Estratègies d'expressió i comunicació en llengua anglès
per a jornades i congressos

What makes a good presentation?

Preparation, planning and practice

• Know your subject and have clear objectives.
• Know your audience: Who are they? What do they know? What do they hope to get from your talk?
• Structure your talk clearly. Present your main points in a logical order (Rule of 3!) with clear examples. At the end, summarise your main points and thank your audience.
• Check out the venue and the facilities beforehand.

• Handouts: Give them out after your presentation. Include references and follow-up questions for discussion.
• Language: Keep it simple and avoid jargon. Use appropriate language to signpost.
• Pronunciation: Make sure you know how to pronounce keywords, difficult or foreign words.
• PowerPoint slides: Minimize text, maximize pictures and eliminate clutter. Less is more. Never read from the slides. If you use a laser pointer, when you point at something, hold the pointer steady.
Questions are good. They show that the audience is listening. Know your audience, anticipate questions and prepare answers beforehand. Just in case nobody has anything to say, have some questions or points for discussion ready to ask.

Practice: "It takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech." - Mark Twain. It's obvious, but lots of people still don't do it. Practice in front of friends or a videocamera, get feedback and make improvements.

Use your voice and body to communicate clearly

- Speak loudly enough for everyone in the room to hear you. If people can't hear you, they won't listen.
- Speak slowly and clearly and emphasize key words.
- Vary your voice quality (volume and pitch). Avoid monotone or your audience will fall asleep. When you begin a new point, use a higher pitch and volume.
- Use pauses and don't be afraid of short periods of silence.
- Stand straight. Don’t slouch, shuffle about or turn your back on the audience.
- Be dynamic! Move, use your hands, facial expressions, and your body to add to your communication.

Interact with your audience

- Talk to your audience, don’t read to them! Use a conversational, informal tone.
- Make eye-contact. If you don’t include the audience, they won’t listen to you.
- Smile! Your audience will react warmly to you if you smile and look relaxed.
- Be enthusiastic and engage the audience: capture their attention right from the beginning of your talk.
- Be aware of how your audience is reacting. Are they interested or bored? What does their body language say?

Dealing with nerves

- A bit of nerves is a good thing! Adrenalin often helps you perform well.
- Slow down! Stop at the end of a sentence, take a breath, and think before you continue.
- Be organised and well-prepared.
- If you look like you are enjoying yourself and feeling confident, you will communicate these positive feelings to the audience.