

## THE FIVE “P’s” of PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

**PLAN** –Before you even start thinking of doing your presentation, think about what information you will want to present.

- Select your topic
- Start working on your presentation by thinking about your goals. You might even start by thinking about your conclusion. What are the most important points you want to leave with your audience.
- Consider your audience. What is important to them? What do you want them to think or do after seeing your presentation? You’ll need to use words your audience will understand and make sure that the concepts are well explained.
- Select an appropriate title

**PREPARE** – A well prepared presentation will be easier to make and be of more interest to the audience. Your presentation should include:

- Introduction: Why did you choose the topic? Why should the audience listen?; What will you say or do?
- Body: Present your subject in an organized manner
- Summary: Briefly review major points; List references
- Research your topic thoroughly. No one likes to watch a presentation full of things they may already think they know. Use stories and examples and cite references to give your presentation depth and make it interesting.
- For your presentation to be effective you may have to develop charts (title, each major point or summary). Make sure the charts support your points.
- All the steps in a demonstration should be reviewed so that your presentation will proceed in a logical manner.
- Don’t write out your complete presentation. Outline the main points on note cards. Be sure to put page numbers on your note cards in case you drop them.
- People will be looking at you and listening to you so be sure to look your best.

**PRACTICE** –We’ve all heard the saying, “Practice Makes Perfect.” We can’t guarantee a perfect presentation, but we will guarantee that you will be much more confident and at ease if you have adequately practiced your presentation. When you give a presentation, you’ll need to pay attention to: your voice; your physical presence; and your visual aids.

### VOICE

- You can use your voice to make your presentation flow, hold the audience’s attention, emphasize points, and help the audience understand the information.
- Your tone can give clues about how you feel about your topic. The audience will become more interested if you sound interested. You can show enthusiasm, excitement, or passion about your subject by raising or lowering your tone of voice. Without any variation or expression, a monotone voice can quickly become difficult to listen to.
- Speak loudly so that everyone in the room can hear you. Instead of straining your voice,

breathe deeply and practice until you get used to hearing yourself a little louder than usual. It gets easier with practice.

- Speak clearly so that everyone will be able to understand every word. Speak naturally, but enunciate every syllable. Don't let your voice drop in volume at the end of words and sentences.
- Don't try to go too fast. Take your time, be comfortable and breathe! You will want to practice your presentation several times to make sure that it fits into your time limit without making you rush.
- Use pauses to breathe and let the audience keep up with your information. Remember, they are hearing this information for the first time and need to think about it while they listen.
- In casual conversation we use filler words every day. In a formal presentation, though, words such "Um, er, you know, or da" just don't fit in. When you are practicing, have someone help you count the times you say filler words. The only way to stop using filler words is to become aware of them and practice taking them out.
- *Hot Tip:* Get to know your strengths and weaknesses. Record yourself reading a page from a book. Listen to see if your voice is loud, clear and easy to understand.

#### PHYSICAL PRESENCE/BODY LANGUAGE

- Stand confidently in front of your audience and try not to move around too much. Plan out any movement you will do before you give your speech. Will there be a podium or lectern? Will you move around as you talk?
- If you do plan to move, do it for a purpose. For example, you may need to move so that your audience can see the screen, or you may want to pass out handouts.
- While you present your topic, take the time to look people in the eyes. When you do, members of your audience will feel connected to you, pay more attention and trust in what you are saying. Avoid looking at one person only, or at one spot on the wall
- Gestures can add or subtract from your point, depending on how you use them. Using gestures can feel a little like acting. You can clap your hands for attention, wave your arms over your head or put your hands out in front of you like you are pleading for your life. Start by paying attention to the gestures of the people around you when they speak. Do they use their hands? Do you see any gestures that would help you express the ideas in your presentation? Become aware of the gestures you make naturally. Have someone watch you while you practice your presentation. You may be doing things you don't even notice. If gestures have no real meaning or are over done, they can distract you audience.

**PRESENT** – Keep in mind that even experienced speakers get nervous.

- It's difficult to get experience in front of an audience without an audience being there. The better you know your material, the more clear-headed you will be when it comes time to present it. Practice with notes, then without notes, then in front of a friend, family, relatives, your 4-H club; your school class; or a community organization. Ask for feedback. Time yourself and make sure you meet your time without going over. Each time you practice you'll get a little more comfortable.

DURING your presentation:

- Slow down and take a deep breath. It's easy to forget to breathe when you are concerned about all of the other complicated things you have to think about. A deep breath can clear your mind, slow your heart rate and keep nervousness at a minimum.
- Keep some water close by. Nervousness can sometimes give you a dry mouth, which can then make you more nervous...fight the cycle and take a sip of water!
- Hot Tip: Practice your presentation in front of a mirror.

**PARTICIPATE** – Making a Public Presentation is never easy.

- Don't be alarmed at having butterflies in your stomach; nearly everyone does. The important thing is to remember as you do more public speaking you will be less nervous, and you will gain poise and self-confidence.
- Picture it going well. Just before you begin, it is a good idea to remember all of the work you have put into the presentation. Remember the practicing you have done and the things you have learned. Congratulate yourself on your hard work.