



PART 6—THE PRESENTATION

Notes



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section *The Presentation*
6.1, 6.2, 6.3.

6.1 Introduction

This is what it's all about. We've already talked about everything leading up to you being in front of your students and teaching them. The presentation is the tool used to help you transfer knowledge to your students, to inspire them, and to change their lives.

First Minutes. The first few minutes of a presentation are crucial. The hardest part is simply getting started. You'll want to:

- Soften the strangeness of the moment, and meeting people in advance is a good way to accomplish this goal.
- Defuse the students' defenses by being just a little playful in the introduction.
- Slice through the natural reluctance to expose feelings and emotions, and talking to people before the class begins helps encourage your students to open up.

Meeting and talking with as many people as possible before class begins helps everyone relax because you're getting to know each other. Your introduction actually begins during this time and not at the "official" beginning of your presentation.

Before your students arrive, set out a flyer that contains a detailed outline of what they can expect. Be sure it contains a biography of you and your interests so they can better relate to you. Meet and greet people before the class begins and during break times.

Let your students know up front that you're *delighted* to have them there. Tell them, right off the bat, "I've been looking forward to this moment and I'm excited to be here." and mean it!

Make Friends. Make friends by using eye contact, move on to another face, lock in, read the reaction, and then continue. Just keep making friends by speaking in a way that comes easily and naturally for you. An easy way to get people involved is to ask them a simple question about traffic, the meeting location, or some other universal topic.

Don't force students to introduce themselves at the beginning of the class. Some of them will be uneasy speaking or being in the spotlight, so be sensitive when asking for volunteers. Many students may feel uncomfortable with public introductions, especially at the beginning of a class, so consider the audience carefully before asking for them to participate early on. In fact, I recommend you don't ask people to introduce themselves because you have a finite amount of time in which to complete your presentation and you can't control how long they'll talk.

Focus on the student who shows the most interest, and transmit real feeling to him or her with friendly eye contact. Let that person know he or she is important and begin to build a relationship. You'll be warmed up in no time, and your students won't be far behind. You can easily involve everyone by asking them what they hope to get out of this program.

6.2 Breaks

It's always better to schedule breaks in advance than to wait until someone shouts out, "Hey! How about a break?" Have a timer that will alert you when it's time for a scheduled break. Schedule them at appointed times and follow a consistent timetable.

You can insert a slide in your presentation at a point where you think a break might be called for as a reminder to yourself. This can be a subtle clue such as a slide advertising your website or an upcoming class.

Break Schedule. When you call a break, let everyone know the specific time to return, and then start promptly when the break is over. Use a PowerPoint count-down timer to help everyone stay on schedule.

Don't continually look at your watch to schedule breaks. Take it off and lay it by your laptop where you can easily see it. Using a timer instead of your watch may work better for you.

For an 8-hour program, I suggest the following break schedule:

Start	8:00 am
First break	9:15 am (10 to 15 minutes)
Second break	10:45 am (10 to 15 minutes)
Lunch	12:00 noon (one hour)
Third break	2:15 pm (10 to 15 minutes)
Fourth break	3:45 pm (10 to 15 minutes)
End	5:00 pm

Print it out and give each student a copy so they'll know when they can take care of any personal business without missing portions of your presentation.

Start Back on Time. Be sure you start on time after a break! A count-down timer will help you stay on schedule. If nothing else, refer to a clock in the room that everyone can see, and tell the group what time you'll resume speaking.

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Questions at Break. What do you do if you get questions as you're starting after a break? Simply explain that you can't answer the question(s) at this time because the break is over, and you'll get with them later. If you receive questions during break that are pertinent to the topic, write them down to share with the class. As the students are making their way back to their seats, you can share these questions and answers which will begin bringing them back on task.

Let students know you'll be available after class to answer questions individually. Don't schedule anything else that might infringe on this time.

6.3 Create Conflict

Bring up an issue you know will "get them started." Show some information that you know some people in the group just won't believe. This will make them sit up and take notice. There are many interesting sources of little-known facts that you can incorporate into your presentation or your count-down timer.

This can be a very touchy strategy—use it with caution so the conflict doesn't snowball into confrontation. Anything you bring up during a class should be carefully planned in advance.