



FULLCIRCLEARTSTOOLKITS

SERIES 2 professional development... **Developing your presentation skills**

or “**How** you present is far more important than **what** you present.”

Do you agree with this statement? Why / why not?

Think about the presentations you have been to which have really made an impact on you and try and work out why they were so powerful. List your reasons here:

When you have thought about these questions, you are well on the way to thinking about what makes a successful presentation.

A word of caution:



don't try and copy anyone else's style or method of delivery. When you are making a presentation, you must use your own style, strengths and personality, together with preparation and practice.

Here are a few words and phrases which can be used to describe people as they present. What kind of presenter are you naturally, do you think? Mark the words and phrases that apply to you.

relaxed authoritative nervous too loud tentative
funny knowledgeable clear long-winded
passionate too quiet easy to listen to too fast too slow
easy to ignore entertaining respectful of your audience

Look at the words and phrases you have marked. Which ones are you happy with and which ones need work so that you can become a better presenter? Are there any that you haven't marked but that you think you would like to become?

These are your starting points.

It is difficult to teach someone to make good presentations. The most important thing about making good presentations is to develop the sorts of qualities you've been thinking about as you've answered the questions.

What you need to develop these qualities are:

- 🎤 practice – this means finding opportunities to give short presentations and also practising in front of friends
- 🎤 people you can trust who will give you honest , constructive feedback – you need people who will tell you what you are getting right as well as point out where you need to develop your style
- 🎤 presentation techniques which you can use to build your confidence

You *always* need to consider:

- 🎤 your intention – what do you want the presentation to achieve?
- 🎤 your audience – who are you talking to, and what difference does this make
- 🎤 your space – is it big or small, intimate or impersonal, is the audience all in front of you or to the sides as well, are you behind a lectern or can you move around your space
- 🎤 your technical equipment – what will you do if it doesn't work?!
- 🎤 your timing – how much time have you been allocated? Don't overrun!

Here's a suggestion for a group exercise to start to practise and get feedback:

1. Get together with a group of friends or colleagues. Perhaps they want to develop their presentation skills, too. You must be able to trust them.
2. Everyone thinks of a subject they know a lot about and are really passionate about. It can be anything – cooking, animal welfare, Coronation Street, darts, absolutely anything.
3. Allow an hour to prepare a five minute presentation on your chosen subjects.
4. In turn, give your presentations and give each other feedback using these questions:
 - were you interested?
 - did you understand the content?
 - did you enjoy listening to the person presenting?
 - what did you learn?
 - and for all these questions, ask: why; what was it the presenter did or didn't do?
5. Someone should take notes and you will soon build up ideas about what makes a good presentation and also what strengths you each bring at this stage to the task of giving a presentation.
6. Now look at your presentations again, polish them up and practise your delivery in the light of the feedback you received.
7. Give your presentations again and discuss them.
8. What do you each still need to practise?
9. If you have the opportunity, practise again with this group using a real example, a presentation you really do have to give, or a presentation which is related to your work. In other words, make this practice more serious.

If you cannot work in a group, then ask a friend or friends to listen to your practice presentations, and go through the same process.

If you are using BSL, or working through another kind of interpreter or PA, you need to make sure that they understand your intentions in giving the presentation and you need to trust that they will interpret accurately and appropriately.