

New at Making Presentations? Check out these Tips from the Pros

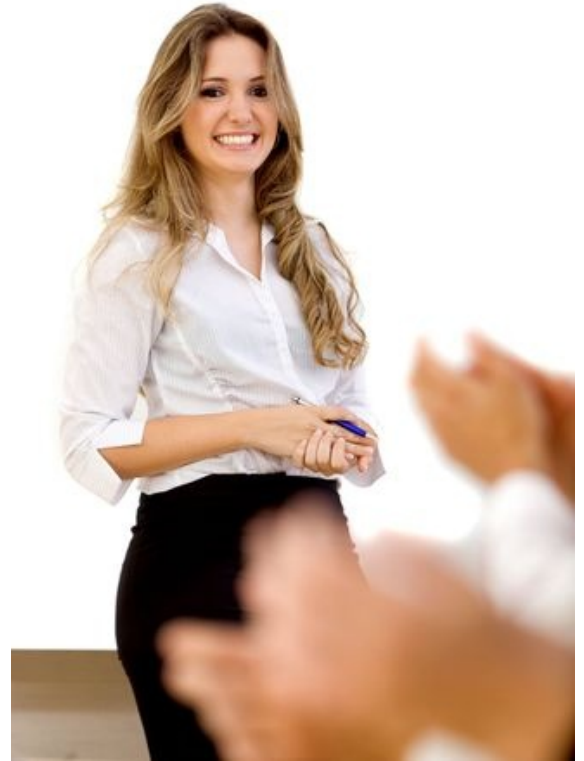
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You've been asked to make a presentation at a meeting and it's not something you do every day.

If you're feeling nervous, it's understandable. Standing up in front of a group of people can be intimidating. You feel judged. It's especially nerve-wracking if there are people in the audience you want to impress. It's scary; what if there are jerks in the audience who want to trip you up?

Although you might be tempted to hand over the assignment to a more experienced colleague, don't do it. The ability to speak persuasively in front of a group of co-workers is a valuable skill. Making a presentation also gives you visibility, which executive coach Joel Garfinkle, author of [Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level](#), says is vital to your career success. "Visibility," he writes, "is important because the people who make decisions about your career need to be aware of your value."

Here's a round-up of tips for how to present with flair and confidence at your next meeting.



1. When you prepare, ask yourself these [five questions to help organize your thoughts](#).
2. Keep it short and sweet. According to communications expert Dean Brenner, you need to [keep it brief, but be ready to do a deep dive](#).
3. Consider how people like to learn information. Are they a "talker" or a "thinker"?
4. Check out [Nancy Duarte's blog](#) on creating powerful presentations.
5. Professional speaker Garr Reynolds nails it with this quick ["top 10" tips list](#).
6. Kenny Nguyen is CEO of Big Fish Presentations. He writes about the [10 "commandments" of making presentations](#). I especially like commandment #3: "Never deliver a presentation you wouldn't want to sit through yourself."
7. Do a "dry run" in front of someone you trust. You need to get feedback before you "go live" in front of an audience.

And my final words of advice: **you can do this**. Even if you're nervous, even if you don't have the fanciest visuals, even if the guy in the back row is giving you the stink eye, you can do this. Each time you make a presentation, you gain more confidence. You improve.

And that, my friends, is how to lead yourself towards career success—one growth opportunity at a time.

What are your best tips for making a stellar presentation? Put them in the comments section below.

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