



5 questions I am regularly asked about presenting.....

1. What's the best way to start a presentation?

Some people think you only have 20 seconds or so to gain the attention of your audience. To do that you need to start with either :

- a bold statement - 'Ladies and Gentlemen did you know that'
- a striking memorable image - 'Ladies and Gentlemen what you see here is
- or an anecdote that will create immediate audience engagement

Don't start :

- with an excuse - 'apologies for my voice, my nervousness, my under prepared presentation..'
- by tapping on the microphone and asking 'can you hear me?'
- by saying "I'll keep it short" .. people who say that rarely do

2. How can I engage with the audience?

Audience engagement starts before you speak. Arrive early and do some 'meeting and greeting' introducing yourself off stage and informally as the audience arrives and thereby getting to know some of them. Once you start speaking get close to your audience (so ideally don't get stuck behind a lectern), and make lots of eye contact - and if you know people in the audience bring them into your presentation ...'as John over there will no doubt tell you...' To keep focused on the audience use a couple postcards for your prompt notes. Avoid clunky A4 notes and worse still turning round and reading from the screen, which neatly takes us to

3. How many slides should I use?

As few as possible since 'Death by PowerPoint' is a common ailment suffered by many audiences! Keep the number of slides to a minimum and more importantly keep the words on each slide to as few as possible. Use a font size twice the average age of your audience and use images instead of words where possible. If you include a video clip keep it to 20 seconds or less. If you want to

stand out why not ditch the slides all together? For some top tips on going slideless check out my article 'Ditch the Slides' - <http://bit.ly/1NM5JQY>

4. How do I ensure my presentation runs on time?

No one wants an overrunning speaker but it happens more often than not. I recently attended an event where each speaker had 5 minutes and the shortest one took just over 10! That's bad news for the audience and the organiser. Remember the last thing your audience hear is your summary and call to action so don't overrun and get hauled off before delivering those.

On the day you are likely to improvise so plan your presentation to last for 80% of your allocated time. So if you've got 10 minutes aim to finish in 8. Timed practices will help you achieve that. Do at least 3 and if you can't get to that 80% mark then you will have to be a ruthless editor and leave stuff out.

5. How can I stop feeling nervous?

Having a touch of nerves can be a good thing as it will give you a bit of an 'edge'. Knowing you have prepared well will help, as will arriving early at the venue and checking the equipment, the seating arrangements and how you will be introduced. (Top tip if someone is going to introduce you write your own intro and give it to them to use). If you can have a run through before the audience arrives of the first two or three minutes of your presentation. That will help settle your nerves.

Wear clothes to present in that make you feel good and confident about yourself and have a glass of water handy should you need to take a moment to recompose yourself during the presentation.

If you would like help with a particular presentation or you and / or your colleagues would like your own bespoke 'Deliver Awesome Presentations' session please call me, Trevor Lee, on 07785 390717 or email via trevor@trevorleemedia.co.uk