

Process for Making Effective Oral Presentations

PRACTICE OBJECTIVE

This practice covers:

- The basics of verbal communication: It's all in the delivery!
- Conquering those crazy quirks.
- Delivery formats.
- Using visual aids to your advantage.

Sooner or later, you will have to speak in public. It comes with being in IT, there's little you can do to avoid it, and the requirements will increase as you climb the ranks. If the thought makes you nervous, you're not alone! Research shows that most people place fear of public speaking second only to fear of dying. If you are inexperienced, the fundamentals and tips for polished public speaking in this practice will help you solve these problems. If you are an accomplished speaker, use this as a review.

One goal should be to improve your self-concept as a speaker. Think positively, and focus on improvement, not perfection. Like writing and listening, speaking is a skill; once you grasp the basics, the rest is practice, polish and style. You may be embarrassed by your initial mistakes, but you'll survive. Few of us will become guest speakers, but all of us can become more effective if we practice the basics. Learn all you can from your contemporaries; some of them are accomplished speakers. If you are already a speaker extraordinaire, share your views, tips and personal hang-ups about speaking with others. Everyone improves when they receive timely and objective feedback.

PRACTICE TUTORIAL

Before you consider the fundamentals unique to speaking, you may want to review the Seven Actions to Effective Communication (see Figure 1).

Remember, the fundamentals in Figure 1 are just as necessary for good speaking as they are for good writing. Although there are subtle differences in the drafting and editing sections, the general concepts apply. Indeed, the basic principles are a good place to start when preparing an oral presentation, but we all know there's more to it than that.

Figure 1: Seven Actions for Effective Communication

1. Analyze Purpose and Audience
2. Research Your Topic
3. Support Your Ideas
4. Organize and Outline
5. Draft
6. Edit
7. Fight for Feedback and Get Approval

PRACTICE WORKBENCH

Oral presentations are normally number one or number two on the lists of what people dread to do. The reason for this personal concern is that many individuals who are called upon to make oral presentations have not had classroom experience in making oral presentations, nor do they have a process for making oral presentations. The workbench for making effective oral presentations is illustrated in Figure 2.

Developing the material for an oral presentation can generally follow Actions 1 through 6 of the 7 Actions for Becoming an Effective Communicator which are all included in QAI's Process Warehouse. Following these actions will clearly define a communication objective and develop the material for the oral presentation.

Verbal communication is divided into two steps. The first step is the words you speak and the second step is your nonverbal communication. Many believe that the nonverbal communication is equal to or more important than the verbal communication. The third step provides different options on the type of delivery format you choose. The last step involves preparing visual aids.

This process was developed by the United States Air Force. Since many serious consequences can happen due to poor oral communication, it was important to the Air Force to develop a process for making oral communications.

INPUT PRODUCTS

Two important input products drive the process for making effective oral communication. The first input is the presentation objectives. The objective(s) they hope to accomplish by making the oral presentation must be clear to the individual making the oral

presentation. The introduction, body of the presentation, visual aids, and conclusion should all support accomplishing the presentation objective.

