Presenting Effectively:
Vocal & Nonverbal Communication

Oral vs. Written Communication

Lecturing is a form of audience-centered oral communication that differs in important ways from written communication.

Oral vs. Written Communication

- Unlike written communication, oral communication allows for immediate listener feedback.
  - The listener may provide the speaker important visual cues (i.e. non-verbal indicators of agreement, confusion, skepticism, keen interest, etc).
  - The speaker is responsible for adapting to the listener’s non-verbal cues.

Oral vs. Written Communication

- Unlike written communication, oral communication cannot be “reread.”
  - Listeners have only one opportunity to absorb the speaker’s message.
  - The speaker is responsible for facilitating audience understanding through the use of “audience helpers”:
    - Simple and clear organization
    - Preview and summary statements
    - Clear labeling of points
    - Signposting

Vocal & Nonverbal Communication

- The Voice in Delivery
  (Vocal Communication)

- The Body in Delivery
  (Non-Verbal Communication)
The Voice in Delivery

1. Volume
2. Vocal Variety
3. Rate
4. Pauses
5. Articulation

Volume
- Project your voice enough to be heard easily without overpowering your audience.
- Adjust your volume to account for variables such as room size, audience size, & background noise.

Vocal Variety
- Avoid a monotonous pitch or tone.
- Vary your pitch to show enthusiasm for your subject and to promote audience attentiveness.

Rate
- Speak at a comfortable, easy-to-follow pace.
- Look for non-verbal cues from the audience that your rate may be too fast.

Pauses
- Make use of strategic pauses (i.e. to allow the listener adequate time to take notes, for dramatic effect, etc.)
- Avoid distracting “vocalized” pauses such as “um,” “ah,” “okay,” etc.

Articulation
- Speak with clarity, emphasizing every syllable.
- Avoid mumbling and slurring words.
The Body in Delivery

1. Eye Contact
2. Facial Expressions
3. Gestures & Movements

Eye Contact
- Make regular eye contact, as appropriate.
- Avoid reading or relying too heavily on your lecture notes. Record and use “key words” as prompts.

Facial Expressions
- Use natural facial expressions to convey emotions.
- Facial expressions should correspond with or match the tenor of the message.

Gestures & Movements
- Make use of natural gestures and movements to reinforce your verbal message.
- Avoid distracting movements such as swaying and rocking, playing with your pen, or rattling your notes.