

Speak up with Confidence

Tips on Presenting in Nine Key Areas



BUL 880

by Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz, and Barbara Brody

LIFE SKILLS GAINED THROUGH ORAL PRESENTATIONS

One of the most common fears among adults is speaking in public. Youth and adults who learn to effectively speak in public become confident in their ability to speak in front of a group and thus gain an important leadership tool.

Practice helps anyone develop skills in planning, organizing, and presenting. As people grow in self-confidence, they often find their fear of speaking in public dwindles.

The University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development program requires youth to give an oral presentation to complete each 4-H project. Completing projects and speaking about them are important parts of building leadership skills. To help youth learn how to plan, organize, prepare, and effectively speak about their project or any other topic, this publication explores nine key aspects of presenting.

Youth and adult volunteers alike may use the following Tips on Presenting to learn more about how to become a confident, polished public speaker. Each tip sheet can be used as a stand-alone document to practice some element of a presentation. Each tip sheet encourages individuals to focus on a specific skill. While these documents were written with 4-H youth in mind, adults may also use them to develop skills for giving more effective presentations.

Here are the topics for each tip sheet:

Tips #1 Putting Parts of a Presentation Together describes three basic parts of any presentation, components of each part, and how the presentation can flow from one part to the next. This document also suggests how to choose appropriate visual aids.

Tips #2 Planning and Organizing a Presentation describes factors to consider when beginning to plan a presentation including identifying your audience, topic, and level of detail. It helps you consider what type of presentation is most appropriate and discusses time management.

Tips #3 Types of Presentations describes six types of presentations and how to choose a type that best fits your audience and topic. It helps you consider the most effective ways to get your message across.

Tips #4 Using Multimedia describes the effective design and use of multimedia in presentations and what to do if some part of the plan fails.

Tips #5 Mechanics of Presenting focuses on how individuals present themselves including use of body language, dress, voice inflection, eye contact, personal poise, and use of notes.

Tips #6 Getting Your Message Across with Posters describes factors to consider when using and creating posters for a presentation. Learn to determine if using a poster is appropriate and, if so, how to create a poster that is effective, can be seen by the entire audience, and is attractive.

Tips #7 Creative Hooks describes how speakers can capture and hold the audience's attention throughout their presentation by using a variety of verbal and non-verbal techniques.

Tips #8 Food Demonstrations describes special techniques and tools specific to presentations requiring food preparation.

Tips #9 Using Live Animals in Presentations describes safety concerns and special accommodations to consider when using animals in a presentation.

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Introduction

Body

Conclusion



PUTTING PARTS OF A PRESENTATION TOGETHER

by Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz, Barbara Brody

Putting a presentation together is easier than you might think. There are three main parts—introduction, body, and conclusion—that provide a framework for easy planning. They serve as a guide for a smooth presentation. Each part contains key components of information to lead the audience from one part to the next. Once you have selected a topic, choose three or four main points to focus your message.

OUTLINE OF A PRESENTATION

1. Introduction

- Catch
- Personal introduction
- Brief outline of main points

2. Body

- Point A
- Point B
- Point C

3. Conclusion

- Summarize the main points
- Give sources of information
- Ask for questions

Every presentation needs a title. Don't be concerned about coming up with a title first. It will come!

Consider what type of visual aids will have the most impact to strengthen your message. Decide if the presentation will have an end product, such as in a demonstration, or if it will be an educational or persuasive type presentation that lends itself better to an illustrated talk or speech. See *Tips #3 Types of Presentations*. If you plan to use live animals, be sure

the animals are controllable and are approved in the setting of the presentation. See *Tips #9 Using Live Animals*.

INTRODUCTION

Begin with a “catch”—something to grab your audience's attention. The catch may be a thought-provoking question, a quote, or maybe a very short story that intrigues your audience and leads into your topic. See *Tips #7 Creative “Hooks.”*

Next, introduce yourself. Share your name, age, years in 4-H, your club name, and the title or topic of your presentation. In a non-4-H setting, this information may be different. The idea is to give a little information about you, the presenter, to the audience to help set the stage of the presentation. Next, give the audience a brief outline of points you will present. For example: “I will show you three common types of embellishments used in scrapbooking and demonstrate the most effective ways to use them.”

BODY

The body of the presentation is where you give the main points or objectives. Be sure to present the main points in the same order that they were given in the introduction. Whether demonstrating how to do something or speaking about a subject, refrain from reading your presentation or memorizing every sentence word for word. Use note cards or bullet points on a poster as a guide. Reading or memorization may be disastrous if you lose your place or drop your note cards. The natural spoken word well researched and rehearsed is easier to hear and more interesting to your audience. It may be easier to read, but know the information and practice the delivery for a better quality presentation.

CONCLUSION

The last part of a presentation is the conclusion. Summarize the main points in one or two sentences. Next, state what sources you used to gather your information. Sources may include books, websites, people who are experts or knowledgeable in the subject, or your own experience. Cite at least two sources, if possible. If the information is mostly from your own experience, say so, but also find sources to back up or confirm your information. Typically, in a competitive setting when presentations are timed, this is where the time stops. But don't stop here. Your presentation isn't complete without asking for questions and answering them.

