

Incorporating Oral Communication Skills in Your Teaching

Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success. Paul J. Meyer

- *100% of surveyed executives listed communication (oral, speaking capability, written, presenting, listening) as extremely important. (Marcel, 2015)*
- *Sound presentation skills are acknowledged by policy-makers in the world as what well-educated graduates should exhibit (Van Ginkel et al. 2017).*
- *Common complaints about graduates' poor performance in public speaking among employers (Hill and Storey 2003)*
- *Deficit between candidates' required and actual skills was greatest for written and oral communication abilities (Maguire Associates, 2012)*
- *Employers view the development of written and oral communication skills as the primary responsibility of colleges and universities (Maguire Associates, 2012).*
- *Pedagogical strategies in classroom are needed.*

1-What are common communication skills students need for the work place?

Communication competencies in the workplace include:

- Writing communications (emails, memos, letters, reports, papers)- happens outside class (here we talk only about oral communication).
- Email is the most-used communication method for every desk job.
- Presentation skills (oral – happens in class) – to different audiences in different settings (interview, reporting, seminar, conference, debriefing in a meeting, or teaching)
- One-on-one oral communication
- Group and team communication
- Active listening
- Meeting facilitation

2-What are the biggest issues with oral communication and public speaking?

Anxiety and fear of public speaking is usually the biggest issue, and you need to create desensitization strategies to overcome that fear via small steps.

3.What can we possibly do in our teaching to support oral communication skills?

Strategies to Incorporate Presentation Skills in your Teaching

- The Syllabus: Find opportunities in your syllabus and course design to support oral communication skills. ex. individual or group projects/assignments and presentations

Course Design

- **Outcomes** (for course and for each individual lesson)
 - Make presentation skills part of your outcomes

- *Ex: By the end of this course, students will be able to design and deliver a presentation on X with clear opening, body, and conclusion.*
- **Assessment**
 - Assign grades (& rubric) for presentations (and its components)
 - Peer assessment: Let students provide oral & written feedback (as part of the participation grade) using a checklist (see handout), so they become familiar with the required skills.
- **Activities**
 - Help students develop mastery for presentation skill
 - To develop mastery, students must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned.
 - Breakdown presentation to smaller task
 - Make time for practice (Use some class time to practice)=
 - Teaching = Content + Practice + Assessment
 - **Let them practice with self** (video recording – submit video recorded assignment)
 - **Practice with one another- small groups**
 - Pair up – give 1-2 minute elevator talk (standing) to a partner. Partner gives feedback.
 - Let them practice their opening in pairs (3 times)
 - Impromptu speaking (on part of project on spur of the moment)-Pair/square
 - Present in small groups (TPSS)
 - **Practice with the whole class**
 - Final project as a poster/ppt presentation
 - 3 min. message (important concept to present in 3 min. w/evidence and examples, and order (1st, 2nd)- use rubric to score it (for review sessions)

Support one-on-one and group communication

Strategies

- Directed Paraphrasing
- Think-Pair (square)-Share
- Snow balling (2-4-8)
- Fishbowl
- Forced Debate
- Single Jigsaw
- [Gallery Walk Jigsaw](#)
- Role play

Examples for Role Play

- **Market behavior (simulating a market)**
 - buyers and sellers of some good
 - strike deals to exchange the good
- **Election process and political convention model**

-roles of party delegates to a political convention

- **Booking a hotel room (language class)**

-Receptionist and customer

General Tips

- Connect presentation to your course outcomes
- Explain to students the value of effective presentation for their career
- Grade their presentation (even the small steps they do). Use and share a rubric for evaluating presentations- assess their prep work.
- Allow opportunities to practice small segments of presentation over the course of the semester to reduce anxiety and permit mastery
- Space it out: 5 10-minutes practice session spaced out throughout the course will more effectively than a single 50 –minutes practice session.
- Start small: try a small exercise in a single session and see how the students respond.
- Divide students to groups where they target different level of audience (ex. pharmacist talking to client, doctor or manager)
- In general: need to move class more and more toward “skill-based” activities.

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