Step 1: It's All in the Delivery—Verbal Communication

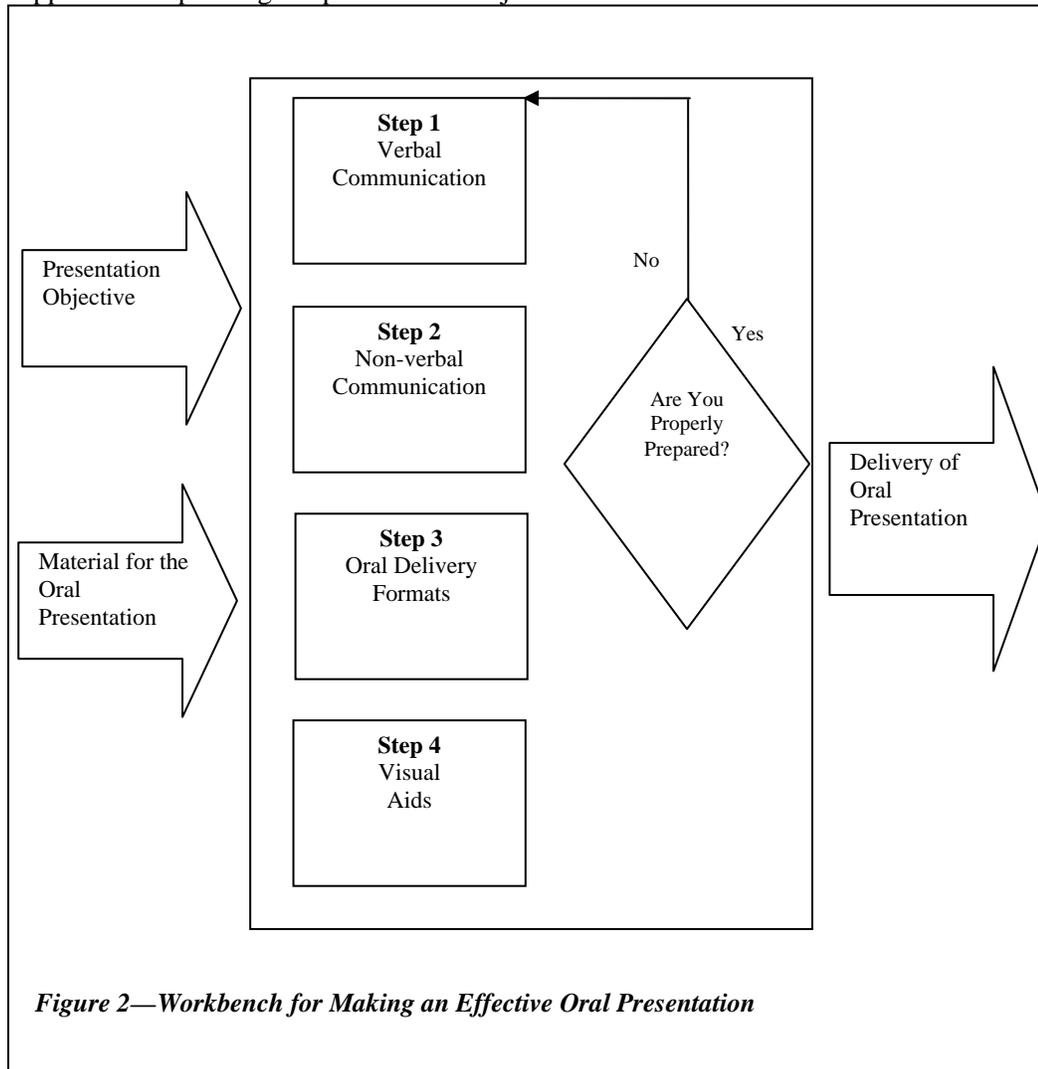


Figure 2—Workbench for Making an Effective Oral Presentation

How effectively do you use your voice to drive home your ideas or information? You have control over rate, volume, pitch, pause and other aspects of your speech. So, use your voice to create interest in your presentation. Read on to find out what we mean.

Rate

There is no correct rate of speed for every speech. However, you might consider this: People can listen 4 to 5 times faster than the normal spoken rate of 120 words a minute. So, if you speak too slowly, you will lose the interest of an audience who is processing information much faster than you are delivering it. On the other hand, you don't want to use the same rate of speech all the time. Use the rate of speech that

you need to add emphasis to what you want during your presentation. Consider speaking at a faster rate to indicate excitement or sudden action or a slower rate to hint at calm or a more serious tone.

Volume

Volume is another verbal technique that can give emphasis to your speech. If possible, check out the room to know how loudly you must talk, remembering you will need to talk louder with a crowd since the sound is absorbed. Ask someone in the back of the room if you can be heard. Remember your voice will carry further when the room is empty versus full. If the audience must strain to hear you, they will eventually tune you out from utter exhaustion. A portable

The other input to this process is the material that will be used in the oral presentation. It is recommended that you follow the first six steps of the process involving 7 Actions for Becoming an Effective Communicator. Note that these actions not only help you develop the material, but through feedback and consultation can develop the appropriate presentation and obtain the needed support for accomplishing the objectives in your oral presentation.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The implementation of this practice involves the following four steps:

microphone may be a good idea if you know you tend to speak quietly, and one is often required in large auditoriums. Speak louder or softer to emphasize a point—a softer level or lower volume is often the more effective way to achieve emphasis.

