

Tips for the Day of your Presentation

Before you leave:

- Be aware of the way you look. As a speaker, your visual presence is a way of establishing ethos. Dressing professionally is one way to communicate your composure and preparation to your audience.
- Try on your presentation outfit in advance: if you have squeaky shoes, noisy or distracting jewelry, or revealing clothing you could detract attention from your speech and diminish your ethos.
- Bring your notes and a copy of your slides. Remember to email yourself a backup copy of all documents, just in case.

During the day:

- Eat and drink normally. Try not to consume more caffeine, nicotine or other stimulants than you ordinarily would.
- Visualize yourself giving a fantastic speech. What's your rock-out music? Aretha? Vivaldi? The Yeh Yeh Yehs? Keep it playing in your head throughout the day.
- Run through your ideas aloud or in your head. Try not to focus on the specific words, but the order of your general ideas. Think, "First, I'm going to talk about . . . Then, I'll talk about . . ."

In the room:

- Walk confidently to the front of the room when it is your turn to speak. Scan the room, looking people in the eyes, to make sure you have everyone's attention before you begin.
- Be aware of your volume. Watch the faces of the people in the back of the room: are they leaning forward in order to hear you? Are the people in the front grimacing because you are speaking too loudly?
- Use the objects around you to enhance your presentation. The podium is an excellent place to put your notes, but your speech can be more engaging if you don't stay in one place. Use the space you have within the room: walk the length of the stage and engage the audience by moving around.
- Be aware of your stance. Avoid leaning on the podium, desk, or wall. Use your stance to communicate your intentionality: maintain good posture, lean towards the audience during important points, etc.
- Time is difficult to gauge for novice speakers. If you are comfortable, ask someone to give you time signals. And remember to look at them!