

Activity 6: Presentation Skills Answer Key

Part 1 – Your Image as a Speaker (pp. 95-99):

Presentation Skills	Describe what you can do
Appearance	<p>Looking good boosts your self-confidence and builds your credibility with the audience. Do you need a haircut? Are your shoes shined? Are your clothes clean and freshly pressed? Are your buttons buttoned?</p> <p>Your posture also creates a general impression of you as a speaker. Stand straight and alert, but relaxed. Don't lean on the podium, rock back and forth, or slouch on one leg and then the other.</p>
Eye Contact	<p>As soon as you're at the podium, establish eye contact with the audience. Let the audience know you are looking at them and talking to them. Effective eye contact is direct and impartial. Don't stare, but do look at the audience. Look slowly from one side of the room to the other.</p>
Facial Expressions	<p>Use facial expressions, but don't overdo them. Use them the same way you would if you were engaged in a casual conversation. You should not smile or frown continuously, but use these expressions as necessary to reinforce your ideas.</p>
Body Movement	<p>Be aware of your typical body movements. Keep yourself in check, and always seek feedback.</p>
Gestures	<p>Gestures are the purposeful use of your hands, arms, shoulders, and head to reinforce what you are saying. Your gestures should appear natural and spontaneous. Used appropriately, they add life and vigor to your presentation. Inappropriately used, they can be a distraction to the audience. Make your gestures slowly and naturally, and watch your timing. Be sure they are consistent with what you're saying. Make them add meaning to your presentation. Practice your gestures in front of the mirror.</p>
Voice—rate, volume, pitch	<p>Rate - If you speak too fast, your talk will be impossible to understand. If you speak too slowly, your audience will find it harder to follow your meaning. And if you do not vary your speed, your voice will be monotonous and you may lose your audience's attention. A faster rate communicates excitement or sudden action, and a slower rate sounds calm or tired. Use the rate of speech that is most appropriate to the ideas you are expressing.</p> <p>Volume - Before you speak, survey the room where you will deliver your talk, if possible. Take time to practice talking in the room. Bring along a friend. Ask the friend to move to various parts of the room and tell you whether he or she can hear you. Know how loudly you must talk. Change your volume to <i>emphasize a point</i>. Using a softer level or lower volume is often a more effective way to achieve emphasis than shouting is.</p>