Making a good oral presentation

Your name:
Module:
Date
Plan your presentation carefully: consider:

- **Objectives:** what would YOU like to hear on the subject of this presentation? What would you like fellow students to have understood at the end of your presentation?

- **Audience:** How much do they know? What references are they likely to understand?

- **Content:** be selective. The objective of a presentation is NOT to say everything on a given subject.
An oral message: essential markers

- Outline what you are going to say: make the plan of your presentation explicit
- Use key markers to structure your presentation
- Re-cap. Recap often
- Provide an explicit answer to the initial question.
- Open the debate: avoid ‘Any questions?’ (see below)
Visual Aids

- Do not put too much text on your power point slide as you will distract your audience.

- They will read the text rather than listen to what you have to say.

- Also you risk reading the text yourself, losing dynamism in your presentation.

- Above all, make sure that your text is free from typing errors, and has all the necessary accents, especially in a foreign language.

- Avoid “fontitis” and **overfussy graphics**.

Avoid blurry, unreferenced photos!
PowerPoint is good for:

- Listing key ideas.
- Visual support: charts, diagrams, pictures
- Visuals must be relevant and should not distract from your main ideas.

Be careful:
- Do not write everything you are going to say
- Do not overuse animation
- PowerPoint is not good at making links
- PowerPoint leads to a linear presentation of an argument.
Group presentation

- Not sequential but integrated: each student must participate to the development of an idea.
- No need to be all in the same spot when presentation is delivered
- Body language: where to stand and what to do when I do not speak?
Engaging ‘passive’ listeners

Vary the rhythm and texture of your presentation.

Attention span
Engaging ‘passive’ listeners
Vary the rhythm and texture of your presentation.

- Ask questions, define small tasks to be completed.
  - Can you summarise the most important point made so far?
  - Read this quote: What do you think it means?
  - Can you think of another example to illustrate this point?

- Use different type of visual support.
  - Video: keep it short, contextualise and give specific objectives (e.g.: I want you to note down the three most important points made by the speaker)
  - Handouts: use blanks (missing words)
  - Silence: ‘for the next 2 minutes, I want you, on your own, to do this...’

Keep it simple and short.
Delivery

- Know your audience
- Know your subject
- Rehearsing → editing and timing
- Read the text? Learn the text? Cue cards? Don’t rehearse to keep it natural?
- Body language
Prepare for questions.

Try to think of the kind of questions your audience might ask and prepare answers to them.

Do not panic if you can’t understand a question – ask for it to be repeated or rephrase it yourself.
Starting a debate

- Do you have any question?
  - Does not often work, but people may want to ask for precision or further examples.
- Prepare some questions to ask audience: questions stressing personal experience, emotion or description are a good start:
  - How would you feel if…
  - Have you ever experienced…
  - Could you describe/ imagine a situation such as…
- To end the presentation, summarise key points, including those raised during the debate.
Bibliography

- Very important, consistently presented (in Harvard APA for instance).
- If you use quotes in your PowerPoint slides, present them with in-text references.
- No point to list sources which are not reflected in the content of your presentation (do not pay service to unread sources: it will always show!)