

How to give a sparkling seminar

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This article presents a guide for how to present a sparkling seminar. Many people can give a seminar, but only a few can do it in such a sparkling way which will have a memorable impact on the audience. It discusses the important aspects of a good presentation. It is a good start for graduate/postgraduate students as well as an inexperienced staff member, and if followed closely it will help both the speaker and the audience immensely. In general, a good seminar speaker will develop to become a good teacher/lecturer in the future.

What a good speaker must do before presenting a seminar includes the following:

1. Readiness in self-preparation, such as being well dressed and ensuring availability of the audio-visual or other aids for the presentation (e.g., notebook, LCD, microphone and a laser pointer)

2. Have a dry run at home. This is quite crucial for young speakers who have a tendency to present beyond the allotted time. Remember: *Practice Makes Perfect*.

3. Prepare a “conclusion or summary” slide that incorporates the message to be taken home. This slide should not be too long and it should be colorful, if at all possible.

There are 12 major points of this guideline that should be followed for an effective seminar presentation as follows:

1. To begin, address the audience by saying “Good morning, etc., Ladies and Gentlemen:” This starting statement is quite important, because it will quickly draw the attention of the audience to concentrate on the talk.

Don’t forget to open your mouth and speaker distinctly and loudly enough to be heard by every person in the audience. Don’t worry about nervousness at the beginning, because it is a good sign of careful preparation of the talk.

2. State the topic or title of the presentation.

3. Give a brief introduction to the presentation. This must be short, but must show the importance of the subject to the audience. If possible, use a statement that excites attention, arouses curiosity or surprises the audience.

4. State clearly the objective and boundaries of your presentation. Write out both of these headings in detail. Then, go over them repeatedly until you are entirely familiar with them. Speak only from notes. Do not read from the power point slides. Be sure you speak naturally.

5. Clearly explain Materials & Methods

- Don't forget to mention all statistical tests used.

- Use figures and diagrams whenever possible to help with the explanation.

6. Avoid all types of distracting mannerisms

- Don't mumble.
- Don't speak too fast.
- Try to eliminate reading as much as you can, or you will lose your audience at once.

- You must not speak in a monotone, because most of your audience will easily get bored.

7. Present both figures and tables in a logical manner. Explain clearly one by one!

- Select appropriate audiovisual aids to suit your data (graph or figure).

- Both graph and figure must be easily understood.

- Avoid copying complicated tables from the journal or text. Redraw and simplify each of them.

- Do not show something that you do not want your audience to read.

8. When presenting the result, you should also discuss them. What do they mean to you, to the audience, and to the previously published literature.

- What are the similarities?

- What are the conflicting findings? Why?

- If you cannot explain the conflicting results, state so and throw them back to the audience.

- The audience requires sincere convictions from you sincerely expressed.

9. State the conclusion or summary of your talk.

10. Most importantly, keep your speech within the limits of the time allotted to you.

11. Thank the audience at the end of your presentation, and open the floor for questions, comments or suggestions.

12. Have a dry run at home, but never before an audience. You must tolerate painstaking preparation of your speech, because you are deeply indebted to the audience for the privilege they have given you. A good speech is the best expression of your gratitude!

Important points to remember:

- Stand in one place. Do not pace up and down the platform like a caged lion. These movements distract the audience.

- Your hands should be kept loosely to your sides. If this is not comfortable, hold a microphone, a pointer or your notes.

- Do not point your finger at the audience as if you were scolding the neighbour's children.

- Above all, be natural.

How to make your speech**Sparkle**

- Insert suitably humorous stories, epigrams and amusing definitions.

- Use illustrations or quotations from biographies, plays or literature.

- Use similes.

- Use alliteration.

An epigram is a short saying which expresses an idea in a very clever or amusing way.

"What would you do if you were in my shoes?"

"The sun is shining somewhere."

"Still water runs deep."

A quotation: is a fragment of a human expression that is being referred to by somebody else. Most often a quotation is taken from literature, but also sentences from a speech, a scene from a movie, elements of a painting, etc may be quoted.

"Power is nothing unless you can turn it into influence."

"Anger makes you smaller, while forgiveness forces you to grow beyond what you were."

"The secret success is to know something nobody else knows."

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent"

Eleanor Roosevelt

"Wisdom is not a product of schooling but of the life-long attempt to acquire it."

Albert Einstein

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country"

John F. Kennedy

A simile is an expression which describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else.

"She runs very fast like a deer."

"He is very sick and walks like a lame duck."

Alliteration is the use in speech of several words which all begin with the same letter or sound.

"The rain in Spain falls mainly in the plain."

"While singing and mingling I was tingling my sibling."

"The night sight is quite bright."

Finally, what a seminar presentation requires:

1. Sincere conviction earnestly expressed.
2. Unquestioned knowledge of your subject.
3. Painstaking preparation of your talk.
4. Practice at home, but never before an audience.

And in conclusion, I would just like to say that the only way to get really good at doing sparkling presentations is to practice, practice, and practice again. Each time you give a successful presentation, you gain more confidence, and learn lessons about how to improve. So don't wait any longer - start today!