How questions are handled can leave a lasting impression. When a question is asked, first repeat the question back to the audience. By repeating the question, several things happen: 1) everyone in the audience can hear and understand the question, 2) the presenter checks that the question is correctly understood, and 3) it gives the presenter a little extra time to formulate an answer. If you don't understand the question, it's OK to ask for clarification. If you do not know the answer to a question, don't guess or try to bluff your way through a reply. Say that you don't know the answer, and offer to find the correct answer or offer a resource.

USING VISUAL AIDS

Choosing appropriate visual aids for your presentation can significantly improve the effectiveness of getting your message across to your audience. Visual aids to consider include:

- Posters with pictures, graphs, drawings, or key points
- Supplies and equipment to show how to do something (i.e. how to make a rope halter or bake brownies)
- Animals
- PowerPoint presentation
- Costume

If the presentation is competitive, be sure to check what the rules are for different types of presentations. Some questions to ask:

- Are live animals allowed?
- Can another person be a part of the presentation?
- Will electronic equipment be available for a PowerPoint presentation?
- Is it OK for another person to help manage the visual aids—control animals, move or hold posters, etc.?
- Do different types of presentations have different requirements or restrictions on props?

Whether for a competition or not, practice enough so that you are comfortable handling and using the props you choose. Always be sure that you are able to safely use props and they are safe to have in the setting of the presentation. See *Tips #4 Visual Aids*.

TO SUM IT UP

The three main parts of a presentation define the beginning, middle, and end of a presentation. The introduction sets the stage for what is about to come, catching the audience's attention, and introducing the scope of the topic to be presented. The body delivers the intended message with three or four main points in an orderly manner. The conclusion simply summarizes the information delivered in the body and brings the presentation to a close. Incorporating appropriate props in a presentation will enhance its effectiveness, clarify the message, and tie it all together.

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Audience

Topic

Presentation
Type



PLANNING AND ORGANIZING A PRESENTATION

by Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz, Barbara Brody

The more time put into planning, organizing, and practicing a presentation, the more effective it will be.

The first step is to know who will be in your audience. Next, select the appropriate topic and its scope to match your audience. If your presentation completes 4-H project requirements, the topic may be narrowed to a particular project area already. Consider what type of presentation best fits the audience's needs and best fits the topic. See *Tips #3 Types of Presentations*. Then organize the content. Before you're done planning and organizing, also consider the time allotted for the presentation and if the amount of information you have planned will fit into the time frame.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

As you begin planning your presentation, consider who will be in your audience.

- Will they be mostly adults or youth?
- Why are they there? To learn something? To be persuaded to a particular point of view?
- Do they have knowledge of the topic? Does the information need to be very basic?
- How big is the audience? Will they be able to see visual aids?
- Will you use a hand-held microphone that limits use of your hands?

As these questions are answered, you can plan and prepare for these characteristics and begin to tailor the presentation to the audience.

SELECT A TOPIC

The most important consideration in selecting a topic is to choose something that you, the presenter, are interested in and already know something about. Most likely, as the presentation develops, additional research

will be needed to supplement what you already know. Be sure to document sources as you gather information. Write down the title of the source (book, article, website, etc.) and the author(s) for inclusion at the end of the presentation.

If the presentation completes requirements of a 4-H project, it should be on a topic that you have learned about in the course of your 4-H project work in the current year. If you have trouble coming up with a specific topic, review the project manual and activities completed this year for ideas. The topic should also interest your audience.

After selecting the topic, define your focus. Typically, it is best to cover no more than three or four main points. Cover the topic well, but keep focused.

For example, a beginning sewing project member may choose to demonstrate how to thread a sewing machine. The main points may be to tell about and show:

- Where the spool of thread is placed and where and how the thread goes through the parts of the sewing machine, ending at the needle;
- Where and how the bobbin is placed;
- How to pull the bobbin thread to the top to begin to sew.

In this example, it may be easy for the presenter to get carried away and talk about selecting appropriate thread, the differences in sewing machines, how to wind the bobbin, what to do if the bobbin runs out of thread, and what to do if the thread gets tangled. Plan ahead how much detail to talk about, and stick with the plan.

TYPE OF PRESENTATION

Once the audience and topic are defined, choose the type of presentation that will most effectively get your message across to your audience.

- A demonstration is showing and telling how to do something, typically ending with a finished product.
- An illustrated talk is speaking about a topic and using pictures or illustrations to support topic points.
- A speech is a third type of presentations that does not involve visual aids. The presenter only uses the spoken word and gestures (note cards may be used).

There are many other types of presentations, although these three are most typically used in 4-H project oral presentations. See *Tips #3 Types of Presentations*. Considering the topic and the audience, decide which type of presentation best conveys your message.

Next, choose visual aids. See *Tips #4 Multimedia* and *Tips #6 Visual Aids* for more information on choosing, creating, and organizing appropriate visual aids.

TIME MANAGEMENT

It's easy to underestimate how long it will take to plan and organize a presentation; it's clearly not a good idea to wait until the last minute to put together a quality presentation. Allow time for:

- Research – gathering information;
- Organizing information so the presentation flows well;
- Choosing and creating visual aids;
- Practice, practice, practice! Make adjustments, then practice some more!

Gather all of the supplies and tools you will need for a demonstration, and then look at them again—are they clean and in good repair? This may add even more time. Allow plenty of time for practice. When practicing, do everything you plan to do in the actual presentation.

