Lecture 22

22.1. Anxiety and Fear

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by an unpleasant state of inner turmoil. During a presentation or presentation rehearsal, anxiety is often accompanied by nervous behavior, such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaints, and rumination. It is often accompanied by muscular tension, restlessness, fatigue and problems in concentration. It is the subjectively unpleasant feeling of dread over anticipated disappointment and usually stems from the fear of public speaking.

Fear is a feeling induced by perceived danger about a current event or threat that occurs in certain types of organisms. During a presentation, this is usually the fear of public speaking which stems from the fear of being judged or scrutinized by the audience. The symptoms include shaky hands, blushing cheeks, memory loss, nausea, nocking knees and confused speech.

Anxiety is not the same as fear, which is a response to a real or perceived immediate threat, whereas anxiety is the expectation of future threat – delivering a presentation. This results in a loss of focus as an overreaction to fear of public speaking. Rest assured that anxiety is subjectively seen as menacing. The discussion highlighted in this document aim not only to eliminate this subjective feeling but also to help you prepare to present your best, to enlighten your audience and ultimately to persuade them.

Figure 1 The resulting laughter hardly happens!

22.2. Planning Your Presentation

Preparing a presentation can be an overwhelming experience if you allow it to be one. The strategies and steps below are provided to help you break down what you might view as a large job into smaller, more manageable tasks.

22.2.1. Analyze Your Audience

The first step in preparing a presentation is to learn more about the audience to whom you'll be speaking. It's a good idea to obtain some information on the backgrounds, values, and interests of your audience so that you understand what the audience members might expect from your presentation.

22.2.2. Select A topic

Next, if possible select a topic that is of interest to the audience and to you. It will be much easier to deliver a presentation that the audience finds relevant, and more enjoyable to research a topic that is of interest to you.

22.2.3. Define the Objective of the Presentation

Once you have selected a topic, write the objective of the presentation in a single concise statement. The objective needs to specify exactly what you want your audience to learn from your presentation. Base the objective and the level of the content on the amount of time you have for the presentation and the background knowledge of the audience. Use this statement to help keep you focused as you research and develop the presentation.

22.2.4. Prepare the Body of the Presentation

After defining the objective of your presentation, determine how much information you can present in the amount of time allowed. Also, use your knowledge about the audience to prepare a presentation with the right level of detail. You don't want to plan a presentation that is too basic or too advanced.

The body of the presentation is where you present your ideas. To present your ideas convincingly, you will need to illustrate and support them. Strategies to help you do this include the following:

- Present data and facts
- Read quotes from experts
- Relate personal experiences
- Provide vivid descriptions

And remember, as you plan the body of your presentation, it's important to provide variety. Listeners may quickly become bored by lots of facts or they may tire of hearing story after story.

22.2.5. Prepare the Introduction and Conclusion

Once you've prepared the body of the presentation, decide how you will begin and end the talk. Make sure the introduction captures the attention of your audience and the conclusion summarizes and reiterates your important points. In other words, "Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Then, tell them what you told them."

During the opening of your presentation, it's important to attract the audience's attention and build their interest. If you don't, listeners will turn their attention elsewhere and you'll have a difficult time getting it back. Strategies that you can use include the following:

- Make the introduction relevant to the listeners' goals, values, and needs.

- Ask questions to stimulate thinking.
- Share a personal experience.
- Project a cartoon or colorful visual ads.
- Make a stimulating or inspirational statement.
- Give a unique demonstration.

During the opening, you want to clearly present your topic and the purpose of your presentation. Clearly articulating the topic and purpose will help the listeners focus on and easily follow your main ideas.

During the conclusion of your presentation, reinforce the main ideas you communicated. Remember that listeners won't remember your entire presentation, only the main ideas. By reinforcing and reviewing the main ideas, you help the audience remember them.

