

# Presentation Skills that Work:

*Smart Strategies to Boost Your Career & Your Confidence*

A 90-Minute Audio Conference for  
Administrative Assistants,  
Secretaries, and Office Support Staff

Featuring **Shari Peace**

PRESENTED BY

**The Office  
Professional**

**If you could spend a few minutes talking about something you enjoy or would like to share, what would it be?**

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# Nervous? You're not alone! . . . .

**“If that’s the case, you’d be better off in the coffin than delivering the eulogy.”**

*— Comedian Jerry Seinfeld, joking about the fact that the fear of public speaking is worse than the fear of death for many people*

# Agenda:

- I. Introduction
- II. The single most important tip to being a good presenter
- III. Exercise: What would you feel comfortable talking about?
- IV. 6 tips to help before you present
- V. 6 tips to help while you present
- VI. 3 tips to help after you present
- VII. Conclusion & summary

# Poll question # 1:

**For most people in an audience, what is the biggest factor in how much they enjoy a presenter?**

- 1) Good stories
- 2) A warm personality
- 3) A very professional appearance
- 4) The presenter's interest in the audience
- 5) Perfect delivery with no mistakes

# The \_\_\_\_\_% rule of presenting:

Typically, \_\_\_\_\_ after listening to a presentation  
a person remembers only \_\_\_\_\_% of what the presenter said!

# The single most important tip to being a good presenter:

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Generally, the more you focus on \_\_\_\_\_,  
the more nervous you will be and the more difficult it will  
be to present.

*They don't care how much you know  
until they know how much you care!*

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 5 tips for easier preparation

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare

2. Extra-prepare the 1st few sentences

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare
2. Extra-prepare the 1st few sentences
3. Keep a story/illustration file
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare
2. Extra-prepare the 1st few sentences
3. Keep a story/illustration file
4. “Write” your speech into a tape recorder
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# Great opportunities to practice presenting:

- Speak at your church/temple (do readings, usher, etc.)
- Speak at professional associations (introduce people, make motions, etc.)
- Do mini trainings for your co-workers after you attend a seminar
- Do announcements at a staff meeting
- Speak at Boy/Girl Scout events
- Use your volunteer jobs to speak more
- Visit a Toastmaster meeting
- Make toasts at weddings
- Speak up when someone asks for a volunteer
- Ask/answer a question when you're in the audience
- Deliver an internal brown-bag luncheon

# 6 tips to help you before you present

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare
2. Extra-prepare the 1st few sentences
3. Keep a story/illustration file
4. “Write” your speech into a tape recorder
5. Take advantage of small opportunities to get better
6. \_\_\_\_\_

(see questions on page 33)

## Poll question # 2:

**Right before you present, how do feel?**

- 1) Very comfortable
- 2) Somewhat comfortable
- 3) Fairly nervous
- 4) Very nervous

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. Remember: The audience is rooting for you!

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. Remember: The audience is rooting for you!

2. Be yourself (just be your BEST self!)

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. Remember: The audience is rooting for you!

2. Be yourself (just be your BEST self!)

3. Don't "give a speech"—have a *conversation*

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. Remember: The audience is rooting for you!

2. Be yourself (just be your BEST self!)

3. Don't "give a speech"—have a *conversation*

4. Give yourself permission to feel nervous

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 6 tips to help you while you present

1. Remember: The audience is rooting for you!
2. Be yourself (just be your BEST self!)
3. Don't "give a speech"—have a *conversation*
4. Give yourself permission to feel nervous
5. Involve the audience as quickly as possible
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# 3 tips to help you after you present

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Some things to write down in your post-evaluation

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Remember:

**In your post evaluation, give yourself credit for the “little win” (the small improvements you’ve made since the last time). It’s great for your confidence and for continuous progress!**

# Some factors outside of your control:

- comfort of chairs
- lighting
- sound quality/noise
- quality of presenter before you
- quality of your introduction
- audience's fatigue
- audience's alcohol consumption
- room setup
- the audience's day!

