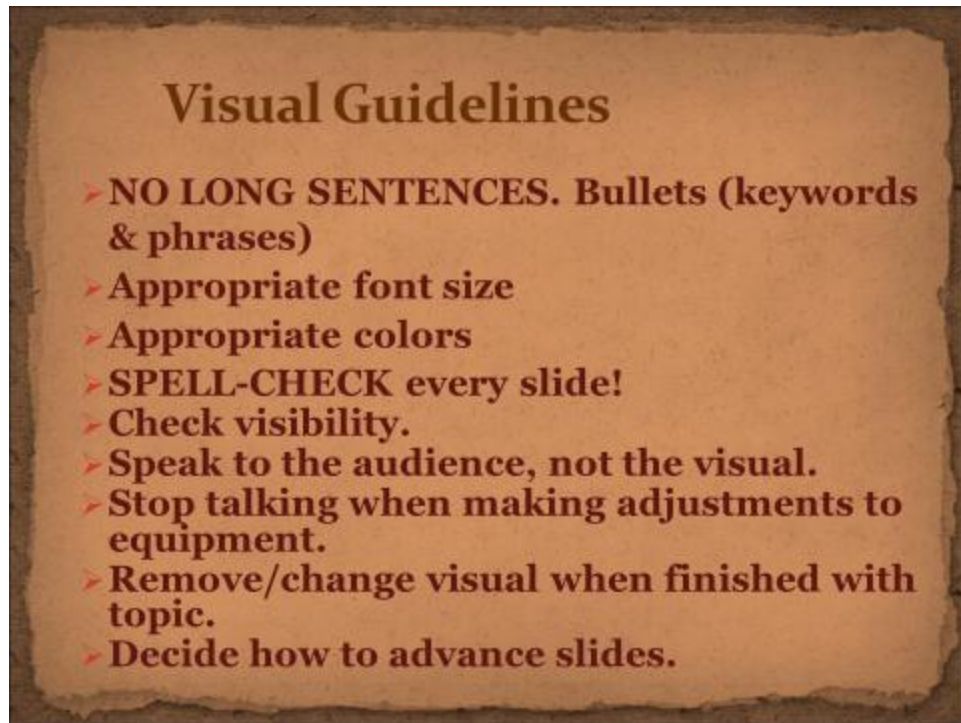
You should also be careful about your body movement while using visuals.

Purpose of Visuals

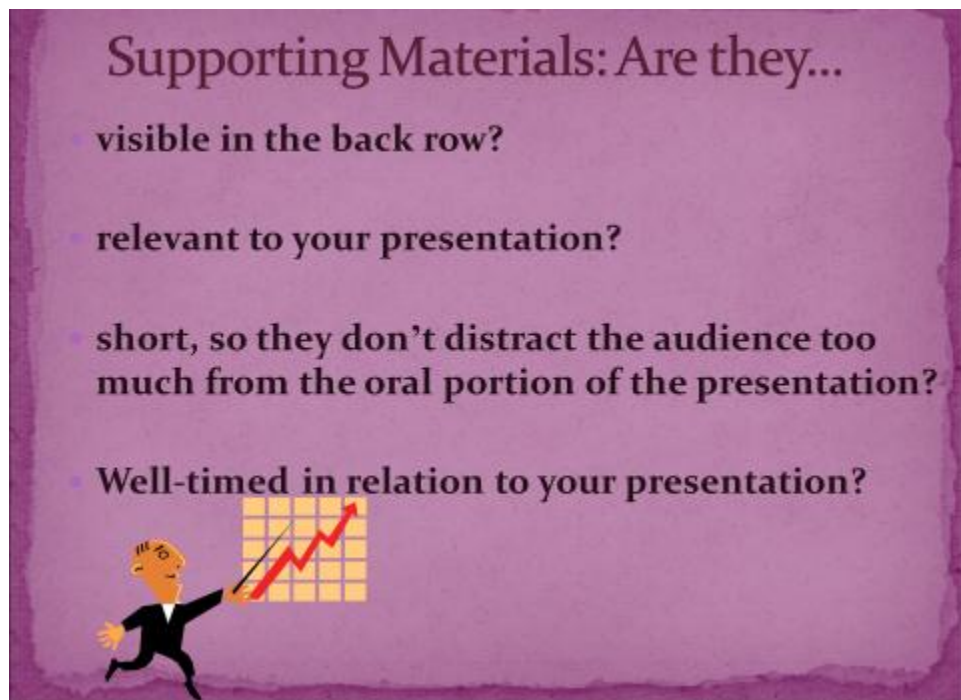
No doubt, a picture is worth thousand words. Instead of trying to explain a difficult idea in so many words, if you show a related picture, the audience would understand it very easily. But how effectively do you use it? So, when it comes to visuals you should clearly understand the purpose and know how you should use them. Visuals are used to illustrate key points, reinforce verbal message, stimulate audience interest, focus audience attention.



