**Things that can Go Wrong with Your Presentation and What to Do**

Don’t let Murphy’s Law Hit You

 Murphy’s Law?

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Presenting is already difficult and when things go wrong it becomes even more difficult.

But if you prepare – No problem – Nervous energy becomes + confident energy.

Here are some tips on how to prepare, avoid, and deal with difficulties.

**Problem #1 – Time.**

 

Using too much time is a common beginner problem.

It is importantto **stay within your given time**. In fact, you should **end a little early**!

It is a **contract**: You have an amount of time to give the audience something (an idea, knowledge, emotion, entertainment) and the audience expects that you will do it.

Having a presentation go **too long** can make your audience **unhappy** ☹.

But a **shorter** presentation will make them **happy** ☺.

Unfortunately, other presenters may talk too long and can cause your time to be shortened - You should still try to finish in your given time slot.

**How to prepare**: Flexibility, Time Yourself, Control - > Know Your Subject **(2)**

**Practice** your speech. **A lot.** More practice = more comfortable & control. In this way you will memorize less and internalize more - Giving you **flexibility**.

Moreover, you will become **aware of important ideas and less important details**. This gives you **flexibility**: Less important details can be taken-out or added in according to time.

T**ime yourself** when you practice. Know how long your presentation takes.

**In reality, your presentation will take longer than the practice time**, so, plan.

If there is time, add details -> You may even have extra slides (these can be hidden**)**

 **You may have an optional story example / proverb**

**Timing is everything**. You are borrowing your audience’s time.

 They are investing their time in you, so don’t abuse that trust.

**So Tip #1 – Internalize, don’t memorize.**

Memorization will give you **zero flexibility**. You will have to say things in order and that is dangerous. Practice until you have the concepts **internalized** which means you know the topic perfectly and you **can say what you need to say in many different ways**. It gives you **flexibility** to add or cut something.

**Tip #2** - Know the **main points** of your presentation so you CAN quickly end by skimming over your main points. The **main points are the need** to know while the other the **points are only nice to know**; in this way, you can cut parts of your speech easily.

**Tip #3** – **Do not be a robot. Be flexible** know what you want to give the audience (the audience take away). Know the main ideas & details which give life to the audience take away -Your important gift.



**What to do when time becomes a problem.**

- **Don’t panic**, just do what you can. The audience will not know what you left out.

– If you are running out of time -> Do the **main points**.

– **Don’t rush**. If you talk too fast, your audience will not understand.

– The last part of your presentation is IMPORTANT – don’t forget it. **It puts everything together**. This is what the audience goes home with. For many presentations, your closing **is the call to action** - the **main purpose** of the speech. **Don’t forget it this** important **take away**.

**Problem #2 – Equipment crash or missing (3)**

**Can you give your presentation without PowerPoint?**

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Technical problems are a reality – Be prepared

You or your host forgets to bring needed equipment like a projector, paper, markers, paper & pencils. Maybe there is a computer issue.

Some venues will ask you to use their computers. Maybe your thumb drive will not open.

**How to prevent difficulties & solve problems**

- Always **e-mail your presentation to yourself** and have a **back-up thumb drive** with only your presentation.

– Practice! When you practice, **think about the things that you will need if something goes wrong**. You should be 100% self-reliant. Do not depend on others: and do not depend on your slides, in fact, **you should be able to give the entire presentation without them**. – HOW?

– Be sure to **print out your slides**. With a printed-out copy, you will have an outline of your presentation and can refer (look) to your slides. Under each slide, write the **main idea**; this is usually the answer to a question.

**What to do**

- **Go to the room before** your presentation. You can **check things out and set up**. In this way you will know if there are any technical problems and will have time to find solutions.

- While you are at your presentation room,**quickly go through your presentation**. You can check the sight-lines and know if your writing is too small. Going to the room, checking things out and setting up will reduce your nervous energy; this will make you much more comfortable and confident. **Your presentation becomes a routine.**

- **Don’t apologize** – You will look unprofessional. Think of something positive to say.

– Don’t try to fix the technology while you are supposed to be giving your presentation. You will lose the audience.

– You can ask for technical assistance.

- Meet the technical staff before you present, in this way, they will know and want to help you.

**Problem #3a The Difficult Question (4)**

Always think of potential questions and **be ready**

- Look at your slides and make questions – then make your dialogue to answer those questions.

- Always **repeat a question**, this will help you clarify the question and give you time to think

 -> “The question was, ‘Why do aliens have big heads?’”

- “That is an excellent question, maybe we can discuss it further out in the lobby”

- “Excellent question and I wish I knew the answer maybe we can talk further during the break”.

- “I will have to get back to you with that one”

**Problem #3b – Hecklers (people who yell out things)**

Hecklers can make both you and your audience unhappy.

Hecklers have their own purpose. They want attention, want to prove you wrong, or want to cause problems. No matter the reason, you need to **maintain a level head**.



