Group Presentations

Group assignments can be daunting, you generally do not know each other beforehand and it can be hard to meet as a group to make decisions and work on your project. Group work and presentations are required assignments in many classes; so it is important to know how to work effectively in a group, and how to create a cohesive presentation.

Working as a Group

- Decide on group roles early in the process. It helps to have one person who keeps notes and checks in with other members to keep them on task. Use the skills of each group member to better the overall project. If you have a group member who is good with PowerPoint or Prezi, have them put together the visual aid, etc.
- Encourage group participation in preparing the presentation by asking individual members to contribute content and setting a positive atmosphere.
- Set a group goal that includes a strategy, the purpose of the group, and the resources needed to fulfill the goal.
- Try to meet up as an entire group at least once, and set up an email chain or Google document that you all can make changes to as you work on the project.
- Develop a group presentation outline that everyone can agree on and that clearly states what will be covered.

Preparing the Presentation

- Determine what each member will do during the presentation. Assign one person to run the visual aid until she speaks.
- Decide on speaking order, putting more nervous speakers first can help. You don’t want them using the presentation time to be worrying about how their part of the presentation will go.
- Analyze the audience and come to a group consensus of what the audience needs to hear.
- If introductions are necessary, decide whether each member will introduce themselves at the beginning of the presentation or immediately before they speak.
- Decide how each section will fit together. Practice introductions and transitions when moving from group member to group member to make the presentation flow smoothly. Transitions can be as simple as “Now that I have explained how to analyze demographics, Jane will tell you all how to research your competition.” or transitions can tie together themes from each of the sections “Now Jane will continue to explain how to analyze your market by looking at competition”
- Decide what will happen when each member is finished speaking. Will they sit or stand? This may sound basic, but determining this ahead of time will prevent awkward moments.
• Rehearse the speech many times (both as a group and individually) to work out any bugs beforehand. Make sure that you time your rehearsals so that you have a good idea of the length of the presentation.

**Giving the Presentation**

• Use discrete hand signals to indicate when a speaker is speaking too quickly or slowly, too quietly or too loudly. Time the speech and let others know how much time they have left.
• Speakers who go later in the presentation have the burden of deciding if they need to cut information, so decide what can be cut for time before the speech day.
• As a group, try and dress in a similar manner. Whether you decide on dressing formally or casually, make sure that you come to some agreement. The same can be said with the presentation—establish a visual aid that flows from one section to the other in similar font and color. Have all group members use similar language or terminology.

Group presentations can be challenging because of the effort that it takes to coordinate all of the members and the different sections of the presentation. Make sure that you give yourself plenty of time to work on the presentation. Use these tips and come to the Speaking Center for a polished and effective group presentation.