

Presentations

Level: Advanced

Age: Adults

Time: Up to 90 minutes

Lesson aim:

- To describe what makes a good presentation and share advice for presenters

Skills: Listening, Speaking

Materials:

- Worksheet
- Live from London: Business "Presentations" video
- Transcript

Before you watch

A

The aim of this activity is to enable students to briefly share information about giving presentations and presentation skills. This should activate prior knowledge. Students discuss the questions with a partner or in a small group. Do not correct or expect detailed answers at this stage.

Video

A

Play the first part of the video (0:00–2:02). After the first watch, students discuss the two questions.

Key:

1. Students' own answers
2. Both Jason and Jenny mention the importance of practice, knowing the content/subject matter of a presentation well. Similarly, Tolani mentions preparation. Both Vivek and Jason mention confidence.

B

Students reflect on what they heard by attempting to complete the advice shared by each speaker. They then watch the first part of the video again and check their answers.

Key:

Tolani – Don't be **nervous**. **Prepare** and be **yourself**.

Jason – Be **confident**. Use those **nerves** to your advantage. Make sure you know your **subject matter**.

Vivek – **Smile**. Remember, you're the most **credible** person in the room.

Jenny – **Practise**. Know your **content**.

C

The aim of this activity is for learners to recognise the main ideas from each speaker. Students read the four statements. Then they watch the second part of the video (2:03–3:44). They write the name of the speaker next to the corresponding idea. Allow students to share their ideas in pairs before class feedback.

Key:

1. Tolani
2. Chris
3. Kieran
4. Prad

D

Students watch the final part of the video (3:45–4:44) and discuss the question.

Key:

Tolani and Vivek like giving presentations. Prad doesn't.

Language focus

A

This activity draws attention to some phrases from the video that learners may not know. The aim of the task is actually to provide a context to practise the language in the next activity.

Students match the quotes to the correct speaker from memory. They can check their answers in the transcript if needed.

Key:

1. Chris
2. Tolani
3. Prad

B

This activity raises awareness of the phrase 'you know', which is used throughout the video. Students review uses of this phrase in video extracts and discuss the questions.

Key:

What is the purpose of the phrase?

'You know' is sometimes used as a filler in conversation. Fillers have a range of functions, such as gaining thinking time or to hold a turn in conversation. 'You know' is also used by the speaker to highlight that they are expressing shared information – something both speaker and listener already know. The first three extracts are examples of shared information, whereas the final extract seems more like a filler.

Why do you think it is used so frequently?

'You know' is a phrase that directly engages a listener and can add a level of informality and familiarity. As a filler, it also buys the speaker more time to form their ideas.

After students discuss the questions and the phrase 'you know' has been explained, refer learners back to activity A (Language focus). Ask them to consider where this phrase might appear in each utterance.

Key:

The position of 'you know' in these sentences is quite flexible. However, some patterns are worth noting:

'You know' can appear between 'to' and 'verb', which emphasises the information following the phrase.

'You know' sounds unnatural if included within a fixed phrase such as 'think on your feet'.

With the position being flexible, this is a chance for learners to practise using the phrase in a range of positions, sensitising them to its frequent use in everyday conversation.

C

This activity draws attention to the use of a common sentence structure used for emphasis. Students read the extract and discuss the questions.

Key:

1. Students' own answers. Suggested:
 - *The delivery is important. So is how you are connecting ...*
 - *Both the delivery and how you're connecting [with your audience] are important.*
2. 'It' may generally refer to the main topic, which is effective presentation skills. However, 'it' is being used as an 'empty subject'.
3. 'It' is used to add emphasis. One way to think of 'it' here is that it makes the listener anticipate the information that follows.

D

This activity provides learners with the chance to apply what they have noticed in activity C. Students attempt to rephrase extracts from the video to fit the sentence structure introduced in the previous activity.

In order to fit this structure, some information must be known. A sentence including known information has been included. Students build on this by adding additional information using it as an empty subject.

This is a challenging task even at Advanced level – it is a good idea that the first example is done as a walkthrough.

Key (suggested answers):

1. Confidence is one skill needed for presentations, but it's not just confidence (that's important); it's also (about) being able to think on your feet.
2. It's important to know your topic, but it's also important to know your audience.

Students try to write their own example sentence using the target structure. Note that it may help to provide a pronunciation model to raise awareness of sentence level stress.

Communication focus

A

Students have three possible tasks to choose from for the communication focus:

Task 1 is a repeat of the lead-in discussion. Students would be expected to discuss these questions in greater detail. You could provide planning time to help them with this.

Task 2 is a chance for learners to use the language they have learnt during the lesson in a slightly different (yet relevant) context. They answer similar questions to those in the lead-in, but this time in the context of job interviews. Allow preparation time before students discuss the questions, so they can review/plan to use useful phrases from the Language focus.

Task 3 is a longer task, requiring learners to produce a more personalised and detailed response to the video content. This may be well suited for assessment purposes, although it may require additional time (in or out of class) to complete.