For example, if you are giving a presentation for an art 4-H project on how to make paper, actually make the paper when you practice. You will discover what can potentially go wrong and change what you do or how you do it. The more practice time you put in, the better you will know the information and the smoother you will be at handling the visual aids. As you practice the presentation, be sure to time how long it takes. Know how much time you have to present, whether it is a timed competitive event or a talk with an allotted amount of time. Stay within the timeframe, even if you need to re-evaluate your presentation and add or take away information.

TO SUM IT UP

Planning and organizing are the keys to a successful presentation. Start with knowing the audience and selecting the appropriate complexity or topic detail. With both audience and topic in mind, identifying what type of presentation to use to most effectively get the message across will come more easily and the type of visual aids will become self-evident. Most importantly, allow lots of time to prepare and practice before giving the presentation in front of an audience.

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Demonstration

Impromptu
speech

TV commercial



TYPES OF PRESENTATIONS

by Barbara Brody, Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz

Oral presentations communicate information about a specific topic to an audience. Many methods and techniques can accomplish this. Knowing what type of presentation to give is just as important as the topic! Ask yourself, “Which is the BEST way to get my information to this audience?”

TYPES OF PRESENTATION

There are at least a half dozen types of oral presentations, each with specific requirements. Prior to committing to giving a presentation, it is essential to understand the requirements. For example, if you will compete in a contest, check the contest rules for specific requirements. If you are invited to give a presentation, make sure you understand the request and needs for the presentation you’ve been asked to give.

Common types of presentations include the following:

- **Demonstrations** are a perfect way to show and tell the actual steps of making or doing something. At the end of the demonstration, you have a finished product. For example, show how to make a milk shake or milk a goat. At the end of a demonstration, you will have a finished product. Also see *Tips #8 Food*.
- **An illustrated talk** uses visuals—posters or pictures and charts or models, slides, etc.—to educate or tell how to do something. You are illustrating like an artist who draws a picture in a book. Illustrated talks are similar to a demonstration except the information is shared through visual aids rather than an actual product. This is an outstanding alternative to giving live animal demonstrations because instead of bringing a goat on stage, you could make a video of you milking the goat and then use the video clip during the oral presentation.

- **A public speech** is talking. You use no props or visual aids. A speech may be informative, sharing information about a topic, or it may be persuasive; trying to change someone’s thoughts about the topic.
- **An impromptu speech** is not planned ahead of time. A topic is given after which you have a short amount of time to prepare a speech. Again, just like in public speeches, visual aids or props are not used. In public and impromptu talks, hand and face gestures and voice inflection are important to keep your audience engaged and to emphasize your points.
- **Dramatic readings** use words and actions to present material to either entertain or educate. Presenters use their own or another author’s material. Make sure you understand the requirements. Costume, make-up, or props will add to your dramatic reading if they are allowed.
- **A TV commercial** is a presentation to convince an audience to buy an idea or product. This type of presentation may include illustrations or objects as long as name brands are concealed. It will include an introduction, body, and summary. See *Tips #1 Presentation Parts*.

INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM?

Presentations may be given as an individual or a team. Teams work well for demonstrations and illustrated talks. They are usually not allowed in speeches. Team demonstrations work well when the task requires more than two hands. A team approach may help someone who is apprehensive about giving a presentation. It allows one person to talk while another is demonstrating. It is important to remember in a TEAM presentation, both presenters should participate equally!

For example, each team member needs to speak and participate in the presentation. This type of presentation requires teamwork and balance.

LET'S PRACTICE

The following ideas are simple ways to help become comfortable presenting and practicing different types of oral presentations. The practice ideas can help individuals, or they can help groups work more effectively together.

How to make a peanut butter sandwich: Demonstrate the techniques for making a peanut butter sandwich. See *Tips #8 Food*. Now discuss how you would change this presentation into an illustrated talk.

Napkin folding: Demonstrate three ways to properly fold a napkin for the table.

Should 4-H youth be required to complete a record book? Use this as an impromptu speech topic at a meeting.

TO SUM IT UP

Oral presentations vary according to the way you decide to communicate the topic.

No matter what the situation is, it is beneficial to ask numerous people to evaluate your presentation and provide constructive feedback. Use the feedback provided to improve your presentation. If you will compete in a contest, use the contest score sheet and ask others to score your presentation.

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Setting

Software

Presenter



USING MULTIMEDIA

by Joey Peutz, Nancy Shelstad, Barbara Brody

Becoming a competent, not just confident, speaker, especially when using multimedia, requires a lot of practice. Here are tips to help with using technology or multimedia in your presentation.

WHAT IS MULTIMEDIA?

Multimedia—using more than one medium of communication—includes any combination of text, audio, still images, animation, or video in a presentation. Multimedia is information that is recorded and played or displayed. It may be accessed by computers, tape recorders, slide projectors, or other electronic tools. When preparing a presentation, it is important to decide if you should use multimedia. To do this, you must consider your audience and place where you will present.

The ultimate goal of a presentation is to share knowledge with another person in as compelling a way as possible. Below are some questions to ask when thinking about people in your audience.

- What do they know?
- What do they need to know?
- What do they expect?
- What can you teach or show them?
- How will you keep them focused?
- Will using multimedia help get your message across or make your presentation more interesting?

When preparing a presentation, try to see it from the audience's perspective. Put yourself in the audience. What might people who attend understand or see as boring?