22.3. Visual Ads

Visual aids can be a very powerful tool to enhance the impact of your presentations. Words and images presented in different formats can appeal directly to your audience's imagination, adding power to your spoken words. Visual aids are defined as charts, pictures or images that help to make a point or enhance a presentation. An example of visual aids are bar graphs and pie charts that are used to illustrate percentages of products sold and the change in sales over time.

Visual aids can help you to reach your objectives by providing emphasis to whatever is being said. Clear pictures multiply the students' level of understanding of the material presented, and they should be used to reinforce your message, clarify points, and create excitement. Visual aids involve your students and require a change from one activity to another: from hearing to seeing. With pictures, the concepts or ideas that you present are no longer simply words – rather words plus images. If students don't clearly grasp the spoken word, a visual may help them to better absorb information. Visuals can help to make complex information more understandable. They provide a change from just listening, and pictures typically stimulate interest more easily than words.

Think about using a variety of different visual images. Try using photographs, tables, diagrams, charts, drawings, key words, or video sequences. Be creative and deliberate in your choice of images to achieve the most impact.

Think of your next presentation. How can you display your material visually? What techniques might help you present your argument or results in a stimulating way? What might add emphasis to your spoken words?

22.3.1. When to use visual aids

Words and images can be used throughout your presentation from the introduction to the conclusion. However, remember to restrict their use to key moments in your presentation; an over use of visual aids can be hard to follow.

Think about using visual aids at the following times:

22.3.1.1. Introduction

- Display the title of your presentation;
- Define technical terms or units;
- Indicate a structure to your presentation by listing your main points;
- Display an image which encapsulates your theme(s);
- Highlight a question you intend answering during your presentation;

22.3.1.2. Main points

- Highlight new points with an appropriate image or phrase;
- Support technical information with clearly displayed data;
- Indicate sequence by linking points together;
- Offer evidence from your research to support your argument;

22.3.1.3. Conclusion

- Summarize your main points on a slide;
- present your conclusion in a succinct phrase or image;
- display your key references to allow your audience to read more on your topic.

22.3.2. Example of Visual Ads

- Presentation Tool (MS PowerPoint, etc.)
- Overhead Projector
- Graphs/Charts
- Pictures
- Films/Video
- Flip Charts
- Sketches
- Handouts
- Posters
- Role Plays

22.4. Microsoft PowerPoint

There are various presentation tools available which you may use to enhance your presentation. Built-in professional-looking graphics and tools allow even the most novice user to create impressive visual presentations. Some of these are shown pictorially in Figure 2. In this handout, we'll only discuss Microsoft PowerPoint as a presentation software program since it is commonly used in both businesses and classrooms and is available to Students of COMSATS Institute of Information Technology.

PowerPoint is a visual and graphical application, primarily used for creating presentations. With PowerPoint, you can create, view, and present slide shows that combine text, shapes, pictures, graphs, animation, charts and even videos. Use them to your best, depending on the type of presentation. Remember the Presentation Skills while creating a PowerPoint presentation.

As a presentation tool PowerPoint, can be used to animate your slides to give them greater visual impact. PPT is a file extension for a presentation file format used by Microsoft PowerPoint, the popular presentation software commonly used for office and educational slide shows. All text images, sound and video used in the presentation are contained in the PPT file.

Figure 2 Some presentation tools

22.4.1. Use of Visual Aid in PowerPoint Presentation

Years ago, equipment like overhead projectors and posters provided the common visual aids; however, with the evolution of multimedia, specifically including the development of Microsoft PowerPoint, slide shows and portable digital projectors for showing animated clips have become common.

The possible uses of PowerPoint are countless. A slide show can help a teacher teach a lesson, illustrate an event in history, easily display statistical information, or be used for training in corporations. A slide show can be a valuable tool for teaching, sharing and learning. PowerPoint presentations are useful no matter what the topic and help communicate ideas to an audience.

