



PART 4—PRESENTATION SKILLS

4.4 Humor

You can make fun of yourself, but never make fun of a student. Be very careful about teasing them, even if done in a good-natured way. Even if the person is someone you know well, others in the class may take it the wrong way.

Don't degrade others with inappropriate jokes and don't use inappropriate dialogue or profanity to try to relate to a work situation. Don't build a presentation around jokes you've collected. Do incorporate relevant bits and pieces of humor into your message. Never use off-color words or jokes, or profanity in class.

Before you use a joke, be sure it passes all of the tests: not prejudicial, not sexist, not racist, not targeted at a group, not political, nor inappropriate for a business setting. Avoid slang words because they can be offensive to some groups, and idioms might not be understood by everyone in the class.



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section *Your Presentation Skills* 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7.

4.5 Move Around

Don't sit unless you're working on something with an individual student or there are no more than five people in the class. Travel around the room during your presentation so people will have to keep their eyes focused on you. When you sit, the students' eyes are likely to begin to relax making it difficult for them to pay attention. Moving around creates a lively energy, encourages your students to keep their eyes open, and reduces your own stress.

On the other hand, too much erratic movement can be very distracting and annoying, and may cause tension in the audience. I personally use a barstool when presenting. When I feel the need to rest my legs and feet, I lean on the stool and continue my presentation. But I don't sit on it.

4.6 Names

People love to be noticed and appreciate it when you use their names, so try to remember the names of your students. Nameplates on the table in front of each student will help you remember everyone's name. Also provide name badges if appropriate—but not the ones that are pinned on and make holes in clothing. This makes it easier for you and fellow students to learn names and build relationships.

4.7 Participation

Student participation stimulates involvement and motivation to learn. It's the fastest form of learning, and students remember more when they're engaged in the process. Learning isn't a spectator sport! If a question comes up about something you haven't yet taught, let the student know you'll be addressing that subject later in the presentation. If it is a calculation problem add it to the following class program so you can show them the steps to work the problem.

Audience participation feeds information about the student to the instructor and aids in student analysis and evaluation. This feedback is important to the instructor in determining

if the class objectives are being met. That comes from questions, body language, and evaluations, so:

- Make student participation easy for everyone.
- Be a cheerleader and be open to suggestions.

You can't always have 100 percent participation, because some people have their own agenda, or they're exhausted, on medication, ill, or any number of other issues. Some instructors become so preoccupied with one student looking around, or looking at a watch (when everyone else is interested and involved) that the he or she loses focus.

Don't work so hard on that one person who just really wants to take a little nap during your presentation. You might drive yourself nuts trying to address the single student who just isn't paying attention, and in the meantime forget that everyone else is already interested and ready to go forward.