

# Creating an Effective Presentation in English for Business Communication Class

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## ABSTRACT

*Many of business communication subjects are carried out or introduced in schools and universities not only for business students but also for non-business students. Some of the non-business students are strongly motivated to take a part in business world by selling product, outlining a proposal, or attempting to enlist support for a project. In today's business world, it is extremely important to effectively communicate our ideas. Presentation, as a form of communication, plays a more and more important role in modern business setting. But not all the presentations are effectively made for a variety of reasons. This paper is the result of the writer's experience assisting non-business students to prepare presentation related to business in English for Business Communication class. Still, in many cases students have the same limited exposure, resulting in the same lackluster result. The major purpose of the entire effort is to make the presentations as easy to comprehend as absolutely possible. Therefore, this paper aims to explore effective presentation skills and techniques. In order to minimize the negative and maximize the positive, a presenter should consider three areas called three P's: Preparation, Practice and Presentation. By following the steps the writer has mentioned, the results have been very satisfactory for them. They did the presentation very well. They were able to discuss and defend their points of view and answer questions from the audience. The most important thing is that doing presentation has increased their self-confidence and their public speaking skills.*

**Keywords:** *Business communication, preparation, practice, and presentation*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's business world, it is extremely important to effectively communicate our ideas. This paper contains descriptions of how a presentation method can be used as a tool for communicating business ideas of students who not only come from business class, but also from non-business class, in this case English Department students who receive English for Business Communication (EFBC) subject/course. This paper describes the writer's experience in teaching the students of English Department of Widyatama University who took EFBC subject in preparing presentations related to business communication. The method applied in this subject is a business presentation. They are required to present topics such as how to sell a product and how to plan a project in front of the class. The aim of this research is to explore the capability of the students in speaking English by presenting the business subject in front of the class so that they can get both knowledge of business communication and knowledge of presentation techniques. To obtain good results presentation, each student as a presenter must be able to pass through three critical stages named three P's: Preparation, Practice and Presentation. Finally, the writer will suggest a course of action for lecturers and presenters to follow to make such presentations successful.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Business Communication and Presentation

Reference [1] explains that business communication is defined as any action undertaken to promote an idea, product, service or organization, internally or externally, with the objective of propagating the cause of the business by creating value or making a sale. In business communication, the message is transmitted externally through print, broadcast and digital channels such as the Internet, television, radio, newspaper and magazines, billboards and word-of-mouth. Internally, communication is primarily through oral instructions, emails, memos, presentations and demonstrations.

As in [2], Presentations, however, are a vital part of business communication. Many times a business presentation can make or break an important deal. Using different ideas and incorporating various presentation skills can give your next presentation the extra element needed to close a deal. Business communication presentations should be informative, creative and entertaining to keep your audience's attention. Using innovative and out-of-the-box ideas can make the needed impression on your potential client.

## 2.2. Steps in Preparing Presentation

[3] mentioned that giving an effective oral presentation requires preparation. Preparing for an oral presentation is just as important as delivering the presentation; without preparation the oral presentation will not be delivered effectively. The oral presentation needs to be organized and well thought out. Therefore, set aside time to work on oral presentation. This approach consists of a number of steps which are followed in a logical order:

1. Know exactly what is required and expected when we will be presenting. Know how long the presentation must be, what type of visual aid is required, and your audience.
2. Pick a topic, if one was not provided. Depending on the situation, a topic may not be given. Pick a topic that we are familiar with, one that our audience can easily understand and that will meet the requirements of the oral presentation. The topic should be easily searchable and have reliable sources.
3. Determine the purpose of the oral presentation. The purpose of an oral presentation varies because it depends on the message we will convey.
4. Analyze the audience, and think about their expectations. Consider the age, values, gender and education level of the audience.
5. Research the topic and take notes. Take detailed notes about everything that pertains to the topic.
6. Write a rough draft of our oral presentation. The rough draft will only be used to organize the information obtained from doing research and to write the note cards.
7. Prepare visual aids for the oral presentation. Some presentations require a PowerPoint, while others require a transparency; follow the requirements given. Keep visual aids simple. The visual aids should help the audience understand the topic better. Include graphs, charts, pictures or a video clip in the visual aid if it will help the audience understand the topic better. Do not use visual aids that are not directly connected to the topic.
8. Prepare note cards using our rough draft. Our note cards should be numbered in the order we will use them. Do not write complete sentences because we will not read directly from our note cards. Only take notes, preferably in bullet format, on the note cards. Note cards should be easily read, if needed; therefore, do not overcrowd any note card with too many bullet points. Use as many note cards as necessary without overcrowding any.
9. Practice and time the presentation. If the presentation needs to fall within a specific time frame, practice and time our presentation using a stopwatch. Use note cards as a guide to help us remember everything that needs to be said. Do not read directly from note cards.
10. Conclusion. We can now conclude by: *giving our opinion, summarizing the main points, and add any last message (make it a striking and impressive one)*

## 3. DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Experience

The writer started teaching in Widyatama University in 2002 as a part time lecturer. After she graduated from English Linguistics, Post Graduate Program 2 years ago, she continues her job as a lecturer who teaches English not only for the students of English Department but also for the students of non English, such as accounting, business & management, and engineering students. For the non English Department she teaches General English (GE), Academic English (AE) and English Proficiency Certification (EPC). Meanwhile for the student of English Department she teaches English related to skills such as grammar, listening, reading comprehension and also EFBC included in the curriculum as compulsory subjects. This is in line with university policy that in the curriculum of every faculty, students of Widyatama University should be introduced to the business subjects.

Introducing business subjects to students of English Department is not easy. Because in addition to lecturers must have knowledge about the subject itself, they must also be able to determine what kind of teaching methods applied to students so that students can acquire knowledge of the business without losing sight of the English language ability as its core.

Two semesters ago, the writer applied the method of presentation to teach EFBC subject. With the number of students of 33 people, each student got a turn 2 times to present his or her paper with topics related to the business which had previously been discussed together at the first meeting at the beginning of the semester. The topics are (1) How to introduce and sell a product and (2) How to organize a project event.

Her aim in applying the method of presentation is to motivate students to act creatively, for example related to the topic (1) is how the students attempt to identify a product, to identify the advantages of these products to be introduced as attractive as possible so that the product is sold. While related to the topic (2) is that students are trained to work together formed as the event organizers that organize an important event such as seminar, conference, exhibition, music concert, and so forth. Another aim is to train students' public speaking skills. Developing the confidence and capability to give good presentations, and to stand up in front of an audience and speak well, are also extremely helpful competencies for self-development too.

### **3.2. Effective Presentations**

As a lecturer who helps the students prepare the presentation in English, the writer tried to help them with some guidelines in order to reach an effective presentation. They are called three P's: Preparation, Practice and Presentation.

#### **3.2.1. Preparation**

##### **a. Topic**

The first thing to be done by a lecturer is to give a topic. The two topics the writer provides are (1) how to introduce and sell a product and (2) how to organize a project event. The reason why she provides those topics is because those are easily searchable and have reliable sources.

##### **b. Organization**

The structure of the presentation should follow the conventional schema of introduction, body or development of ideas, conclusion, and question- and- answer period [4]. This schema has to be adapted to fit the amount of time available for the presentation. The outline should be developed into a written script. This is a very time consuming step, but the writer believes it will make her students work hard to practice their writing skill in English in developing their ideas to the topic chosen. The introduction must grab the audience's attention. It should clearly state what the speaker is about to present and how it will be presented. The body of presentation must develop ideas clearly and logically, and connect them by means of appropriate transitions. The supporting details or cases presented must be relevant. Finally, the conclusion should be anticipated, never abrupt. It is advisable to use summing-up phrases.