Pitch

To use pitch effectively, you need to practice the talents of a singer. Pitch is really the use of notes (higher or lower) in voice range. Start by speaking in a voice range that is comfortable for you and then move up or down your scale for emphasis, using pitch changes in vowels, words or entire sentences. You can use a downward (high to low) inflection in a sentence for an air of certainty and an upward (low to high) inflection for an air of uncertainty. Variety in speech pitch helps to avoid monotone and capture the listener's attention.

Pause

The pause gives you time to catch your breath and the audience time to collect your ideas. Never hurry a speech; pause occasionally so your audience can digest your comments. The important question is this: Where? Pauses serve the same function as punctuation in writing. Short pauses usually divide points within a sentence, and longer pauses note the ends of sentences. You can also use longer pauses for breaks from one main point to another, from the body to the conclusion of your speech, or to set off an important point worthy of short reflection. A pause may seem long to you, but it's usually much shorter than you think, and your audience will appreciate it. However, don't get pause-happy and make your speech sound choppy.

Articulation and Punctuation

Your articulation and pronunciation reflect your mastery of the spoken English language. Articulation is the art of expressing words distinctly. Pronunciation is the ability to say words correctly. Of course, you may be able to articulate your thoughts and still mispronounce words while doing so. Unfortunately (and unfairly), many people consider word pronunciation or mispronunciation a direct reflection on your intelligence. Listen to yourself and make your words distinct, understandable and appropriate to your audience. If you are not sure of your pronunciation, consult a current dictionary—before you get up and do

your thing. You can even look up dictionaries on-line with audio links that will pronounce the word for you.

Length

Have you even take a speech course and wondered why the instructors were so big on the timing of your briefings? It is because the length of your presentation is crucial. In the IT environment, you must be able to relay your thoughts and ideas succinctly. A key rule in verbal communication is to keep it short and sweet. There are few people who will tolerate a briefer or speaker who wastes the audience's time. Have your stuff together before you speak. Know what you want to say and then say it with your purpose and the audience in mind.

Ok, we've just hit the highlights of controlling and managing your voice to optimize the delivery of your briefing. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to actually practice these tips so that you will have the "radio voice" that public speakers dream about. But wait, you're not done yet! There's more to the fine art of public speaking than you managing your voice. You need to manage your gestures, movement, and that pesky thing called nervousness.

Step 2: It's All in the Delivery—Nonverbal Communication

Numerous studies have shown that people remember less than 10 percent of what is verbally presented, but first impressions are largely based on nonverbal communication such as how you dress, carry yourself, and use gestures and other body language. Your biggest nonverbal challenge to conquer will be your nervousness, so you must be prepared to overcome (or at least diminish) stage fright. Stage fright is often nothing more than misdirected energy, meaning the excitement and/or possible anxiety you feel is displayed in some form or fashion for all to see. You probably have witnessed a great presentation "gone bad" solely due to nerves that have gone unchecked. Here's a checklist on how to overcome stage fright and put your best foot forward, or at least fool your audience. Remember, it may be impossible to be entirely free from nervousness—that's OK! But you don't want the nervousness to disable you from sending your message.

Figure 3 is a checklist for you to use to help you relax during an oral presentation. The checklist is appropriately called “Overcoming the Sweaty Palms Syndrome.”

