

Presentation Planning –

- 1 **Prepare, Prepare, Prepare** - The more time you spend preparing your presentation beforehand the more confident you will be on the day.
- 2 **What is your topic?** What subject or aspects of a subject will you be covering? Before you start writing your presentation you must determine what exactly you will be talking about. You may find that your topic is actually too large or complex for the time available, so you may have to go back and review the specific topic you wish to address. It is better to do this early in the process than when you're half way through it.
- 3 **What is the purpose of your presentation?** Presentations gain impact to the extent that you can identify their purpose and state it in a single sentence. By forcing yourself to identify the purpose of your presentation, you can make sure that every word, every chart and every illustration is focused on the desired result. Ask yourself: "What is the action I want my audience to take?" This will help you immediately focus on the goal of your presentation.
- 4 **How much time do you have to state your case?** The number of arguments you present should be determined by the length of your presentation. It's better to cover a few, important, points in detail than present so many points that nothing is remembered. Always try to end a little ahead of time. This leaves you room to fully answer audience questions and concerns. **Never, never, run longer than your allotted time.** This is unfair to other presenters and quickly leads to audience discontent.
- 5 **Get to know your audience.** Put yourself in their shoes. What's in it for them? What understanding do they currently have? Do they want a detail or strategic level talk from you? Formal dress? How many people will attend?
- 6 **Where will you deliver your presentation?** Whenever possible, familiarize yourself with the presentation environment before you begin creating your presentation. The most important question is: "How much control over room lighting will I have?" Although overhead transparencies can be viewed in normal, or slightly-reduced, room lighting, electronic presentations require darker rooms.
- 7 **How much audience interaction do you desire?** Do you want to "preach" to your audience or engage them in a dialogue? The desired level of audience presentation should play a key role in determining the presentation media you choose.
- 8 **Split your presentation into a beginning a middle and an end.** Use the middle section to develop your ideas. Try using a mind map to help you organise your ideas into logical chunks. The clearer your thinking is the easier it should be to understand when you are presenting.
- 9 **Remember the power of three.** Wherever possible think of things in threes. eg three key points to make at the beginning, three key points to develop further in the middle and three key points to make at the end. Your middle can further expand on the three points with three additional points each. Etc
- 10 Lead your audience through your presentation using **sign-posting**. Recap on what you've just covered and then use rhetorical questions to move onto the next section. Always summarise your main points just prior to the end of your presentation.
- 11 **Brainstorm the likely questions** you will be asked by your audience and prepare responses.
- 12 **Avoid the trap of preparing for your presentation at the last possible minute.** It will only mean you lose a night's sleep - on the night before you have to present!
- 13 Plan to **end your presentation** with a call to action, a request for a decision to be made, or whatever you believe is the most appropriate means to achieve your overall goal.