Preparing Materials

Be sure that the information you present is well-organized, legible, and communicates graphically. When possible, use illustrations, photographs, and diagrams to help convey information.

1. Communicate visually without presenting multiple stimuli simultaneously.
2. Use an uncluttered design for your presentation, media and graphics.
3. Avoid using distracting background designs.
4. Use highly contrasting colors (e.g., a dark background with light text) for reading ease.
5. Use a large font in your presentation (at least 18 pt). Standard fonts include Times New Roman, Arial, or Helvetica. Sans serif fonts are easier to read when projected.
6. Use mixed case (upper and lowercase letters, not ALL CAPS).
7. Videos with audio must be captioned.
8. Avoid using music or auditory materials as cues or to illustrate a point.
9. Include a conclusion/summary slide to reinforce the key points of your presentation.
10. Provide handouts to minimize the time needed for notetaking.

Presenting to Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Audiences

Are you planning on presenting to an audience that will include deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals?

▼

Would you like to learn about strategies to help make your presentation a success?

▼

These guidelines will help ensure that audiences with diverse communication needs can fully benefit from your presentation!

http://www.rit.edu/ntid/pda

Presenting to Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Audiences

Presenting to deaf/HH audiences requires a sensitivity to deaf culture and an awareness of communication needs. It is important to keep in mind that deaf/HH individuals primarily receive information visually.

1. Begin your presentation with an outline or overview of your agenda.
2. Speak at a medium pace. Remember, your speech is being interpreted/translated.
3. Pause periodically between topics/slides to allow time for participants to view materials, ask questions, and participate in discussions.
4. Speak to your audience—not to the interpreter, nor to the visual aid.
5. Provide transition cues when switching from one topic to another, such as "next we'll be talking about..."
6. When you refer to handouts, media, or other materials, allow time for your audience to read the materials before you continue speaking.
7. Do not turn your back to your audience while speaking. Discontinue speaking when you turn to write on a board and do not resume until you can again face your audience.
8. Your audience will not be able to take notes or participate in an activity while you are speaking.
9. Maintain eye contact with your audience to successfully direct their attention and deliver your message.

Resource: *PEPNet Tip Sheet on Deaf Culture*, http://www.netac.rit.edu/downloads/TPSHT_Deaf_Culture.pdf

Working with Interpreters

Interpreters facilitate communication in both directions—your words to your audience and their signed questions/responses to you. It is difficult for the audience and the interpreter to process multiple channels of communication simultaneously. Therefore, it is critical to allow ample time for your audience to receive and to assimilate your information.

1. Provide a copy of your presentation or outline to interpreters to help them prepare in advance.
2. Prior to your presentation, introduce yourself to the interpreter.
3. Speak clearly and at normal tone and pace.
4. Talk directly to the audience, not to the interpreter.
5. Maintain a clear line of sight between the interpreter and deaf participants. Do not stand or walk in front of the interpreter.
6. Allow only one person to communicate at a time.
7. Visual information should come from the interpreter or from your visuals, but not from both at the same time.
8. If the room will be darkened for media, discuss this with the interpreter and/or your host ahead of time so that appropriate lighting (of the interpreter) can be arranged.
9. Pause periodically between topics/slides to allow the interpreter and the audience a break from processing stimuli.
10. Repeat audience questions and allow time for interpretation before you respond.
11. If you are running out of time, do not start talking faster. This is counterproductive for effective communication.
12. Acknowledge your interpreter at the beginning and at the conclusion of your presentation.

Technical and Room Setup Considerations

Your host is largely responsible for arranging the technical setup for your presentation. Discuss your technical and logistical needs with your host well in advance. Since technology can be unreliable, do not rely solely on media, equipment, or an Internet connection. Even the best-laid plans can go awry. So, be sure to have a backup plan!

1. Prior to the presentation, inform your host of your equipment needs, room setup requirements, and your plans for using media.
2. Request a circular, semi-circular, or U-shaped seating arrangement for small groups. Request tiered seating for large groups.
3. Note your host's contact information, as well as contact information for their technical support personnel.
4. Arrive early enough to do a media check (e.g., audio, visual, media, Internet, connection with captionist/transcriber).