Figure 3: Overcoming the “Sweaty Palms Syndrome”	
✓	Analyze your audience: listening traits, needs, desires, behaviors, and educational background. This will reduce your fear of the unknown and the resulting nervousness.
✓	Check out the place where you’re speaking. Is it large enough to accommodate the number of people? Does it have a blackboard, microphone, arrangement for visual aids, tables, chairs, ventilation, lighting, pencils, paper, telephones, extra project bulbs, etc? Does the equipment operate properly?
✓	Practice, practice, practice. Using a tape recorder, a video camera, a full-length mirror or even your peers can be really helpful. Try doing a “dry run” at the office or where you’ll be.
✓	Memorize your introduction and transition into the main point. It’ll help you through the first and most difficult minute.
✓	Smile and be positive! Your audience wants you to succeed! Keep your nervousness to yourself. Chances are your audience won’t even notice if you don’t mention it.
✓	Take a short walk right before you “go on stage” to help release some energy.
✓	Deliver your message. Focus your attention where it belongs, not on yourself.
✓	Make eye contact and look for feedback. Play your audience. Let them know you are looking at and talking to them. It holds their attention. If you look only at your notes, you may lose your listeners—and you can’t wake them up if you don’t know they’re asleep!
✓	Use simple, everyday language appropriate for your audience. Use contractions and keep sentences short. Use personal pronouns, if appropriate. Repeat key words and follow with specific examples if you get into abstract or complicated reasoning.
✓	Involve members of your audience by soliciting their answers and information.
✓	Enhance your presentation through creative use of newspaper clippings, cartoons, music, appropriate quotes and relevant, self-deprecating experiences to get a point across.
✓	Use your excess energy naturally: facial expressions, pertinent gestures, walking, or pressing fingertips or thumbs against lectern or chair. Use your facial expressions, hands and arms to reinforce your speech and your points of emphasis—just don’t overdo them. Leaning on the lectern, rocking back and forth or side to side or slouching on one leg and then the other is never a positive way to use your excess energy. Read

	on for more tips on those dreaded nervous habits.
✓	Looking good builds confidence and builds your credibility with the audience. Do you need a haircut? Is your suit pressed? Your buttons buttoned? Are you standing erect and feeling alert, but relaxed? Remember, in your audience’s mind, a frumpy ensemble and sloppy bearing equals an equally frumpy presenter. Fair or not, that’s the way your audience’s mind works. We’re all critics!

Common Nonverbal Quirks

Here are some final thoughts on nervousness. Most of us have quirks when we are put in the limelight. The key is to be cognizant of yours and don’t overdo them. Keep yourself in check, and as always, seek feedback. In time you will have it down to an art. We’ve named a few of the more common quirks below. Do any hit home for you?

- *The life raft.* This is the speaker who clings for dear life to podium or lectern. Their ultimate fear is leaving the comfort and security of that piece of wood in front of them, so they hold onto it with both hands in desperation. Waling about the room is incomprehensible to these speakers.
- *The fig leaf.* This is the speaker who is recovering from the above habit, is now venturing out in front of the audience, but is still not quite sure what to do with those pesky things called hands. He or she wants to run back to the safety of their life raft, but instead may lay one hand over another at the end of stiff arms, with hands resting...where a fig leaf would be. Do you get the picture?
- *The hand washer.* This is a speaker who stores all nervousness in their hands. While they speak, they wash and they wash. You may think with all that friction they would suffer thermal injury to their palms, but they’re indestructible. Too bad you missed their message while focused on the quirk.
- *The caged tiger.* Listening to these speakers is like watching a tennis match. These speakers continually pace from one side of the room or stage to the other, never even stopping to check their pulse. They expend so much energy that their briefing qualifies as aerobic exercise. Their calorie expenditure goes up

even higher when they combine this technique with hand washing.

- *The rocker.* Rockers are caged tigers on the road to recovery. They have conquered the worst phases of stage fright and no longer fear visible perspiration or dry mouth, but they have some residual fear of standing still and simply talking. Speaking experience has tamed this beast, but not to the point of total comfort with the art of public speaking. There are two style variations: 1) the fore-and-aft rocker and 2) the side-to-side rocker.
- *Pocket maniacs.* It isn't practical, but these folks should consider sewing their pants pockets shut because whenever they speak they start counting the change from their last trip to the soda machine. Many of these speakers are trying desperately not to be hand washers or fig leafers and end up jamming their hands in their pockets. They are often oblivious to the new distraction and annoyance they inflict on their audience. These speakers may find that holding something—anything—will help them refrain from this habit and prevent them from “hand washing.”
- *Pen clickers.* These speakers are related to the pocket maniacs. They have to be doing something with their hands. All pens, pencils and other similar objects should be removed from their possession before they get up to give a presentation because the temptation is just too great. They are compelled to manipulate and click any pen in their possession, which does not make for high marks on audience critiques.