Take note of the following guidelines:



While using supporting materials, ensure the following:



You should avoid complicated derivation as the one shown below.

WATCH OUT!

Avoid Complicated Derivation



$$\begin{aligned} \psi(n, p) &\leq \frac{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n)}{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n) + p + \kappa(n, p)} \\ \Rightarrow \psi(n, p) &\leq \frac{p(\sigma(n) + \varphi(n))}{p\sigma(n) + \varphi(n) + p\kappa(n, p)} \\ \Rightarrow \psi(n, p) &\leq \frac{p(\sigma(n) + \varphi(n))}{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n) + (p-1)\sigma(n) + p\kappa(n, p)} \\ \Rightarrow \psi(n, p) &\leq \frac{p(\sigma(n) + \varphi(n))}{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n) + T_0(n, p)} \\ \Rightarrow \varepsilon(n, p) &\leq \frac{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n)}{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n) + T_0(n, p)} \\ \Rightarrow \varepsilon(n, p) &\leq \frac{1}{1 + \frac{T_0(n, p)}{\sigma(n) + \varphi(n)}} \\ \Rightarrow \varepsilon(n, p) &\leq \frac{1}{1 + \frac{T_0(n, p)}{T(n, 1)}} \\ \Rightarrow T(n, 1) &\geq \frac{\varepsilon(n, p)}{1 - \varepsilon(n, p)} T_0(n, p) \\ \Rightarrow T(n, 1) &\geq CT_0(n, p) \end{aligned}$$

Instead, try to show the whole thing in terms of pie chart, bar chart, or graphs. Follow some organizing strategies as suggested below:

Organizing Strategies:

- Chronological
- Problem-cause-solution
- Pro/Con
- Sequential (1-2-3 . . .)

Chronological strategy of presentation refers to the historical progression of an idea starting from its origin, growth, development, maturity, and following it up till its decline, and death. Problem-cause-solution strategy is effective in presenting problems and identifying their causes and offering solutions. Pros and cons method can be used for cases which are to be debated, where you present ideas for and against, and suggest their advantages and disadvantages. The most popular and conventional method is arranging ideas in a sequential order and presenting them using connectives as firstly, secondly, thirdly, fourthly, fifthly, sixthly, seventhly, eighthly, ninthly, and finally.

Towards the conclusion, I just want to quickly re-capsulate certain significant points which you should bear in mind to minimize your mistakes in oral presentation.



Keeping an eye on the audience's body language is important because you can moderate your speech according to their moods. For instance, if you see some of the audience yawning, looking at their watches, or scribbling something, you can understand that they are feeling bored. This may be because your speech has become monotonous. To break the monotony, you can introduce humor or narrate an interesting anecdote. You can even pause your presentation and simply pose some questions to the audience. These minor efforts will make the audience to come back to track and follow your presentation with renewed interest.

You should also keep in mind the following presentation practicalities:

Presentation Practicalities

- ✓ **If possible, e-mail files in advance (ppt)**
- ✓ **Always keep a hard copy/ transparencies**
- ✓ **Always bring a soft copy on disc/pen drive with all fonts and media included**
- ✓ **And always rehearse—
With the presentation computer if possible**

Final Tips

Final Tips

- **Use topics from your own experience**
- **Develop narrative skills**
- **Never speak without a purpose**
- **Support your argument with interesting examples, personal anecdotes and funny facts**

Communicate clearly

Project your voice

- Speaking a little more loudly than normal feels unusual at first but your audience won't notice.
- They will only notice if you speak softly.

Communicate Effectively

**There is no point in giving
a presentation that the
audience can not
understand!**



Overall you should communicate effectively. There is no point in giving a presentation that the audience cannot understand. Despite months spent on preparation and rehearsals, and the use of attractive visuals, if the audience do not understand anything, there is no point in such an oral presentation or public speaking. So, communicate effectively, focus on the message and learn to express it clearly. Keep practicing: it's persistent practice that will make you a perfect speaker!



Finally, when you are doing all these things, learn to enjoy yourself. Public speaking is a unique experience in itself. Your personality keeps growing as you move from one small presentation to another difficult one with added enthusiasm and renewed vigour. Once you develop confidence, you can gradually develop your own style. I am sure, soon you will have your own fans following and you will reach a day when you will get a standing ovation!



For Further Reference

