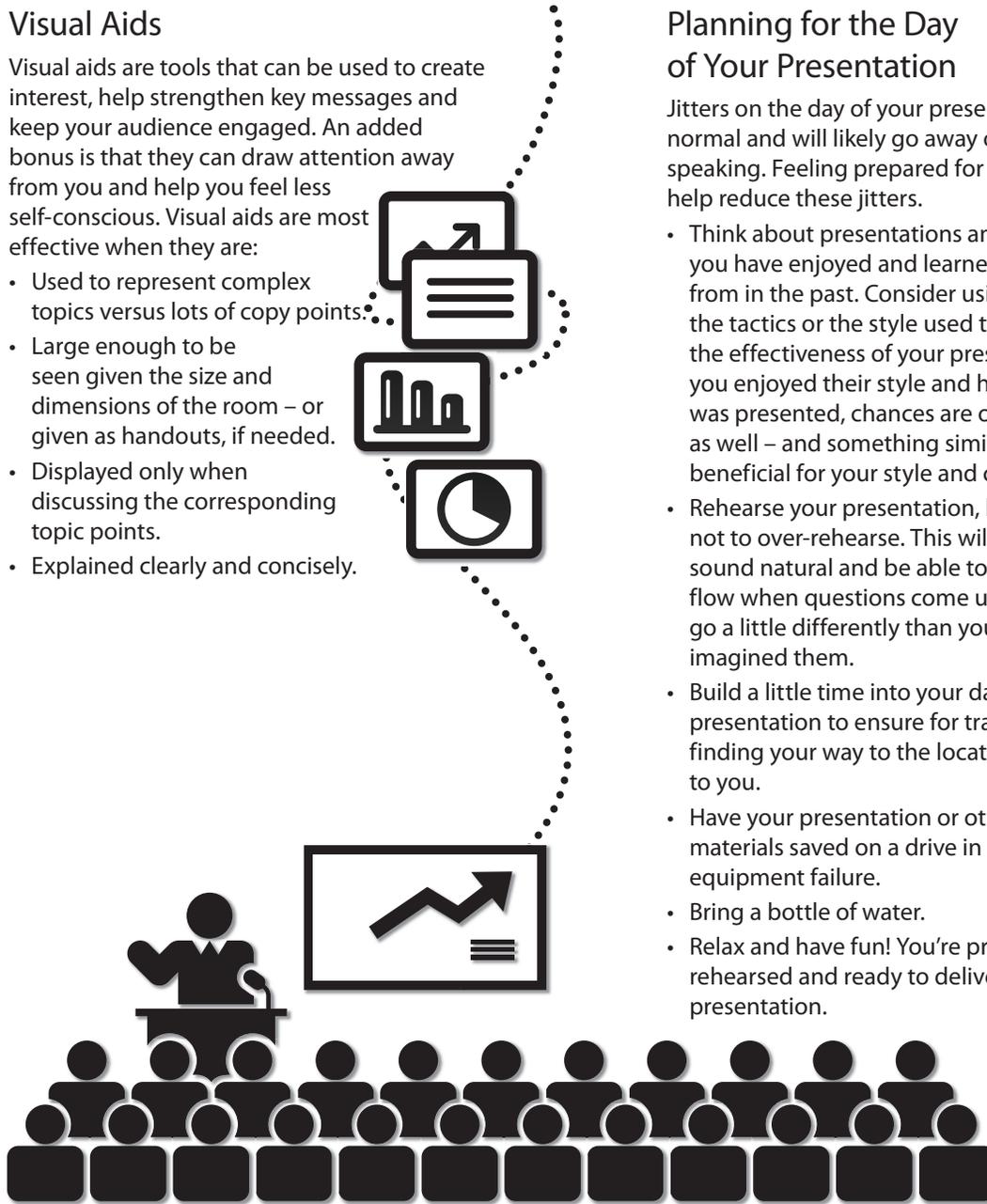


Visual Aids

Visual aids are tools that can be used to create interest, help strengthen key messages and keep your audience engaged. An added bonus is that they can draw attention away from you and help you feel less self-conscious. Visual aids are most effective when they are:

- Used to represent complex topics versus lots of copy points.
- Large enough to be seen given the size and dimensions of the room – or given as handouts, if needed.
- Displayed only when discussing the corresponding topic points.
- Explained clearly and concisely.



