



PhD Program

Graduate School of Nursing
University of Massachusetts,
Worcester

Develop Skill as a Presenter

Scholarship often involves oral presentation of ideas in classes, seminars, webinars, panel discussions, conference presentations, and networking/poster sessions. Presenters can learn skills that enhance their listeners' grasp of important ideas through what they hear and see.

Various GSN and online resources can assist nursing scholars to develop and master skills for oral presentations. Resources range

from online tips, through peer and mentor review, to professional, individualized coaching and supports. Some are available no cost. Other involve a fee. All involve practice.

Here we describe tips and resources intended to help with an array of challenges, such as distracting habits, and fears about speaking to large, expert audiences. Other challenges include being able to engage the

audience, and adjusting one's own colloquial speech patterns, such as dropping r's, speaking rapidly, and using regional terms or phrases not familiar to listeners in another region.

We hope this first edition of a guide is helpful, and we invite your feedback, to inform later editions. Thank you.

A "Speaking Selfie" Could Be Fun...

Try recording a practice segment of one of your presentations, using audio and video tools on your computer or cell phone. Play it back alone or with a trusted peer for insight into your skills.



Video Resources

Susan McConnell's (Stanford) video, [Designing Effective Scientific Presentations](#), (iBiology.org) on YouTube

Jean Luc Dumont's video, [Creating Effective Slides: Design, Construction, and Use in Science](#) (Stanford University Center for Teaching and Learning, on YouTube)

Julian Treasure's TED Talk, [How to Speak So that People Want to Listen](#), for tips about positive, skilled speaking and warm-up exercises (TED.com).

Tips for Presenters

If you have a presentation coming up, practice, practice, practice!

1. Develop your talk and any related visuals, incorporating organizer's guidelines, if available.
2. Practice with a recording device and a timer, to gauge content.
3. Reserve a room to practice using a microphone and slide equipment, including a remote.
4. At least two weeks in advance, arrange for a peer review with colleagues, or GSN Presentation Mock Review.

Written Resources

Michael Alley's (2003) PDF, [The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid](#), New York: Springer-Vergas (2nd Edition), 2013, available for purchase).

Jean-luc Dumont's (2009) [Trees, Maps, and Theorems: Effective Communication for Rational Minds](#). Belgium: Principiae.

A, Hayne & G. McDaniel (2013). [Presentation Rubric: Improving Faculty Professional Presentations](#), *Nursing Forum*, 48, 289-294.

The University of Kent's [Presentation Skills](#) site, including "Observer's Notes (for reviewers).

Worried Something Will Go Wrong at the Last Minute?

Do you worry that when the time comes to present, you won't be able to find your presentation, or technology will fail? Ease your mind with some simple steps.

Create ready access to your presentation.

- Send your presentation ahead as a PDF file if the organizer allows that.
- Send a copy of your presentation to yourself so you can access it anywhere you can access your mail.
- Bring a back-up file with you on a thumb drive.
- Consider bringing a printed copy of your talk with you.

When you arrive at the place where you will give your talk, introduce yourself to a staff person who can show you where you will present and orient you to equipment.

- Take a few minutes to consider the microphone.
- Is it attached to the podium?
- Can you freely move around and still be heard?
- Test handheld and lapel microphones, checking for interference from your clothing or accessories as you move.
- Practice advancing slides while using the microphone.

Speaking and presenting in scholarly contexts involve a number of skills. Some of them develop naturally. Others require insightful strategy and expert direction. For example, learning to manage inflection and accent are skills that might develop more quickly with coaching.

Speech coaches can assist multi-lingual scholars with what experts call “foreign-accented” speech. Sessions focus on accent modification – not accent elimination – so each speaker’s unique character is maintained, while audience understanding improves. Services begin with formal assessment. Measurable results may be evident within the first several sessions. Some coaches offer these services online through readily accessible video/voice programs. Some coaches



offer to work again with scholar speakers preparing for specific speaking engagements after initial service is complete.

Voice coaches may assist scholars with learning to enunciate words, breathe, manage pitch, and project and pace speech for group audiences. Search “public speaking classes” and “voice coach” in your

location to find these resources.

Coaching services often involve fees for service on an hourly or project basis. Employers may assist with fees. In some instances, insurers cover speech services, such as speech therapy services. More often, scholars access speech and voice coaching services independently, for professional reasons.

SPEECH COACHING SERVICES

EBAM Institute L.L.C.
ebaminstitute.com

Amee P. Shah PhD, CCC-SLP
330-551-EBAM

Speech Coach Company
speechcoachcompany.com

Janelle Winston, MS
Info@speechcoachcompany.com

Worcester State University
Speech Language Clinic
www.worcester.edu/Speech-Language-Hearing-Center

Ann Veneziano-Korzek, MS, CCC-SLP
508-829-8055