THE SETTING/FACILITY

When preparing, a speaker should know the size and shape of the room. The acoustics and lighting of the room are also important. For example, if a room has large windows with no coverings, it may be hard or even impossible to see projected images.

A prepared speaker also knows what equipment is available. For example, does the facility have a screen and projector? Arrive early to set up equipment, avoid fumbling with a PowerPoint, or hook up a projector before it is time to speak. Make sure the room is arranged correctly. Practice your slideshow at the delivery site to avoid hiccups.

USING PRESENTATION SOFTWARE EFFECTIVELY

Multimedia presentations, whether made with PowerPoint or other software, can be a great way to support a speech. Using multimedia can help an audience visualize complicated concepts or focus on a subject.

Good design gives a professional touch to any presentation. Here are things to keep in mind:

- Keep the design basic and simple so it will not distract from your topic.
- Pick an easy-to-read font such as arial or helvetica.
- Font sizes that are at least 30 point or larger will be easiest for your audience to see.
- Be consistent—keep the same colors, fonts, and type size on all slides.
- Use contrast. Black text on a white background is easy to read, if boring.

- Apply brilliance. Bright colors make small objects and thin lines stand out. However, some vibrant colors for text can be difficult to read when projected.
- KISS—Keep It Straight and Simple. Remember, the slides are only there to support, not to replace your talk.
- What do you most want your audience to remember? Always share a take-home message.
- Add images or pictures, but do not use images to decorate. Instead, they should strengthen your message.
- Use animations sparingly. Bulleted points flying across a screen can be useful. But using a different dissolve for each slide may distract an audience.
- DO NOT READ your presentation.
- Avoid turning your back to the audience. Rather, face your audience, not what is projected on the screen.
- Be prepared for equipment to fail. Have a backup plan to present without multimedia. For example, bring printed copies of your presentation outline to hand out.
- Don't apologize for nervousness or lack of preparation time. Most audience members can't detect a speaker's anxiety, so don't draw attention to it.

TO SUM IT UP

Deciding to use multimedia in a presentation depends on your audience and facility. When using presentation software, remember to keep it simple, organized, and easy to read. Know how to use your equipment and have a back-up plan for potential equipment failures. Becoming a competent and confident speaker requires a lot of practice. So practice!

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GENERAL PRESENTATION ADVICE

Here are more tips for a good multimedia presentation.

- Check spelling and grammar. Remember that spell check only checks spelling, not that you have used the correct word. Ask a trusted friend or adult to verify accuracy.
- Program bulleted points to appear one at a time so the people in your audience listen to the presenter rather than read a text-filled screen. Use the 6 X 6 rule—one thought per line with no more than 6 words per line and no more than 6 lines per slide.
- If the content is complex, print out your slides to hand out, so the audience can follow along or take notes.
- Experts have different opinions on best length of a slide show. Author Guy Kawasaki, an early employee of Apple computer, suggests the 10-20-30 Rule—no more than 10 slides, no longer than 20 minutes, and no text smaller than 30-point font.

ABOUT YOU, THE PRESENTER

A well-prepared and enthusiastic talk is more convincing for audience members and maintains their attention better than a monotone talk.

- Use a wireless mouse or pick up the wired mouse so you can move around as you speak.

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Attire

Body
Language

Notes



MECHANICS OF PRESENTING

by Joey Peutz, Nancy Shelstad, Barbara Brody

With a little practice, you can share your passion for your subject through your presentations. Enthusiasm is contagious. Here are some tips on how to communicate your topic and connect with your audience.

MECHANICS OF PRESENTING

Exploring and developing ways to effectively communicate with your audience involves understanding the mechanics or process of a presentation.

Individuals are most effective when they are comfortable with their own style. This tip sheet will focus on dress, body language, voice, eye contact, use of notes, poise and practice.

ATTIRE/DRESS

An audience's first impression is based on how you look. Clothing should be neat and clean. Sometimes it's appropriate for your attire to support your theme or style of your presentation.

Wear an apron for a foods/cooking demonstration. If your topic involves horses, consider wearing a long sleeved collared shirt, nice jeans, or dress pants, belt, boots, and possibly a cowboy hat. If you are demonstrating stretching techniques for better health, wear sweats and tennis shoes. Make sure that your attire is not distracting to the content of your presentation.

BODY LANGUAGE/POSTURE/MOVEMENT

When positioning yourself in front of your audience, spend most of your time to the left of the audience's center. This will take advantage of most people's visual preference since they read from left to right. However, some movement from one side of the presentation space to the other side can emphasize points or show a transition in the topic.

Avoid these moves:

- Don't turn your back to the audience.
- Avoid shifting or swaying too much.
- Avoid leaning on the table or podium. This gives the impression that you are tired or don't care about your topic.
- Avoid stiff hand gestures and movements. You want gestures to be natural and add to your presentation—not distract. (Practice in front of a mirror will help with hand gestures.)

VOICE

Nothing is worse than a speaker you can't hear. Learn to project your voice. This doesn't mean yelling. Rather, stand up straight and let your voice resonate. If a microphone is available, always use it. Slow down—inexperienced and nervous speakers tend to talk too fast.