**How to prevent.**

– You make the rules. **Let the audience know how they can interact with you**. You can say, “*Please hold all question until the end*”.

Or you can say, *“Please raise your hand whenever you have a question”.*

As the presenter **you make the rules** but this is done at the beginning.

– Give the audience your email. Therefore, if someone would like to ask a question that they are not sure is OK to ask - They can message you privately.

- Sometimes **giving a print-out** of your presentation to the audience is a good idea.

– **Take the stage with confidence**. If you do not, any heckler will see that you are weak and will therefore be empowered to take advantage. Take the stage as a leader; this will stop most hecklers. **KNOW what you will say & do the for the first minute.** Make a plan and practice it.

**What to do when it happens.**

– **Don’t engage with a heckler.** Doing so will make you look rude or mean Don’t argue

– Ask them to hold their questions or comments until the end. It usually works if you are **polite and calm,***“Please hold all your comments until the end. Thank-you”.*

– If you are confident add humor: Make a funny comment or a joke. OR You may want to say, *“Thank you that is a good point maybe we can talk later”* or *“You seem to be very concerned”.*

**Problem #4 – You lose train of thought (forget an idea) (5)**

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You are presenting and everything is going well and suddenly you forget what you wanted to say.Oh no! Your mind is blank (nothing)!Poof! Your idea is gone

-Looking lost & confused is not good.

Why does it happen? Pressure, stress, some distraction in the room, or low energy because you did not eat or sleep well.

Even the best public speakers will sometimes lose their train of thought. The difference between an experienced speaker and a new speaker is that an experienced speaker knows what to do.

**What to do**

– **Practice** getting to **know your subject well**. Getting to know your subject well means getting a **depth of knowledge**. For example, when you did ‘*The Reading’* I asked you what words you looked up. By looking-up new words, you **get comfort & confidence in the new knowledge**.

Unfortunately, something may happen that makes you forget.

 Luckily there are a few tricks to help.

- **Eat & sleep well.** If your brain is not 100% then all your practice will be wasted.

When you are thinking a lot your brain will use up to **50% of your body’s fuel and oxygen**



Fuel your brain so it is strong and can work easily and clearly.



**EXERCISE (6)**

- Simple exercises will reduce the stress which will clear your mind, help you think and relax so that you are comfortable and confident:

**Take a walk**. Some people Meditate, or do Yoga.

EXERCISE uses up stress energy and helps **BRING YOU INTO THE PRESENT TIME** so you are not worried about the future

The **exercise can be mental** such as count backwards 99, 98, 97, etc. or even listening to calming music – google ‘music for the brain’

Exercise the mouth and vocal cords with **tongue twisters**, for example, “Big bad bill bought bad butter”, “Alice ate apples and acorns”. ☺

Breathing exercises from the diaphragm (deep breath)

**Power-pose** before to adjust hormones for **presence**.



**- Don’t take yourself so seriously**. The more pressure you put on yourself, the more likely you are to lose your train of thought – so relax and trust in yourself. Have fun. Smile.

-**Misnaming the object activity** helps you to have fun. Difficulties & mistakes always happen. Do not take things seriously & have a little fun.

Point to something and call it another name -> This makes you comfortable with mistakes.

For example, point to a cat & say “dog”, or look at a chair and say “buffalo”. Have some fun DOG

**What to do when you forget.**

– Don’t make into a big deal. If you do, your audience will too.

-Don’t freeze. Ask, “Where was I?” or even better “Where were we?” (This is a conversation)

Also can **get audience participation**. Usually an audience is happy ☺ to help. **(7)**

-**Remain calm and move on**. The audience does not know your speech.

 -**Get a drink of water** and gather your thoughts. The audience may think that you planned it.

- **Work it into your dialogue** for example, “Today I will give you three important ideas for brand: Idea one is reputation. Idea two is customer loyalty.” And then you forget idea three *(??you forget??)*So you say, “There is no idea three today. I will tell you tomorrow.”

– Feel free to **make a joke** about yourself. When you make fun of yourself, the audience may like you more. For example you can say, “I must be getting old, another senior moment”.

– **Review your main point** to the audience. Repetition helps the audience follow. And so forgetting something is a great time to outline your speech.

**Conclusion**

Many things can and will go wrong when public speaking

**First** you need to prevent or **minimize** them - Be prepared -> **this ups confidence A LOT**

**Second** you need to **be ready** for them -> **know what to say & do** when they happen

(The space astronauts practice many times for each thing that could go wrong)

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Even if something does go wrong, it is not the end of the world for a public speaker

--- It will give you valuable experience and good story telling

**PRACTICE WITH PURPOSE** -> **Know why you are practicing**

**PRESSENCE**: confidence, comfortable, captivating, authentic, enthusiastic (energy) passionate..

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