Oral presentations conducted in the construction industry have many different purposes and audiences. The audience may range from one’s supervisors to a project’s client. A presentation may be one in which the presenter is selling, defending, or merely providing information or an update on a topic. The keys to a successful oral presentation are to know who is in the audience, the purpose of the presentation, and be knowledgeable on the content included in the presentation.

**Considerations for Oral Presentation for the Construction Student**

**Opening**
- Dress professionally
- Provide self introduction
- Provide an attention getting opening or overview of presentation topic

**Audience Adaptation**
- Know who is in your audience
- Technical content must be accurate and appropriate for audience

**Delivery**
- Know how to operate your equipment
- Be familiar with the space in which presentation will be conducted
- Avoid distracting gestures (hand movement, pointer movement on screen)
- Speak loud enough for everyone to hear

The basics of speaking are, for the most part, consistent across disciplines. Knowing the expectations of a discipline is an important part of adapting to your audience, however. The papers in the “Speaking, in my opinion…” series do not represent an official statement from the department. They do, however, give you an introduction to different faculty opinions on effective speaking.
• Avoid “filler” words (um, ah, and uh…)
• Avoid using jargon
• Include your audience (eye contact, natural movement)

Content
• If using software (PowerPoint or similar) be sure you have error free (grammar and spelling) content on the slides
• Use a logical sequence for content order
• Provide references for content (avoid plagiarism)
• Do several trial runs to ensure length is within the time frame and practice smooth delivery of content
• Prepare “hidden” slides for additional details and explanations if needed during question/answer session
• Anticipate questions

Visuals: Design the layout of the presentation and ensure that you
• Avoid using too much color
• Limit content on slides (tendency to read—if wordy)
• Generate text that is large enough for audience to read
• Incorporate graphics and other tables and figures that are high-quality and relevant
• Avoid using inappropriate “bells and whistles”—animations, audio…