

Presenting the Subject

There are some tips to help you make your training presentations more interesting, worthwhile, and fun for both you and your audience.

1. *Prepare* your presentation.

- a. Size up your audience, considering the sort of people they are and what they probably know and what to learn about the subject.
- b. Write down the purpose of the presentation (or review the learning objectives) and decide on the ideas that should be covered.
- c. Research the subject, taking brief notes.
- d. Talk with others who know the subject and make notes of their ideas.
- e. Outline your presentation, including only the most important points -- usually the fewer the better -- and put them in logical order.

2. *Practice* your presentation.

- a. Rehearse your presentation until you have it well in mind. Some trainers like to use a tape recorder so they can hear themselves.
- b. Write in your notes the time allotted to major points. This will help you stay within the time limits.
- c. Put your outline in final form so that it will not be cluttered with discarded ideas.
- d. Try to be ready for extemporaneous speaking, with an occasional look at your outline. Do not memorize or read it word-for-word.
- e. When you are well prepared, you will feel more at ease during the presentation. Also, it helps to take a few deep breaths before you begin.

3. *Personalize* your presentation.

- a. Let each person feel you are talking to him or her. Look at the audience as individuals, not as group. If you are nervous, find a friendly face in the audience and direct your remarks to that person for the first few minutes.
- b. Watch the group's reaction as you go along. Stay close to their interests.
- c. Use thought-provoking questions. This will help stimulate everyone's thinking. It also will help you get feedback from participants, which will tell you whether they understand what you are saying.

4. *Illustrate* your presentation.

- a. Use a chalkboard or flip chart to list your main points, or draw diagrams or sketches while you talk. Training aids help make your presentation more interesting and reinforce the learning process. Not only do the participants hear, but they see as well.
- b. Balance what you say with what you show. Don't let the visual aid be so elaborate

that it is distracting.

- c. Show the equipment and materials needed to do what you are talking about.
- d. Show literature resources on the subject.
- e. Illustrate your important points with human interest stories, preferably something that actually happened. True stories, not necessary funny, are excellent. When interest is waning, an amusing story usually helps.

5. *Pace* yourself.

- a. Stay within the time limit.
- b. Stay on the subject. Don't get sidetracked.

6. *Clinch* your presentation.

- a. Summarize the subject by restating its main idea or problem, its importance, and the major points you have made.
- b. Give your listeners a chance to ask questions, either during the presentation or at the end.