

## Intermediate – Make Sure Your Message Comes Across

**Aim:** To help students communicate their message when they give a talk.

**Lead-in:** Discuss situations when students have had to listen to short talks, and why they needed to listen to the talk. Write notes on the board, e.g., *school, conventions, conferences, museums, on holiday, etc.*

Find out if they have ever listened to a talk that was difficult to understand. Encourage them to say what made it difficult (e.g., the person didn't speak clearly; it wasn't well organised; they didn't explain what the talk was about, etc.). Ask: *When you are chatting with your friends, how do you know they are listening to or understanding what you are saying?*

Answers could include *by looking at them, giving examples, asking politely if they have understood, etc.*

Elicit examples of things you can do to make a talk better/easier to understand, and write them on the board clearly. These should stay on the board for students to refer to in the next stage of the lesson. For example: *prepare, be clear, speak slowly, use notes, introduce the talk, introduce each different section of the talk, don't read the talk, etc.*

**Choose A Scenario:** Working in pairs, students choose one of the three scenarios (A–C). They can choose the same scenario or a different one. Explain to them that the aim of this activity is to practise giving a talk as well as to give and receive feedback on that talk. Encourage students to copy down in their notebooks the pointers given on the board for preparing a successful talk. Explain that they will use these to mark their partner.

Now students should each prepare their talk alone using the information they have. Remind them that preparation is key to giving a good talk, so they should spend a few minutes putting the information for their talk together. The talk itself should last no more than a couple of minutes.

Remind students to refer to the Reflection Point as well as the pointers for giving a good talk. Once students have prepared, they should take turns performing their talk to their partner. Their partner should mark the talk using the list in their notebook.

Get students to give their partner a mark out of five for each point in the list, and tell them to be prepared to explain why they gave that mark.

**Reflection Point:** Remind students that when you give a talk it's important to think about your audience and their reactions. Make students aware that although it is difficult to give a talk, it can also be difficult for the audience to understand a talk, especially if it is unclear and badly organised.

**Class discussion:** First, ask students to discuss the feedback that they gave each other as a pair. Where marks were not so good, encourage students to explain why and suggest how their partner could improve. Discuss with students whether they felt their talk was good or could be improved and if so how. Did they expect the results they received, were they surprised by anything?

Now, ask the pairs to compare their feedback with another pair's. Find out whether they had similar strong points and weak points. Discuss some of these questions with the class:

- *How did you feel when you were giving the talk to your partner?*
- *What are the differences between normal talking and 'giving a talk'? What are the similarities?*
- *What would you think if people stopped listening to you in the middle of a talk?*
- *Can you think of one (new) way to make sure people listen to you?*

**Work alone:** Ask students to choose a second scenario (A–C) and prepare another short talk, taking into account the feedback from the work they did with their partner. They should follow the steps suggested in section 2, but they will not need to give any feedback. When students have finished, ask some of them to perform their short talk. Ask the class to listen to the talks and simply tick the lists they made in section 2. Students who give the talks should try to make sure that they get a tick from everybody for each section.

**Extension:** Ask students to think of something they are really passionate about. Get each student to prepare a two-minute talk about their passion,

saying what it is, why they are passionate about this and why they would recommend it. Explain that, if they like, they can record their talk as a short podcast and post it online along with other students from the class.

Alternatively, the task can just be an opportunity for students to share their hobbies and, for some of them, to consider starting something new. Explain to students that the aim of the task is to invite other students to try new hobbies by explaining why their passions are interesting and fun.