

Presenting with Charisma

THEORY OVERVIEW

- Use your voice and body! Based on research from Psychologist Albert Mehrabian, the following elements and their respective importance reflect “what matters” when it comes to being perceived as a “good” presenter. Most of us spend the bulk of our time working on content - which matters - but not as much as we might think:
 - Content 7% | Voice 38% | Body language 55%
- Congruence matters! Voice and body language must match and support the content. Saying “I’m so excited to be here” (content) in monotone (voice) while not making eye contact (body language) is incongruent --and inauthentic.
- Be Persuasive! The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, divided the means of persuasion into three categories. Blend these to enhance your case:
 - Ethos (character) - ethical appeal, credibility, authority of speaker
 - Pathos (experience or suffering) - emotional appeal
 - Logos (word) - logic and reason

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PRACTICAL TIPS

Public speaking tops people's list of greatest fears, making it more scary than dying! It's totally normal to be nervous -- we're biologically wired this way. Here are top tips on how to manage this:

Before You Present

- **Be prepared (but not too prepared):** Know your content, but don't over-rehearse. That can trip you up during the live presentation if you realize that you said something differently from how you had rehearsed it.
- **Power pose:** Just 2 minutes (standing with feet spread and arms up OR with hands on your hips) increases confidence. Go to the bathroom before you present and whip this out in the stall.
- **Take a (16-second) breather:** 4 seconds to inhale > 4 seconds to hold the breath > 4 seconds to exhale > 4 seconds to hold the breath. This is a proven way to quickly calm down, and you can do this right before you're up to present.

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While You Present

- **Be human:** Use simple, conversational words so that you are relatable (which makes people like you!) and easy to understand.
- **The power of pause:** Catch your breath, take a sip of water... when done strategically*, you re-capture your audience's attention and give yourself a moment to reset. Want proof? Listen to President Obama speak – he's mastered the use of the pause and it's one of the reasons he's such an impactful speaker.
 - *Pause before saying something in a new way, after saying something important, as you change slides or topics to let listeners absorb details.
- **Speak a little louder and slower than you think you should:** Volume and pace are tied to Voice (38% of your presentation!), yet we tend to speak more softly (to make us less noticeable) and quickly (to get to the end sooner) when presenting, which makes it hard for our audience to catch what we're saying.
- **Don't apologize:** If you "mess up" (ex: stumble on words), just keep going! No need to bring attention back to something most people didn't notice (or think was a problem) in the first place.