##### **c. Visual Aids**

Visual aids help to drive a point home. A visual aid can be anything from a short video clip to a hands-on item that listeners can touch and feel for themselves. Use a visual aid to illustrate concepts difficult to grasp, or in the middle of presentation to regain the audience's attention. Visual aids will also speak to those listeners who don't grasp words and concepts very well. Most students use PowerPoint to present their presentation rather than transparency. Their visual aid shows graph, chart, or event visual clip and pictures. Audiences, therefore, can see and follow the information through pictures shown.

#### **3.2.2. Practice**

Ideally, the entire presentation should be practiced using the same kind of equipment the presenter will use during his or her presentation. Whether it is a microphone or computer, the presenter must be familiar with the proper equipment. This will help him/her feel comfortable and confident. Practice should be done until the speaker shows confidence. The writer must correct the presenter's volume, speed, clarity an intonation and English pronunciation. She also observes the presenter's gestures, movements and eye contact so the student does not look unnatural. Correction must be immediate, making him/her realize the mistakes.

#### **3.2.3. Presentation**

##### **a. Delivering Presentation**

As a lecturer, the writer also says to her students that they do not have to be a professional speaker to deliver a presentation. However, they do need to be a prepared one in order to best present to the audience. A prepared presenter will be a more confident presentation giver.

One of the main complaints about delivering presentation concerns those who read their papers rather than talk to the audience. Even if the entire paper is in front of the student when presenting, never read the paper to the audience. Consider extended periods of practice or use note card. Oral presentation should never contain lots of information, because the audience will get lost in detail. The lecturer should remain the students to make their major point, wait for questions and then sit down.

#### **b. Question and Answer Session**

Allowing the audience to ask questions after the presentation is an excellent way to reinforce the message and continue to sell presenter's ideas. In addition, because listeners can ask for clarification, audience members are less likely to leave the presentation or speech with misconceptions about the concepts presenter delivered. Because of these benefits, the question and answer period is actually another presentation and vital to most speaking situations. It is like a presentation after the presentation.

The writer trained the student how to manage or handle the question from the audience. Once the questions start coming, what should presenter do? First, *listen* to the question. Presenter may have to go beneath the surface and read between the lines. He/she may detect a hidden motive behind the question. A little paranoia won't hurt, but do not assume either that every question is a loaded one. The toughest questions can come from those who agree with the presenter, but who may simply want to get a more complete answer. Make sure the presenter hears and understands the full question before answering. Ask for clarification of anything he/she does not understand. Do not pre-empt the questioner by answering before the question is fully stated. Be straightforward. If presenter does not know the answer, do not guess. Admit if do not know; offer to get the answer and provide it to a questioner.

The ways how the students react in the question and answer session are varied. For those who are well prepared with the topic and preparation, they can manage the question well and confidently. Besides, for those who are lack in preparation even do not sufficiently understand the topic chosen, they sometimes find difficulties to explain and answer the questions. Consequentially, they are quiet and a bit nervous because they do not know what they have to do. This is the situation where the lecturer can overcome the problems by giving clarification to the class or invite the audience to add or share the information needed.

### **3.3. Results**

After applying the method of presentation during one semester, it shows a great result. From 33 students who took EFBC subject, more than 87.8% passed the exam and 12.12% did not pass. The details of the value are as follows: 30.03% (10 students gained an A), 51.5% (17 students gained B), 6.06% (2 students gained C) and 3.03% (1 student gained D) and 9.09% (three students gained E). For the students that did not pass the exam, they do not meet attendance or lack of class attendance for almost one semester.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The presentation experience about business for non-business students is one that should not be taken lightly, but it is also not something that should be feared. The best way to maximize without nervousness is to prepare well in advance. By preparing early, the presentation should go smoother with less anxiety. Learning as much as possible about the topic chosen, audience, organization and techniques to present well will aid the presenter in making a memorable impression. In another words, the students can minimize the negative and maximize the positive by considering the three P's: Preparation, Practice and Presentation.

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