Consciously slow your speech down and add pauses for emphasis. Often, when a speaker is nervous, he or she uses terms like "um," "ah," or "you know." Replace those with a pause. Take in a short breath. Initially, the pause may seem a bit awkward, but the audience will barely notice it.

SMILES AND EYE CONTACT

A smile can do more for a presentation than any other single item. A smile tells the audience that you are eager to present and share information. It can also help to relax you.

Look at your audience 75 to 80 percent of the time. Eye contact is important because it invites people into your presentation. Direct eye contact of more than 3 to 4 seconds may give an individual the feeling of being stared at and feel uncomfortable, so keep your eyes

moving. Try to match eye contact with everyone in the room. Each person should feel like you are talking specifically to him or her. If you are very nervous, one technique is to look at the tops of your audience's heads rather than directly into their eyes. The audience will think you are looking directly at them, and it may ease your nerves.

USE OF NOTES

The delivery of your presentation should be natural, not memorized. Most presentation specialists do not recommend memorizing or reading it. Presenters can become preoccupied with trying to remember the words to say rather than the ideas behind the words. As a result, normal voice inflection disappears. With memorizing, mental blocks may occur. With memorizing, it is not a matter of "will" you forget; it's more like WHEN! Presenters who read often lose connection with the audience and voice inflection disappears. Use note cards to help organize and remember key points. Here are some pointers on using notecards or index cards. Place them on the podium, if there is one, to free up your hands.

- Use only one side of each card.
- Limit each main point in your speech to one card.
- Your introduction and conclusion each need a card.
- Number the note cards so they can be put back in order easily if dropped.
- Print large and neatly so the cards are readable at a glance.
- Use a notebook ring to keep all cards together and in order.
- Use a different color ink to jot down short hints to remember while delivering the speech—like make eye contact, use a hand gesture, or slow down.
- Practice using the notecards.

POISE AND PRACTICE

Poise is the ability to remain calm and full of composure. Poised speakers show the audience that they know the topic. If you are fidgety or nervous, the audience may feel nervous for you and will not take your information as seriously or may miss some of the content.

The best way to gain poise is to practice your presentation. Break the presentation into parts and practice each part. After practicing each part, put it all together. Consider practicing in front of a mirror or videotaping your presentation so you can see yourself. A general rule is to practice your presentation one time for each minute it is long.

TO SUM IT UP

Learning the mechanics of presenting can help a person to communicate a topic or subject with an audience. Thinking about and understanding posture, movement, voice, eye contact, and how to use notes will allow a speaker to clearly share his or her passion for the subject.

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Message

Audience

Plan



GETTING YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS WITH POSTERS

by Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz, Barbara Brody

Posters can be a very effective way to communicate a message. Design posters to stand alone and convey a message or be used as part of an oral presentation to aid in conveying a message. The most effective poster is designed for a specific purpose, allowing for all necessary information to be included. Unnecessary information on a poster distracts from the message. First, identify the purpose and audience of the poster, then carefully plan and construct.

WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

Once you've identified how the poster will be used, clearly defining the message is the next step. Keep your message simple by limiting it to 2 or 3 main points. If more points need to be conveyed, consider creating more than one poster. If posters supplement an oral presentation, they can be changed as the presenter talks about one point at a time. Posters may be used to reinforce a message by:

- Teaching a fact or illustrating how to do something
- Causing people to think
- Attracting attention
- Prompting action
- Promoting an event or activity

Decide why and how a poster will enhance the message or deliver the message on its own. Next, decide what it will say, how it will be illustrated, and how it will make the audience feel or act.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Just as posters are created for many purposes, they are created for many different audiences, too. The wording and style of a poster will vary greatly depending on the audience. Words or illustrations on a poster that is intended for a group of teens at a 4-H club may be less

formal than selections for adults at a fund raising event or stakeholder report. Consider if the audience will view the poster on display by itself, will have an opportunity to discuss the poster message in a group, or will the audience need an explanation of the poster?

PLAN IT OUT

When planning a poster, keep in mind that it should:

- Attract attention
- Hold the interest of the audience
- Convey a specific message

Start by answering the following questions:

- What is the topic?
- What is the purpose?
- How will it be used?
- Is more than one copy of the poster needed?
- Where will it be displayed?
- How will it be displayed? Does it need to stand on its own or will an easel be used?
- What size does it need to be?
- What is the theme or color scheme?

Once these questions are answered, sketch out on a piece of paper the design of the poster in color. Include all of the major elements—the title, subtitles, text, pictures or illustrations, charts or graphs, and logos. Evaluate your sketch, considering each element as well as overall appeal. Be sure the elements are not crowded together in a way that appears cluttered. Limit text to adequately convey the message and not be wordy. Use elements of design such as balance, repetition, and movement to create an attractive appearance.

Consider how the lettering, illustrations, and pictures will be created and what materials will be used. Hand drawing and lettering are fine. Keep letters consistent, neat, and readable from a distance. Also, consider using computer generated and printed titles and text to keep letters a consistent and readable size. Cutting out letters neatly for titles and printed text also can provide for neat, attractive posters. Use stiff enough poster material, such as poster board or foam core, so that your displays won't fall over.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

From the sketch, determine what colors to use as well as the size and type of font for the title and text.

