

## VISUAL AIDS

- Consider passing out paper handouts. Handouts can go home with the audience and can provide additional detail. However, be aware that handouts can also be distracting
- For information about creating PowerPoint presentations, please refer to NEON's "Tips for Designing PowerPoint Presentations" brochure

## HOW TO MANAGE NERVOUSNESS

- Practice in front of a mirror or a friend
- Know the material well but don't have it memorized
- Try to relax your body. Use techniques before the presentation to manage your stress including positive visualizations
- Control your breathing. If you start to speak too quickly, take a breath and slow down
- Find one person in the room who is listening intently and approvingly and imagine you are only speaking to them
- Imagine you are talking to a small group of your friends. Try to speak naturally as if you were talk to them
- Prepare your notes with larger than normal font and headings that are highlighted. This will enable you to refer quickly back to your notes



## HOW TO HANDLE AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

- Stay calm, keep eye contact with the audience member, then shift focus to entire audience when answering the question
- Restate the question for the audience
- Respond in a way that supports your presentation's main points
- Be aware of emotionally charged or provocative questions. Restate the question in a more neutral manner that aligns with your thesis
- Keep track of the time. Tell the audience when there is time for only one more question
- Do not ask "Did I answer your question?"
- Do not say "That is a good question." This implies the other questions are not
- If you do not know the answer, state that you do not know. Explain why you do not know the answer, make a note and promise to find the answer. Then move to the next question

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*Standing Ovation: How to Be an Effective Speaker and Communicator*, James C. Humes, 1988

*The Sir Winston Method: The Five Secrets of Speaking the Language of Leadership*, James C. Humes, 1991

*ASAP: The Fastest Way to Create a Memorable Speech*, William Mooney and Donald Noone, 1993

*You've Got to Be Believed to Be Heard*, Bert Decker, 1992

## REFERENCES

Northeast Ohio Medical University, Department of Family and Community Medicine, Office of Faculty Development. (2010). Medical Presentation Skills Workshop Materials: Participant Guide.



## TIPS FOR DEVELOPING AND GIVING A MEDICAL PRESENTATION

Department of Family and Community Medicine, NEOMED  
Office of Research  
Northeastern Ohio Network® (NEON®)  
Susan Labuda Schrop, Ph.D., Rebecca Fischbein, Ph.D.



## VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Use conversational language that varies in length and structure
- Define technical terms even if you think the entire audience should know the term. There may be audience members who are not familiar with your area of research
- Speak slowly and carefully
- Use pauses appropriately to give the audience a chance to process the information
- Speak clearly and alter your tone for emphasis
- Allow your voice to demonstrate your enthusiasm for your topic
- Avoid fillers such as “uh” or “um.” A pause is an acceptable alternative
- Take several deep breaths prior to your presentation to help keep your focus and speak more clearly

## WHY ARE PRESENTATION SKILLS IMPORTANT?

- Provides the best medical care by keeping colleagues knowledgeable in current research and technology
- Publicizes your findings and research
- Improves opportunities for further funding and grants
- Obtains patient referrals

## WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE SPEAKERS?

- An organized presentation with a clear introduction and conclusion
- A limited number of clearly defined objectives
- Effective use of visual aids
- Controlled use of non-verbal communication including gestures, facial expression and posture
- Effective use of verbal communication including tone, speed, volume and absence of fillers (e.g., Saying “like,” “uh,” “um”)
- Ability to keep the audience engaged by using relatable examples and stories to emphasize major points
- Interest and enthusiasm in the subject
- Management of audience questions and comments to support the main points of the presentation

## PLANNING YOUR TALK

### Introduction comprises three parts:

- 1) Opening remarks to capture audience attention
- 2) Thesis during which purpose of the talk is stated
- 3) Overview provides the outline of the talk

### Body:

Depending on your unique topic, the main section of your talk can be organized in a number of ways:

- Problem/solution
- Advantages/disadvantages
- Chronological comparisons/evolution
- Definition/examples
- Good news/bad news

### Conclusion is comprises three parts:

- 1) Review that summarizes the main points
- 2) Plan of action that calls for specific actions to be taken on part of the audience
- 3) Closing remarks to conclude your presentation

## NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Choose clothing that conveys professionalism and confidence
- Approach the podium with confidence and a smile
- Smile at the audience and thank them for attending
- Do not lose your composure even if something unexpected happens
- Stand straight with a comfortable stance and lean forward with your arms uncrossed
- Do not walk continuously during the presentation, move with purpose — from one part of the room to the other during topic switches or towards the audience to recapture attention
- Avoid repeated motions such as shuffling, hand tapping, fidgeting
- Gesture naturally and keep arms at your sides when not gesturing
- Keep your hands out of your pockets, this implies lack of confidence or shyness
- Make eye contact with as many audience members as possible
- Match your expression to what you are saying