Business Presentations
Advanced

Session 2: Opening a Presentation
Learning Objectives

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In this session, you will:

• Think about your presentation style.
• Reflect on and identify presentation strengths and weaknesses.
• Work on opening presentations with an icebreaker and a hook.
Let’s Discuss

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What’s Your Presentation Style?

Task 1: *Explain which situations make you feel most comfortable when giving a presentation.*

It’s time for a bit of self-reflection. Think about what type of presenter you are. In other words, when you speak to an audience, what makes you feel most comfortable? Here are some possibilities:

- I feel most comfortable speaking to small group of well-known colleagues.
- I really enjoy discussing solutions. I guess you’d call me a problem-solver.
- I prefer speaking to larger groups about the big picture.
- I love to pitch my own ideas on my own projects.
- There’s nothing more satisfying to me than putting together a well-organized presentation.
The Challenges of Presentations

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Task 2: Tell us about the two biggest challenges you face when giving a presentation.

Next, think about the challenges you face when presenting. For example:

• I like to hide behind my notes and bullet points!
• I find giving a presentation in English challenging.
• I have difficulties keeping on track.
• I become nervous when asked questions about my presentations.
• I talk too quickly.
• Technology often gets in the way of making an effective presentation.
Let’s Practice

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Crafting the Opening

The opening of a presentation can be divided into a few parts. It will include a welcome, an icebreaker to relax the atmosphere, and a hook to get the audience’s attention. For this lesson, we will focus on effective icebreakers and hooks. Look at the examples below. Why do you think they are effective?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icebreakers</th>
<th>Hooks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s great to see so many countries represented here today.</td>
<td>Did you know the average person falls asleep in seven minutes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to thank everyone for coming out in this weather!</td>
<td>Did you know Hilton was the first international hotel chain?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As I child, I always wanted to visit Tokyo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s nothing like waking up to the view of the Blue Mountains.</td>
<td>What are the top three qualities successful salespeople all have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never thought I’d ever have the chance to cross the Golden Gate Bridge, but here I am.</td>
<td>What are the top three things all potential buyers want to know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The people of Beijing are some of the warmest I’ve met.</td>
<td>What is the number one thing an investor wants to know about you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The road to success and the road to failure are almost exactly the same.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Practice
Advanced

You are giving a presentation on effective advertising in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Seoul, or Beijing. Choose your city, welcome the audience, and provide an icebreaker using one of the following cues:

• A special experience in the city
• A joke about the weather
• A thank-you to the audience for making a special effort to attend
• A reference to the beauty of the city
• A reference to the people of the city
Let's Practice

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A **hook** is a statistic, rhetorical question, story, or quote that will grab your audience's attention. Consider how the hook might be important for your audience.

You are giving a presentation on the importance of excellent customer service. Choose your city, welcome the audience, and provide a hook using one of the following cues:

**Statistic**
*Twenty percent of online consumers return to the same site.*

**Rhetorical Question**
*A bad customer experience?*

**Quote**
*“Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.”* – Bill Gates

**Story**
*Tell a story about your own poor customer experience.*
You are giving a presentation on the benefits of real estate as a long-term investment. Choose your city, welcome the audience, and provide a hook using one of the following cues:

**Statistic**
The median home value has more than quadrupled over the past 70 years.

**Rhetorical Question**
What are the chances that buying a home in 1980 was an excellent investment?

**Quote**
“Real estate investing remains a tried and true means of building wealth.” – Robert Klyosaki

**Story**
Tell a story about someone you know who made a huge profit by investing in real estate.
Apply It!

Advanced

• Reflect on presentations you have given in the past. Have you used icebreakers and hooks?
• Choose a topic for a presentation. Come up with a rhetorical question, a statistic, a story, and a quote for the topic.