Color: Stay with a color theme of no more than two or three colors. Too many different colors can be distracting. It is best to use a neutral (white, black, grey) or subtle color for the background. Brilliant or neon background colors may seem the way to get someone's attention, and while it may do that, it is difficult to read, and it takes away from the information on the poster. The color of the letters or illustrations should complement the background, not blend in. Use pastel or light colored letters on dark backgrounds and dark colors on light backgrounds.

The most attractive color combinations are contrasting or complimentary colors. Colors that are too similar in appearance may blend together when viewed from a distance. Be careful when combining colors that represent holidays such as green and red (Christmas), orange and black (Halloween) or red, white, and blue (4th of July). It can give the poster an unintended meaning. For help in selecting an effective color scheme, refer to a color wheel, or experiment by laying sheets of colored paper next to each other to see how they look together.

Font size: The appropriate size font will depend on the size of the poster and how it will be used. As a general starting point, for a standard poster board—22 x 28 inches—the largest letters should be no more than 3 inches high (a computer font size of about 345 depending on the font used) and the general text about ½ inch high (computer font size of about 48 depending on font). Note that different font styles may look larger or smaller at those sizes.

Once you determine how far away the poster will be from its audience, start with these guidelines:

| Viewing Distance | Print Size | Approx. Font Size |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 8 feet | ¼ inch tall | 26 |
| 16 feet | ½ inch tall | 48 |
| 32 feet | 1 inch tall | 115 |
| 64 feet | 2 inches tall | 225 |

The type of font chosen is also very important. As a general rule, the fancier the font, the more difficult it is to read. Script fonts may be attractive, but can be especially difficult to read. Which of the examples below are easiest to read?

Once a font type has been chosen, stay with it. Do not



use more than two different fonts, and stay consistent with the size of the font.

TO SUM IT UP

The amount of planning and time put into creating a poster directly affects its quality and ability to convey the intended message. A poster is a work of art, so what is attractive to one person may not be to another person. Be aware of your surroundings and make a specific effort to notice what draws your attention and why, then use those elements in your next poster.

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TIPS ON PRESENTING #7

Challenge

Quote

Costume



CREATIVE “HOOKS”

by Barbara Brody, Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz

An **introduction grabs** the attention of the audience with an effective first sentence. Think of it as a hook. A strong introduction convinces your audience that it is worth listening to your presentation.

Most of us know what Velcro is, right? A teacher once used the example of Velcro as how a creative, strong introduction catches the listener’s attention. “Velcro has two sides: one covered in thousands of tiny hooks, the other in tiny loops. Press the two together, and presto – they stick.” Think of your audience’s memories in the same way, with an unlimited number of loops just waiting to cling to an idea with lots of hooks. The more hooks an idea has, the better it sticks. Think about a favorite class, movie, or presentation where the information presented really “stuck” with you. What did that person do to help Velcro that information to your brain?

CREATING A HOOK

After deciding on a topic and beginning your research, begin to think about some creative ways to hook the listeners. If your mind goes blank, ask others to give you some ideas. Here are some ideas and examples to start creating hooks:

- **Make title of your presentation interesting**
No hook: Proper Housing for Pigs
Hook: My Pig Lives in a Luxury Hotel
- **Involve the audience. Ask a question**
No hook: I’m going to tell you about where my pig lives.
Hook: “Do you know what a pig really needs to have in its pen to thrive and be happy?” Ask several audience members who raise their hands to share what he or she has heard. Then share your main points that you are going to tell them about the housing needs of pigs.

- **Ask a challenging question**
How many of you think that chickens are really dumb? How many of you think chickens are smart? Recent Australian research proves chickens are smarter than some people think. (See freefromharm.org/category/farm-animal-intelligence/)
- **Tell a story about what you learned when you built your first pen.**
- **Make an intriguing statement using statistics and facts.**
- **Offer an interesting line of dialogue.**
- **Share your own thoughts.**
- **Hypothetically speaking: The “what if” intro.**
- **Describe it.**
- **Imagine this.**
- **Direct quotation**
Example: Did Winston Churchill get it right when he said: “Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.” I think so, and here are four reasons why.
- **Reveal a startling statistic**
Example: “Pigs pick up tricks faster than dogs. Pigs rank #4 in animal intelligence.
- **Wear a costume**, use props or creative displays.
- **Present foods** – samples & interactivity.

When developing your next presentation, stop and ask: How can I use hooks in my presentation – interactivity, stories, or stronger visuals?

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

It is important that you consider your audience when creating hooks. If you offend your audience with your introduction, it will definitely have a negative impact. Also see *Tips #2 Planning*.

LET'S PRACTICE

The following two activities help youths practice creating “hooks” for a presentation.

First: “It’s In the Bag!” Collect a variety of items and place them in a bag. Allow each participant a chance to secretly select an item. Do not let anyone else see it! Give each person 3 minutes to make a list of creative words to describe the item without using the real name. Let each person share his/her ideas and see if the group can guess.

Suggested items:

- Spoon
- Measuring cup
- Pencil
- Pencil sharpener
- Any food item
- Whistle
- Brush (any type)
- Lotion
- Tape
- Pliers
- Fish hooks
- Money
- 4-H clover

After sharing the descriptive words each person came up with, take turns coming up with creative titles for the item that could be an example of a “hook” in the title.

For example: Do You Measure Up?

This could be the title of a demonstration or illustrated talk about proper measuring techniques.

The second activity—Non-Verbal Hooks—is another lively way to practice hooks.