# 3 tips to help you after you present


1. Do a quick evaluation

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

# 3 tips to help you after you present

1. Do a quick evaluation
2. Remember: Progress, not perfection
3. \_\_\_\_\_



**“You can speak well if your tongue can deliver  
the message of your heart.”**

— John Ford

# What would you feel comfortable presenting?

**Below is a list of some topics often of interest to administrative professionals. Please review it and circle the topics for which you believe you could give other people good ideas. Please DON'T worry about being an expert—just mark the ones that you have some knowledge about!:**

Purchasing  
Reducing costs  
Working effectively with vendors

Working with multiple bosses  
Mini training on different software programs  
Working with difficult people

Being an effective “gatekeeper”  
How to be an effective receptionist  
Sharpening your decision-making skills

Ways you can increase your contributions to  
your department's success  
How to multi-task  
Good productivity tips

Helping your boss work effectively with a Board  
Ways you can contribute to your boss's success  
How your department fits into the success of your organization

Add your own here!

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Now look back at the list above—it's a good starting point for topics you can speak on!

# Great questions to build your self-confidence

**One of the most overlooked ways to present more effectively is to tap into your self-confidence right before you “go on.” Answer these questions (on paper or in your head) before presenting to help give you the quiet confidence you want & deserve!**

1. What is something in my life I’ve accomplished that I’m proud of?

2. What is something about my job that I do well?

3. What is one thing I like about my physical appearance?

*(note: for many people, the answer is their smile – and it’s great to flash your smile while you speak!)*

4. What is one of my personality traits that I’m proud of?

5. What have been 2 of the happiest days of my life so far?

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You’ll speak with more ease and more confidence when you take care of yourself: Get proper rest, eat a good diet, and exercise! To make exercise a regular part of your life, make a list of healthy activities you like to do or would like to try. For example:

- \* rollerblading
- \* walking
- \* running
- \* biking
- \* swimming
- \* water aerobics
- \* weight training
- \* jumping rope
- \* kayaking
- \* hiking
- \* treadmill walking/running
- \* cross-country skiing
- \* playing tennis
- \* gardening

The list will give you new & different ways to *enjoy* adding more exercise to your life

***And on a lighter note!***

**The Presenter’s Prayer:**

Please fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff ...  
And please nudge me when I’ve said enough.

# 18 smart ideas to help you present more effectively

**1. Be yourself!** Every person is inherently charming and interesting, especially when we feel confident. The only trouble is that we don't always let it come out! Let your natural personality come out, and you'll be terrific. Enjoy what you're speaking on, and the audience will love you. Often, the more you try to sound impressive, the more you come off sounding insincere.

**2. Give yourself permission to feel nervous.** Don't concentrate on your nerves. Even the most seasoned, experienced presenter can get nervous. There's no shame in feeling a little scared. But here's a common mistake: Many people, when they begin speaking, start to **focus** on how nervous they feel. They worry about their hands shaking, and they notice their voicing quivering—which, not surprisingly, makes them feel more nervous! Instead, realize that it's OK to feel a little nervous for the first minute or two, and concentrate instead on serving the audience.

**3. Forget about yourself.** Stop worrying about your hair being perfect or your voice sounding odd and start concentrating on serving the audience. Focus on *delivering value to the audience*. The truth is, most people overestimate how much the audience focuses on the speaker's abilities! All most audiences want is good information that's not boring.

**4. Learn from the greats.** Get copies of speeches you really enjoy, and read them to "prime the pump" as you prepare for the speech. Invest a couple of minutes reading Lincoln's Gettysburg address, and you'll find it tough *not* to be charged up to deliver the best speech of your life.

**5. Nail your first few sentences.** There's no question that the first minute or so is the most nerve-racking. Practice your first sentences over and over until you have them nailed! The more comfortable you feel with the first words out of your mouth, the sooner you'll stop feeling nervous.

**6. Act like you're comfortable.** "Fake it 'til you make it," as the old saying goes. Pretend that you're an accomplished, confident presenter. Think about what a seasoned speaker thinks about when they're ready to speak: "This is going to be great." "I can't wait to get started." "I know my information can help the audience." "All I have to do is my best."

**7. Practice, practice, practice.** Abraham Lincoln, a true master of self-improvement, was committed to becoming an outstanding speaker. He carried slips of paper in his hat, and while walking to work, he pulled out slips and read them aloud to practice. Practicing will skyrocket your confidence.