Planning for the Day of Your Presentation

Jitters on the day of your presentation are normal and will likely go away once you begin speaking. Feeling prepared for the day can help reduce these jitters.

- Think about presentations and presenters you have enjoyed and learned something from in the past. Consider using some of the tactics or the style used to increase the effectiveness of your presentation. If you enjoyed their style and how content was presented, chances are others did as well – and something similar could be beneficial for your style and content.
- Rehearse your presentation, but be careful not to over-rehearse. This will help you sound natural and be able to go with the flow when questions come up or things go a little differently than you may have imagined them.
- Build a little time into your day before the presentation to ensure for travel delays and finding your way to the location, if it's new to you.
- Have your presentation or other electronic materials saved on a drive in case there is an equipment failure.
- Bring a bottle of water.
- Relax and have fun! You're prepared, rehearsed and ready to deliver an effective presentation.



Effective

Public Speaking

When's the last time you were able to speak on a topic of choice to family or friends for a full 30-60 minutes, without interruption?



Most people don't regularly speak in front of groups for long periods, which is why the thought of delivering a speech or presentation doesn't always feel natural. That's why learning effective public speaking skills will give you the confidence and know-how you need to deliver that next presentation – whether it's to five people around a conference table or an auditorium filled with hundreds of faces.

The ability to effectively speak in public can mean lives saved when you're advocating the importance of topics, such as smoking cessation or blood pressure checks, or when you're enlisting community groups to support or sponsor a much-needed blood drive.

Know the Details

Most likely, you've been asked to speak because someone thought that you would be able to share information on a topic about which you are knowledgeable and which would be of interest to their audience. When invited to speak to a group of people, find out about the people who will be your audience. Start by answering the following questions:

- Who are they? This includes getting an understanding of what they do and their backgrounds.
- How many will attend, and why will they attend?
- What are they interested in?



- How much do they already know about the subject?
- How do they feel about this topic? Is there trust or skepticism?
- What is the attire? (If you don't know, it's okay to ask.)

The Presentation

- Who will introduce you? Provide this person with a short bio so they can introduce you. In turn, knowing who will be introducing you will give you an opportunity to acknowledge that person in the opening section of your presentation.



- Know the names and titles of the officers, special guests and important member(s) of the audience. You may wish to acknowledge these people and build a rapport with them before and during your presentation.

- How much time are you being allotted?
- Is a question and answer session scheduled?

The Facility

- Where is the facility located, and are there any special parking arrangements?
- What type of equipment does the meeting room need? This will inform what you will and will not have to bring with you.
- Is there internet access?
- How large and what type of meeting room is provided (a gym, an auditorium, a conference room, etc.)?



Planning the Presentation

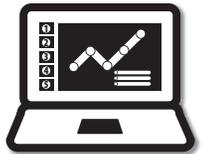
Knowing your audience will give you the direction needed in planning the type of content to prepare. If you will be presenting your topic to a room filled with novices, then a broad-based approach to your topic will be best. However, if your audience is already familiar with your topic, perhaps a presentation concentrating on the latest research and development trends will be the way to go.



Once you have a direction, you can start outlining your presentation and researching the topic and facts. Credibility can be damaged with just one incorrect "fact".

Learn far more information than you think you'll need by:

- Gathering everything you have on the topics.
- Researching the internet for facts, quotes and timely articles on the subject, as well as other industry sources.
- Get in touch with experts and learn what you can from them.



The confidence you will gain from "over learning" and being as prepared as possible will give you a great sense of security, especially when it comes to preparing for the types of questions you may be asked. It's important to know that you could be asked a question for which you don't have the answer. And that's okay. When this happens, admit that you don't have the answer, make a note of the question and who asked it and promise to find out and get back to that person or whoever coordinated the visit as soon as possible. Following through after the fact is a must!