By themselves, these quirks won't cause you to fail as a speaker, but they can create problems if they are severe—the audience begins to focus on the quirk instead of your message. Again, most of us have done some of these things at one time or another. Try to be aware of your own mannerisms, keep them in check and make sure they are not becoming habit and detracting from your message.

Step 3: Delivery Formats—Impromptu, Prepared and Manuscript

Your approach to delivery of the spoken message may be affected by several factors, including the time you

have to prepare and the nature of the message. Three common delivery formats are listed below.

1. Impromptu speaking is when we respond during a meeting or “take the floor” at a conference. It's what we do when we speak publicly without warning or on a few moments' notice. To do it well requires a great amount of self-confidence, mastery of the subject and the ability to “think on your feet.” A superb impromptu speaker has achieved the highest level in verbal communications.
2. Prepared (often called a briefing) refers to those times when we have ample opportunity to prepare. Most IT briefings are done in this format. This doesn't mean we write a script and memorize it, but it does require a thorough outline with careful planning and practicing. The specific words and phrases used at the time of delivery, however, are basically spontaneous and sound very natural. There are three types of briefings (see Figure 4).
3. A manuscript briefing is used in situations that require every word to be absolutely perfect. To do this, you prepare a manuscript, a word-for-word script of what you are going to say. Such a script ensures you get it right every time. Manuscripts are often used at higher management levels for complex or controversial issues. Manuscript-style briefings provide several advantages:
 - Ensures key information won't be omitted.
 - Avoids repercussions caused by a briefer's inadvertent ad-libbing.
 - Imparts exact definitions and precise phrasing, if these are important.
 - Allows anyone to present a “canned briefing” without extensive preparation and rehearsal time—including less knowledgeable personnel.

CAUTION! Manuscripts make a briefing a piece of cake, right? Wrong. Unless you are a talented speaker, reading words aloud sounds dull. People frequently tend to lack spontaneity, lack eye contact and stand behind the lectern with their script. You may also lose credibility. The audience may think you're hiding behind the script and reading something you really don't know anything about. Finally, know your

audience. They may feel insulted if you read something they could have just as well read themselves. If you can deliver a manuscript briefing without error and still maintain a natural and direct contact with your audience, you have a masterful command of “speak-reading.”

Figure 4—Three Types of Prepared Briefings
<i>Informative Briefing:</i> Purpose is to keep the listener abreast of the current situation and supply specific information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to inform the listener and gain his/her understanding. • Deals with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High priority facts and information requiring immediate action ○ Complex information on complicated plans, systems, statistics, or visuals ○ Complex information on complicated plans, systems, statistics, or visuals ○ Controversial information requiring explanation • May have conclusions or recommendations
<i>Decision Briefing:</i> Purpose is to produce an answer to a question or obtain a decision on a specific problem.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefer must be prepared to present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assumptions ○ Facts ○ Alternative solutions ○ Reasons/rationale for recommended solutions ○ Coordination involved ○ Visual information • Briefer states he/she is looking for a decision; asks for decision if one is not forthcoming at conclusion. • Advises appropriate staff elements of manager’s decision after the briefing
<i>Staff Briefing:</i> Main purpose is to secure a coordinated effort and:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rapidly disseminate information orally ○ Aid group decision-making ○ Secure a united effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most widely used and most flexible briefing—used at all levels in an organization • Visuals will make complex issues clearer • Keeps managers and staff abreast of situations • May involve an exchange of information, issuance of directives, or presentation of guidance
<i>Mission Briefing:</i> Purpose is to impart information that is used to elaborate on an order, give specific instructions, or instill an appreciation for the project.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefer must exercise care to avoid confusion or conflict with orders • Use maps and graphic representations of the situation • Mission briefing format varies from organization to organization

Here are some key points in preparing and presenting a manuscript briefing.