*continued...*

## 18 smart ideas to help you present more effectively

**8. Work on speaking distinctly.** To help you sharpen your pronunciation, read aloud from Shakespeare, from the King James Version of the Bible, or from any other work that has beautiful, lyrical writing. Or just pick your favorite book and read a few passages out loud.

**9. Be grateful for your nerves.** A little bit of nervousness is a sign that your adrenaline is up and running and your body knows you're about to do something interesting. That adrenaline can help you stay excited and energetic. The only times I haven't felt at least a little nervous were the times I ended up flopping. So remember, your nerves are your friends. Just don't let them run the show.

**10. You're the expert!** Being asked to present on a topic is a pretty strong sign that you know more about it than the audience does. It's possible you may get stumped now and then, but overall, you have the advantage of knowing more about your subject than anyone else in the room.

**11. Don't "give a speech"—have a conversation.** Thinking about "delivering a speech" sounds nerve-racking. Think about the difference between saying "I have to give a speech," as opposed to saying, "I'm talking to people." You may not give speeches all the time, but you do "talk to people" all the time! If you do actually have a conversation, you'll sound more natural and more interesting.

**12. Read your ideas into a tape recorder.** Having trouble sitting down to write your speech? Try reading your initial thoughts into a tape recorder. Don't edit as you speak or worry about how you're phrasing things. Just talk about your ideas. When you're done, go back and transcribe your thoughts. You'll sound much more natural than if you sit down and try to "write" a speech.

**13. Do a quick evaluation.** After your talk, review how you think it went and why. Remember that not all the factors influencing your talk are within your control. Some people think they're not good speakers, when the truth is they were speaking in a room with terrible sound qualities, or the audience is angry over something else, etc

**14. Write 1 objective for the talk.** What do you want or need it to accomplish? Do you need to persuade them to vote your way? Are you simply delivering information? Cutting it down to the basics will help you feel less overwhelmed. If you achieve that objective, the speech is a success, no matter how many other things you may wish to have changed in retrospect.

*continued...*

## 18 smart ideas to help you present more effectively

**15. Avoid topics that don't move you.** Many people do not enjoy speaking because they don't enjoy the topic they're asked to address. In some situations (at work, for instance) you may not be able to avoid speaking on a particular issue. In other circumstances, though, if you really, really don't want to talk about a topic, you should really, really try not to do. If it's not something you can feel enthusiastic in discussing, it's going to be a tough sell to get the audience energized about it.

**16. Have fun with it.** Speaking in front of any group, on any topic, is a great honor—it means that what you have to say is so important that people want to hear it.

**17. Take care of yourself.** It's hard to be energetic and enthusiastic when you don't feel well. Get enough rest, eat well, drink water and exercise to give yourself the fuel you need to speak well.

**18. Remember:** You're not the first. Whatever “dumb” or embarrassing mistake you make or fear is lurking on the horizon, someone else has already made it and lived through it, including:

- 1) realizing after the talk that their pants were unzipped
- 2) leaving a drycleaning tag on their suit jacket cuffs
- 3) falling down while speaking
- 4) forgetting what they were about to say
- 5) having their skirt get caught in the back of their panty hose, exposing their back side a little more than they would wish
- 6) infinite problems with slides, lighting, etc.

**The great news:** Mistakes often endear you to the audience, because it's a good reminder that we're all human. Also, having something go wrong makes you stronger at staying calm! Figure out how to fix it the next time, have a good laugh about it, and move on (and remember to write it down, because “screw-ups” often make great anecdotes for your next presentation).

# Some great thoughts on communicating!

“Once you get people laughing they’re listening and you can tell them almost anything.”

— *Herbert Gardner*

“Grasp the subject; the words will follow.”

— *Cato the Elder*

The Rev. Billy Graham tells of a time early in his career when he arrived in a small town to preach a sermon. Wanting to mail a letter, he asked the young boy where the post office was. When the boy had told him, Dr. Graham thanked him and said, “If you’ll come to the Baptist church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven.”

“I don’t think I’ll be there,” the boy said. “You don’t even know your way to the post office.”

“The older I grow the more I listen to people who don’t talk much.”

— *Germain C. Glien*

“When you’re arguing with a fool, make sure he isn’t doing the same thing.”

— *Author Unknown*

