

Presentation Skills Checklist for Professionals

Are you ready to knock the socks off your audience with your presentation? Below is a checklist of polished presentation behaviors. If you can master all these elements, you will deliver a knockout presentation that should earn your audience's respect. Since presentations are often given in teams, the word "presenter" below can also refer to "presentation team members." As you rehearse your presentation, have a "mock audience," someone who will have the checklist in front of him or her and evaluate your presentation against this list.

- Presentation appears well-rehearsed; presenter appears to know content well and be comfortable with it. Presentation is smooth and professional.
- Presentation takes the appropriate length of time. Length of presentation matches audience attention span.
- Presenter may refer to notes, but does not read presentation, is not dependent on notes.
- Presenter makes frequent eye contact.
- Presenter makes eye contact with all parts of the room, not just one side.
- Presenter delivers presentation with energy and enthusiasm.
- Presenter moves about the front of the room while speaking, but does not pace.
- Presenter keeps hands out of pockets.
- Presenter projects voice well enough so everyone in the room can hear it.
- Presenter speaks at a normal pace — not too quickly or too slowly.
- Presenter varies voice pitch and does not speak in a monotone.
- Presenter is dressed nicely enough to seem authoritative and persuasive. Business attire/business-casual attire is always a nice touch.
- Presenter introduces self, especially if giving a team presentation.
- Presenters in a team presentation do not murmur among themselves during the presentation.
- Presenter appears calm and relaxed. If presenter is nervous, it doesn't show.
- Presenter keeps "pause words," such as "umms" and "uhhs" to a bare minimum.
- Presenter avoids inserting pause words such as "like" and "you know."
- Presenter refrains from distracting behavior, such as chewing gum, while speaking.
- Presenter refrains from rustling papers or fumbling with/dropping notecards while speaking.

- Presenter refrains from making inappropriate gestures involving hands and face, such as scratching or wiping nose.
- Presenter asks audience for questions.

Lectern Body Language

- Presenter refrains from hugging or leaning too heavily on lectern.
- Presenter refrains from pushing lectern away from self or tipping it forward.
- Presenter refrains from rocking back and forth at lectern.
- Presenter refrains from swaying from side to side at lectern.
- Presenter refrains from tapping or drumming on lectern.

Technology and Visual Aids

- Technical equipment is set up and presenter knows how to work it with ease.
- Presenter has backup plan if something goes wrong with equipment.
- Presenter uses microphone, if needed, effectively.
- Slides have just a few key words or phrases; they are not overly text-heavy.
- Type on slides is mostly in caps and lower-case instead of all caps.
- Fonts on slides are easy to read and don't contain an excessive number of fonts.
- Type on slides is large enough to be read in all parts of the room.
- Slides are simple in design without too many colors or hard-to-follow graphics.
- Slides are free from typos.
- Presenter refrains from turning back to audience while reading transparencies/PowerPoint slides.
- Presenter provides handouts as appropriate.

