

ESL STUDENTS: TIPS FOR PREPARING AND DELIVERING A PRESENTATION

PREPARING YOUR PRESENTATION

When your professor assigns an oral presentation; do not start worrying about your pronunciation or grammar at this point. Relax and organize your thoughts **FIRST**. **What** you have to say is far more important than **how** you say it! Spend your energy working on the information; there will be time to work on your pronunciation later.

- Make sure you fully understand the requirements of the presentation. If you are unclear about something, ask your TA or professor
- Once you understand what is expected of you, create an outline of what you want to say
- Use your outline to fill in speaking notes. You should write your notes with phrases and key words only; if you write your notes out into full sentences, you will be tempted to read them out loud. If you use only key words and phrases to remind you of what you want to say, it will help you *tell* the information and not *read* it
- Now you can prepare your Powerpoint slides. Keep them short and relevant. Use appropriate images, tables and notes (see all relevant handouts in the Oral Presentation section of our website)

TIME YOURSELF

- Time yourself doing the presentation out loud, and while changing the slides
- If you go over the time limit then cut out slides and notes
- If your presentation is too short, then add information

TELL THE INFORMATION INSTEAD OF READING OR MEMEORIZING

- Remember, you are presenting information to people; prepare yourself to talk to them!
- A good presenter uses their notes to guide them to tell the information
- Do not read the presentation out loud; tell the information
- Reading the information will make you sound like a robot
- Do not memorize every word
- Memorizing your presentation sounds just as robotic as reading it
- If you memorize your presentation, you might accidentally forget a section and freeze in front of the class

FOCUS ON PRONUNCIATION

- Find an English speaking listener or make an appointment with a Learning Specialist
- Ask the listener to help you pronounce the KEY words and phrases properly
- You will not be able to change your pronunciation overnight, so only focus on the most important words.
 - For example, if your presentation is about a software program, be certain that you are saying the word “program” as clearly as possible
- Write the difficult word phonetically in your notes

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

- You should plan to practice telling your presentation out loud approximately 5 times a day for a few days before it is due
- Try to find an empty classroom to practice hearing your voice across a room.