Get the group together and have each person practice getting a message across or making a point using non-verbal messages. This is a great technique to add to an impromptu or public speech. Here are a few non-verbal hooks to try:

- **Anger:** Use your hands, feet, facial expressions and arms to show a kid who is angry because he or she can’t have a toy! Now use the same body parts but show happiness.
- **Try being shy,** using your eyes.
- **Sadness:** Show facial expressions and body movement that would express sadness.

Let each person try each non-verbal gesture. It is fun to look in the mirror at home and practice. You can say a lot with non-verbal hooks.

TO SUM IT UP

Do you want to clench your audience’s attention? Incorporating hooks into your presentation is an effective way to make sure your presentation sticks in your audience’s brains.

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TIPS ON PRESENTING #8

Organization

Food Safety

Sanitation



FOOD DEMONSTRATIONS

by Joey Peutz, Nancy Shelstad, Barbara Brody

A **food demonstration** shows an audience how to prepare a food item or use a cooking or food preservation technique. A demonstration is different than an illustrated talk, because you have something to do with your hands; you actually show or demonstrate how to do something.

By using a food demonstration to teach others, food preparation can look easy and fun and may encourage others to give it a try.

PLANNING AND PREPARING A DEMONSTRATION

The first step is deciding on a food recipe or presentation technique. Even if the techniques and presentation are flawless, it will be difficult to connect with the listeners if the recipe or topic does not appeal to your audience. The topic you select should be:

- Right for your ability level (challenging, but not too difficult);
- Suitable for the facilities available and the time allowed;
- Reasonable in cost;
- Colorful, with an appealing texture and taste.

A presentation will have three parts: introduction—body—conclusion. See *Tips #1, Parts*.

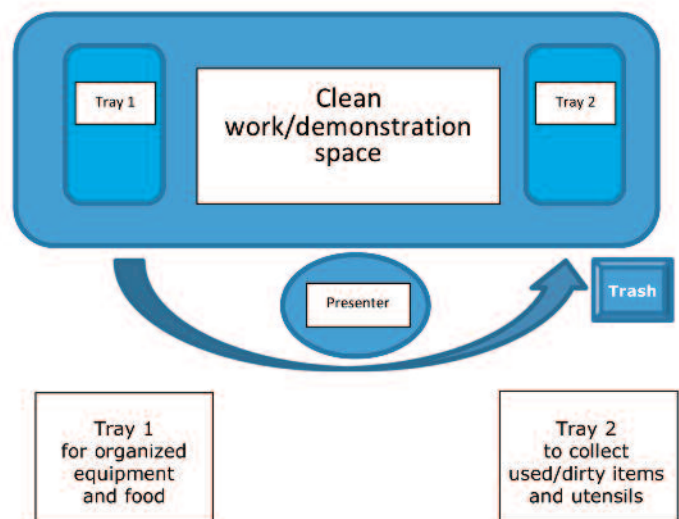
Use the introduction to catch your audience's attention. It should make your audience want to listen and see the importance of what you are doing. See *Tips #7 Hooks*.

The body is the “doing” part of the food preparation demonstration. It logically follows steps to prepare the recipe. Posters are a good visual to keep both you and the audience on track and to help prevent you from skipping a step. See *Tips #6, Posters*.

The conclusion reviews the key points and encourages the use of your recipe or technique. It also tells the source(s) of your information.

ORGANIZING A FOOD DEMONSTRATION

Being organized is very important when giving a food presentation. For example, use two trays (or cookie sheets or jelly roll pans) to organize your food, utensils, and ingredients. Place all ingredients and equipment on one tray—ordered as you will use them—then move them to the spare tray when you finish using each one.



Here are some additional tips to help plan your presentation and give the audience a clear view of your work:

- Wear clothes that are washable, comfortable, and neat—short sleeves, no jewelry, no nail polish, long hair tied back.
- Wear an apron.
- Make sure everything is clean before starting.

- Use a clear mixing bowl. This makes it easier for everyone to see.
- Use small clear containers for small amounts of food and large clear containers for large amounts of food. Label all ingredients to insure there won't be a mix-up.
- Keep two damp cloths handy—one to wipe the counter when spills happen and the other to wipe messy hands.

TIPS FOR GIVING A FOOD DEMONSTRATION

When giving a food demonstration, consider food safety and sanitation as well as the view from the audience. Make it as easy as possible for the audience to see what is taking place.

Presentation tips:

- Provide the recipe on a poster and/or as a handout for the audience.
- Speak in a voice the audience can hear. If a microphone is available use it.
- Use a pleasant voice and proper grammar.
- Smile and look at the audience between steps.

Food preparation tips

- Wash your hands before beginning to work with food.
- Know the proper temperatures for food safety.
- Use a liquid (glass) measuring cup to measure liquids and a dry (metal or plastic) measuring cup for dry ingredients.
- To level flour, sugar, etc., only use a flat spatula or knife. Liquid measures should be taken at eye level with the container resting on the table top.
- If using an electrical appliance such as a mixer, place a towel under the bowl or base of the mixer to deaden the noise.
- Crack eggs with a knife into a separate cup.
- Use a cutting board for chopping, slicing, etc.
- Talk to your audience while you work. In addition to describing what you are doing, you could also discuss nutritional value, cost, food safety, serving ideas, history of recipe, etc.

