

Suggested Process for Preparing to Deliver an Awesome Presentation

1. Know Your Audience

Perform a discovery process ahead of your presentation if possible. I always suggest getting on the phone and talking with a few people that will be in your audience. Understand their situation, their challenges, what would be of greatest value to them, and so on. Then you can custom design a streamlined presentation focusing specifically on their most important needs. If you're not able to do this ahead of time, you can always ask questions right before you present.

2. Have a Structure and Leverage the Fishbone Template

The Fishbone Template basically serves as an effective structure for pretty much any kind of presentation. It's how the presentation flows from start to finish. The better you know the flow, the easier it will be to craft a presentation. And, the more effective it will be, too.

3. Populate your DHG Branded Fishbone PPT Template

Once you've crafted your outline using the fishbone structure, then you can populate your PPT. The DHG branded fishbone PPT template we provided you with is the perfect place to start. Map out your flow and then you can add some Hollywood.

4. Add Some Hollywood

As you already know, adding photos to text enhances learning by 65% or more. That alone should be enough for you to be searching for photos to help you communicate your message. Add anything you can think of that will be visually engaging, including photos, videos, graphics, and more. Remember, people remember what they see. Even more so, they remember what they feel. Tell stories and get your audience emotionally engaged.

5. Keep your Slides Simple

If it takes longer than four or five seconds to read what's on your slide, then it's too much information. Remember, you can always include more detailed information in the notes section, and then forward that to your audience for later review. Use a build, create call outs, or break your points in to multiple slides. Keep it simple!

6. Conquer your fear of speaking

Based on my own personal experience of having suffered from severe stage fright, I have some valuable input to provide here. The number one strategy to overcome any fear of speaking is to practice. To get in front of audiences as often as possible. Practice. Desensitize yourself. Toastmasters is the best venue I know for this. You get to present every week in front of a supportive group and practice your newfound skills. There are plenty of other strategies, as you know, but focus on this one and you'll be in great shape.

7. Master Your Delivery Skills

You may have the ideas in the world, but it means next to nothing if you can't effectively communicate them. Mastering your delivery skills will set you apart from the rest. Take advantage of eye communication, facial expressions, gestures, body, movement, and anything else that might be useful. Remember to feel enthusiastic, because enthusiasm is contagious. And have fun!

8. Prepare

90% of an effective presentation is in the preparation. And 90% of the preparation is practice. It's the only way to get better. Steve Jobs would hole himself up in a room for 48 hours solid to prepare for a 30-minute presentation. The people that present effectively, worked at it. It's the best way. Prepare in advance and you'll feel confident and deliver a presentation to be proud of.