- Prepare the briefing:

- Use a large, easy-to-read font (at least size 12) in all capital letters.
- Write as if you were speaking.
- Fill only the top two-thirds of page so that your eyes won’t drop and you won’t lose eye contact with your audience.
- Double or triple space; never break a word at the end of a line or a sentence at the end of a page.
- Number pages with bold figures.
- Underscore or highlight words you wish to emphasize. Insert double slashes where you plan a major pause.
- Use a loose-leaf binder (e.g. in case of windy days or nervous fingers) or stack pages loosely to turn pages.
- Mark script with red dots to show visual aid changes.
- Practice, practice, practice:
 - Read and reread until you’ve practically memorized it.
 - Add the ingredients of volume, inflection and eye contact.
 - Avoid combinations of words that are difficult to say.
 - Look at your audience when uttering emphatic words and during the closing words of a sentence.
 - Practice using gestures—strive for enthusiasm.
 - Dry run your visual aids.
- Close with confidence:
 - Never explain why you choose to read (it won’t be apparent if you’ve prepared).
 - Be flexible; if necessary (and appropriate), know where you can shorten the speech.
 - Avoid being lengthy after saying, “In conclusion.”
 - Don’t add new information at the end.

Individuals who can strongly present briefings in all three types of delivery formats are the envy of everyone. They appear knowledgeable and comfortable in their roles as speakers because they have done their homework. They may be experts on their subject and know how to present their views with clarity on a moment’s notice (impromptu speaking). They have researched and rehearsed their presentations (prepared and manuscript briefings). They think carefully before they speak, outline their main ideas, say what has to be said, conclude and shut

up. Remember, there is no substitution for preparation. If you have the time to prepare—do it!

Step 4: Using Visual Aids

We've spent the majority of this process on how to speak and how to get over your nervousness. But there's more you can do to make an oral presentation more professional and useful for your audience. Visual aids can enhance your oral presentation by helping the audience remember and understand the content of your message. Remember, comprehension rises dramatically when we see something rather than when we just hear about it. The average person retains 5 percent of what is heard and 65 percent of what is seen. More dramatically, the human brain processes visuals 400,000 times faster than text! In other words, "show and tell" is better than just "tell" alone.

Slides are the most common visual aid used for briefings. They help the briefer to remember key points and help to keep the presentation brief. The presenter makes the slide simple and fills in the "white space" with concise spoken words.

Before we launch into Slides 101, let's take a second to stress one point—you are also a visual aid. If you are well groomed, professional and well prepared, you'll be the most effective visual aid in your presentation. It doesn't matter how awesome your slides are. If you look like a slob and appear awkward, the audience most likely won't take you or your message seriously. Take the time to look sharp!

Preparing Your Slides

The capabilities of computers today make it easy to produce a blizzard of flashy visual aids. Instead of drawing up a dozen slides on a legal pad and running them over to the printing department, we can create hundreds of slides in a few hours without ever leaving our desks.

Each organization is different when it comes down to how your slides should look. However, most organizations agree that the information we present shouldn't be too complex. Don't pack your slides with every detail and custom animation feature you can dig up. You don't need Venetian blind effects and fancy backdrops; all you need is the information.

Color. Color is a very important communication tool. Good designers limit their color palettes even if 256 different colors may be available.

- Use colors in a standard manner throughout your presentation.
- Limit your choices to 4 or 5 colors.
- Use light colors on a dark background and vice versa.
- Use colors to emphasize key elements but try to avoid red lettering.
- Use the same background color on all images.
- Avoid red/green and blue/red color combinations.
- Use bright colors (yellow, orange, etc.) sparingly.
- Maintain good contrast between important information and background.

Text. The first rule here is "less is more." Less experienced briefers are often tempted to pack presentations with every detail they can think of for fear they might leave something out during the real thing. Slides should have minimal content and lots of "white space." slides aim at the visual portion of the brain and will only confuse the audience if they are jam-packed with data. The slides should not be self-explanatory. If they are, you probably have too much stuff on them. Remember, you should add value to the presentation and should supplement the slides with your eloquent speaking abilities.