CLOSING A FOOD DEMONSTRATION

When finishing a food demonstration, give the conclusion, and then display the finished product. Make it look attractive and inviting to eat. You may need to have a finished product ready to display and share if you cannot complete the product in the given presentation time. Give the judges (and sometimes the audience members) a sample of your finished product to taste.

TO SUM IT UP

The old saying, practice makes perfect, holds true for giving a food demonstration. To be a good food demonstrator, practice, practice, practice. Here are some additional tips.

- Do not lick your fingers or utensils.
- Do not touch your hair, cough on the food, or contaminate the food in any way.
- If you must touch the food, explain why you are using your hands and why the product is still safe to eat. Consider wearing plastic food preparation gloves when handling the food.
- If you have forgotten an ingredient—don't make a big deal out of it. Acknowledge it and go on.
- If you have an accident, explain what happened and continue on. Anyone can have a problem with food preparation.

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Safety

Equipment

Environment



USING LIVE ANIMALS IN PRESENTATIONS

by Barbara Brody, Nancy Shelstad, Joey Peutz

Animal science projects are a major part of 4-H. 4-H or other animal owners are encouraged to share new knowledge gained while participating in such projects. Presentations including animals are an outstanding way for youth to learn life skills. However, before deciding to use live animals in a presentation, this tip sheet suggests factors to consider.

Some counties do not allow live animals in oral presentation contests. So, if you plan on presenting in a contest, make sure you know the rules in the county where you will present. Rules aside, there are other important steps in planning a live-animal presentation. Consider which animal is best for your presentation. In many cases, you will want to use your project animal. But consider the risks and weigh the benefits before making a decision. It is challenging to pay attention to your animal, keep eye contact with the audience, and give a presentation all at the same time. This type of presentation may require two people; therefore a team presentation may work well. With practice, patience, and preparation, you will be able to give a successful presentation.

SAFETY

The safety and well-being of the animal, audience, presenter, and judges are your responsibility. If the risk is too great, give a presentation without a live animal. This tip sheet will help you think through your best options.

SELECTING THE ANIMAL

An animal may behave perfectly at a 4-H project meeting. But if the facility where you will be presenting is loud and unfamiliar, your animal may get nervous or frightened and react. It is wise to select a calm and tame animal that has been exposed to a variety of unfamiliar settings. As a presenter, you may be nervous. Expect that your animal will be nervous, too.

To overcome nervousness, extra time, planning, and assistance are required. Practice with your animal in a similar situation with people present to ensure you and your animal are ready.

A healthy animal free of any diseases is important. Make sure you present an animal that is healthy and happy! Consider, too, what animal you choose. Is your project animal the best choice? Is the presentation experience creating any unforeseen risks that could impact the success of a goal you've set for your project? For example, you may be required to present indoors. Has your animal been inside a building before? What if your animal is injured during the presentation? Not only is this a situation you don't want your animal to endure, but it also may impact your project.

EQUIPMENT

Proper equipment to restrain the animal is important. Know what restraining devices are needed and that you have access to them. For example, do you have, or can you use a squeeze chute, fitting or blocking stand, crate, pen, show table, cages, or tie rail to keep the animal secure and safe while presenting?

Keep your work area where you present clean. Bring all the equipment and cleaning supplies you may need to keep the area clean during and after your presentation. For large animals, bring a rake and/or shovel, bucket, and disinfectant. For small animals, bring a carpet square, small rake or shovel, and/or baggies, and disinfectant. Estimate how long the animal will be away from its usual home, and remember to bring water, feed, and bedding, if necessary.

ENVIRONMENT

It is wise to visit the location of your presentation to ensure the facilities will work for your animal and your needs. If it is summer and temperatures are high, you

will not want to be outside in the direct sun with your animal. Plan ahead and be proactive to reduce risks and increase success.

YOU AS PRESENTER

Giving a presentation with an animal can be rewarding. Like preparing for showmanship, presenting with an animal requires tremendous practice and patience to be successful. When working with an animal, you must be prepared for any type of behavior. Staying calm in all situations is essential to a successful presentation using live animals.

HAVE AN ALTERNATE PLAN

Always have an alternate plan when preparing a presentation with an animal like you do when presenting with technology. If the electricity goes out or equipment fails, you bring handouts as a backup. With animals, too, you should always have a backup plan!

For example: What if the animal you plan to use becomes sick on the day of the presentation or becomes temperamental? A prepared presenter will have a photograph or illustration of the animal on poster board, or even a friend's animal as a backup. Worst-case scenario may be to postpone or cancel the presentation. Make sure you inform everyone involved if you need to cancel or postpone. Keep in mind that safety of the animal, presenter, audience, and judges are your top priorities.

TO SUM IT UP—A CHECKLIST

- Do contest rules allow live animals?
- Look at the facilities and location ahead of time to make sure they are suitable for your animal and presentation.
- Practice in the location or similar setting numerous times prior to the final presentation.
- Is your animal healthy and free of disease?
- Is your animal current on vaccinations?
- Do you have proper restraining equipment?
- Do you have equipment to clean up after your animal?
- Do you have access to water and water bucket?
- Do you have feed and bedding, if a long stay is necessary?
- Make a trial run with the animal at the location.
- Prepare an alternate plan.
- Make sure you have people to help you hold and care for your animal.

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