SMITH COLLEGE

Speaker Guidelines

Planning to make a public presentation?

Here are tips to improve your presentation.

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Preparation

- Identify your audience
- Identify your purpose
- Know your subject
- Outline your ideas
- Prepare notecards with short phrases or key words
- Practice, practice, practice
- Familiarize yourself with the room and the stage
- Drink water 15 minutes before you speak

Entertain

Inform

Educate

Inspire

Content

- Consider the 10-20-30 Rule of PowerPoint: 10 slides, 20 minutes, 30 point font
- Structure your material in three sections: grabber opening, middle, and memorable closing
- Limit talk to one major idea that's worth learning, something new
- Favor images over text, but don't overuse animation, sound clips, or gaudy colors
- State topic and intent upfront; get to the point
- Use short phrases, not sentences, on slides
- Write for listeners, not readers
- Avoid jargon, slang, technical terms
- Use metaphors/stories for interest
- Keep it moving; build on idea piece by piece
- Use humor without telling a joke
- Thank the audience

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The Delivery

- Take a moment before you start to speak to collect yourself
- Ask the audience to put phones on silent
- Look at the audience, not at the screen, the floor, your notes
- Speak directly into the mic and stand 6-8 inches away
- Speak clearly and with conviction; don't mumble
- Use a hand-held clicker and/or a laser pointer if needed
- Do not READ from slides or notes
- Avoid those *um*'s and *like*'s
- Don't apologize for mistakes
- Pay attention to your body language, repetitive motions
- Remember to have fun and be yourself
- Slow down!

You!

- Appearance matters!
- Stand straight, but with a relaxed spine
- Dress appropriately for the occasion
- Smile

The Q & A

- Anticipate possible questions in advance
- Repeat, reframe, or refocus the question
- Keep answers short and concise
- Confirm that you have answered the question
- Acknowledge when you don't know the answer
- Don't let a single person dominate the session
- Prepare a second close for after the Q & A

Technology Issues

- Know the equipment setup
- Be prepared for the unexpected and for technical difficulties
- Do a pre-speaking check: mic, projector, sound, etc
- Bring back-up flash drive, video adapter, etc.
- Don't panic; stay calm and carry on

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