- Keep it simple. Use the "7 x 7 rule:"
 - No more than 7 words per line
 - No more than 7 lines per slide
- Spelling is important!
- Don't read slides—it's insulting.
- If you have more than one slide per main point, add "Continued" on subsequent slides to keep flow.
- Have only one thought per slide—it gives the audience time to refocus on you.
- Avoid hyphenation at the end of lines.
- Use upper and lower case for three reasons:
 - It helps identify acronyms.
 - It is more comfortable for the audience, because this is how we read.
 - It makes your presentation look more professional.

- Emphasize key words with boldface, italicized, underlined, or colored text.
- Left-justify your text.
- Font size: Use the same type font throughout the presentation.
 - Title: 40 point
 - Subtitle: 30 point
 - Text: 22-26 point
- Most importantly, you fill in the information. So, you should always know and be ready to present one level of detail below a piece of information. If you don't, you will end up reading slides or the audience will have many questions left unanswered.

Graphics. Whether designed for a briefing or written report, no graphic should be so elaborate it becomes an end in itself and obscures your intended message. However, when used wisely graphics can certainly add to your presentation. Although text is important, audiences remember more when content is graphically presented. A 60-minute briefing can be pretty boring if it is all done in text. But, on the flip side, cool graphics do not guarantee an effective briefing. Read below for some times to keep you in check when using graphics.

- Use only artwork suitable for your presentation. Know your audience!
- Use graphs (bar charts, pie charts, etc.) to convey statistics.
- Be careful with graphs: too many can be confusing.
- Line graphs show trends over time.
- Bar graphs compare values.
- Pie charts compare values against a whole.
- Tables: Don't use if you can convey information verbally or in a graph—they usually appear overly “busy” on a slide.
 - Limit to 4 rows and 7 columns.
 - Use footnotes to remove distracting data from tables.
 - Round off numbers if possible.
 - Don't put decimal points in numbers like 10 or 100. The audience may interpret “100.00” as “10,000.”
- Place your graphics off-center—use them to lead your audience to important text information.
- Be careful with animation:

- Sound: Use sparingly and make sure they add impact.
- Slide transitions: Most briefers overuse slide transitions. If you decide to use transitions, use the same type throughout your briefing, and make sure they add, not detract from your presentation.
- Video can be quite effective, but again, use it sparingly.

Make it big, keep it simple, make it clear and be consistent! Figure 5 lists the most common do's and don'ts for you to follow when using visual aids during your oral presentation.

Figure 5: The Do's and Don'ts of Using Visual Aids	
Do's	Don'ts
Stand beside your visual aid. Better yet, get away from slides and walk around. This may depend on your purpose and audience, and the location of your briefing.	Stand between the audience and visual aid and block the audience's view.
Start out with a well-thought out opening statement and try to elicit audience involvement by asking a relevant question or two. Use a personal story or experience (if appropriate) to bridge to your topic.	Jump right into slides.
If referring to the screen, stand aside, use a pointer, and put it down when done.	Talk at the screen with your back to the audience.
Give the audience time to read your slides.	Change slides too quickly.
Read the slide silently or watch to see if the audience has finished reading. If the slide contains a long quote, paraphrase or underline important parts.	Read the slide to the audience.
Speak naturally and use gestures.	Give a memorized briefing.
Make the slide simple and fill it out with concise spoken words.	Show a complicated slide and give a complicated explanation of it.
Show only necessary slides.	Use slides as gimmicks or crutches.
Turn off the projector or use a cover slide.	Leave the projector on with a blank screen.
Check for spelling and punctuation—more than once!	Forget to check spelling and punctuation.

Practice handling slides and gauging time needed to read them. Use an assistant to advance slides if available.	Disrupt presentation to handle slides.
Anticipate likely questions and rehearse possible answers. Keep answers short and simple. Listen carefully to the questioner and clarify the question if needed.	Be caught off-guard by questions from the audience. Don't give quick replies. Don't direct questions to specific members of the audience.
Know your purpose, audience and any time constraints.	If time is limited (5-15 minutes), you may want to consider not using slides. In these cases, it's more important to establish a connection with your audience than it is to show a few slides.
Practice, practice, practice! And test visual aids prior to your briefing.	Wing it, and never apologize because you didn't prepare. This makes you look irresponsible and ruins your credibility before you even start.

CHECK PROCEDURES

While the four steps in the process for making effective oral presentations are listed as distinct steps, they are closely interrelated. The first two steps involve more of the way you make the presentation. The third step relates to the format of the delivery, and the fourth step is the incorporation of visual aids. As you begin to develop the presentation you need to first consider the type of format and then as you work through the delivery begin to develop visual aids which support your communication objectives.

The Quality Control Checklist for Making Effective Oral Presentations is included as Workpaper #1. When using this workpaper the questions on the Quality Control Checklist should be answered yes or no. A yes response indicates that the procedure was performed correctly, and a no response indicates that additional

action may be warranted. Each no response should be investigated and resolved before making the oral presentation.

DELIVERABLES

The deliverables from this practice include:

- The script for the oral presentation
- The method and strategy for making the presentation (e.g. rehearsing and focusing on non-verbal communication)
- Visual aids

All of these are incorporated into the oral presentation. The success of the oral presentation will be judged by your ability to accomplish your predefined objectives for making the oral presentation.

USAGE TIPS

Use vocal characteristics such as rate, volume, pitch and pause to enhance the impact of the message.

Be aware of any nonverbal quirks; reduce nervousness through solid preparation.

Select an appropriate delivery format: impromptu, prepared, or manuscript.

Visual aids can enhance oral presentations, but don't lose sight of the big picture.

Remember the basics of deliver, keep focused, and do your homework.

The more often you speak in front of or with a group, the more self-confident you become. High confidence and thorough knowledge of your subject are important prerequisites for speaking. Remember, if you have the time to prepare—do it!

Workpaper #1 – Quality Control Checklist for Making Effective Oral Presentations

	<u>ITEM</u>	RESPONSE (Circle One)		COMMENTS
1.	Have you prepared the material for your oral presentation using the first six actions of the 7 Action Process for Effective Communication?	Yes	No	
2.	Do you understand the importance of rate in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
3.	Do you understand the importance of volume in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
4.	Do you understand the importance of pitch in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
5.	Do you understand the importance of pause in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
6.	Do you understand the importance of articulation and pronunciation in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
7.	Do you understand the importance of length in making verbal communication?	Yes	No	
8.	Do you understand the importance of nonverbal communication in making an oral presentation?	Yes	No	
9.	Do you recognize that most oral communications, verbal and nonverbal, are a major cause of stress to individuals making a presentation?	Yes	No	
10.	If so, have you reviewed the “Sweaty Palms Syndrome” Checklist?	Yes	No	
11.	If so, are you prepared to do those things to minimize your stress over your presentation?	Yes	No	
12.	Do you understand the common nonverbal quirks?	Yes	No	
13.	If so, will you take appropriate action to avoid making those common nonverbal quirks?	Yes	No	
14.	Do you understand what is involved in an impromptu oral presentation?	Yes	No	
15.	Do you understand what is involved in a prepared (often called a briefing) oral presentation?	Yes	No	
16.	Do you understand what is involved in a manuscript oral presentation?	Yes	No	
17.	If so, do you know how to decide what will be the best of these three formats for your presentation?	Yes	No	
18.	Do you understand the importance of visual aids in an oral presentation?	Yes	No	
19.	If so, are you using visual aids as part of your oral presentation?	Yes	No	
20.	Do you understand the various media for visual aids in oral presentations (e.g. slides, video, and handouts)?	Yes	No	

21.	Do you recognize that PowerPoint presentations are the most commonly used visual aid in oral presentations today?	Yes	No	
22.	Do you understand the importance of color in visual aids?	Yes	No	
23.	Do you understand how to limit the amount of text in a PowerPoint presentation?	Yes	No	
24.	Do you know it is improper to read PowerPoint slides?	Yes	No	
25.	Do you understand the type of graphics available to include in your visual aids?	Yes	No	
26.	Have you reviewed the list of do's and don'ts of using visual aids?	Yes	No	
27.	If so, will you focus on the do's and attempt to eliminate the don'ts?	Yes	No	