If you want to insert a chart, picture, graph, or any other graphic, click on the 'Insert' tab at the top of the window. Here you will see buttons of all the options of what you can insert into your slide. Click the designated box and insert what it is you want to have on that slide. A second way you can insert pictures and graphs is when you have an empty text or image box. Little pictures of the same options you saw in the toolbox will show up in the middle of the box, and you can click any of these to insert as well. Once you have your chart or picture, you can add a border or edit it however you want in the 'Format' tab.

22.4.2. Launch the PowerPoint Program

When you launch the PowerPoint program, you may be prompted to pick what kind of document you want to create. Choose to create a blank presentation.

22.4.3. Choosing a Design

The next thing you want to do is decide what design you want for the presentation. To do this, go to the 'Design' tab at the top of the page. Scroll through all the options and decide which one looks best for the presentation you want. To get a preview of what the design will look like before applying it to the presentation, hover over the design you want to preview. This design will be automatically continued throughout the rest of your presentation. Once you have more than one slide, you can add a different design for just one slide.

22.4.4. Create Title Page

Click the first box that says 'Click to add title' and add the title of your presentation. Click the bottom box to add your name, or any other subtitle that you choose. Once you have your text in the boxes, you can change their font, size, color, etc. with the toolbar options at the top. You can change the size of the text box by selecting it, and then dragging the corners of the box. To move the text boxes, select the box, and move your arrow over the border of the box. A four-arrow icon will appear, and clicking with this icon will allow you to move the text boxes wherever you choose.

22.4.5. Add more Slides

Chances are, you are going to need more than one slide. There are a few ways you can add more slides. Notice that there is a separate area to the left of the screen where your first slide is located. The first way to add a slide is to right-click the area under where your first slide is located and select 'New Slide'. A new slide will appear. The second way to add another slide is to click 'New Slide' in the toolbar above the slides. This button is divided into two parts; the top will insert a new slide with a default layout. You can also click the bottom half of this button, which will allow you to choose what type of layout you want. You can choose a slide with two text-boxes and a title, one text-box, only a title, and many other options. You will see your new slide appear to the left under the first, as well become the large slide that you can edit. The design you picked earlier will have carried over to this slide. The design will carry over for the rest of the slides you create unless you decide to change just one, like described earlier. The guideline layout you chose will appear, and you can then add in your information.

22.4.6. Play the Presentation

Once you have all your slides completed and in the order you want, view your slideshow. Click the 'Slide Show' tab at the top of the page and select 'From Beginning'. You can go through your entire slideshow, and change slides by clicking or pressing the right arrow. A shortcut to this is pressing F5. Congratulations! You have now made a PowerPoint presentation.

22.5. Points to Remember for Presentation

- Show up early and verify that your equipment works properly.
- Don't assume that your presentation will work fine on another computer.

- Turn your screen saver off.
- Check all colors on a projection screen before giving the actual presentation.
- Ask your audience to hold questions until the end.
- Do not read the presentation.
- Stay on time.
- Monitor your audience's behavior.
- Avoid moving the pointer unconsciously.
- Plan your presentation before creating visual aids.
- Make them visible to the entire audience
- Talk to the audience, not to the aid
- Make minimum use of laser pointers
- Explain the content of the aid when you first show it.
- When you finish with the aid, remove it, cover it, or turn it off
- Limit the amount of material on any one aid

22.6. Contingency Plan

A contingency plan is a course of action designed to help you respond effectively to a significant future event or situation that may or may not happen. A contingency plan is sometimes referred to as "Plan B," because it can be also used as an alternative for action if expected results fail to materialize. In the context of presentation, this includes being prepared to give your presentation without your visual aids. It might help to take hard copy of slides with you. Alternatively, always keep a copy of the presentation with you in a USB Stick. In case you want to present a website, do not assume that you will have access to the internet. It is preferable to have screenshots of the web-page in your presentation and referencing the screenshot accordingly.

22.7. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

We've already covered some details regarding verbal and nonverbal communication. To recapitulate, sending and receiving messages by using words, sounds, speaking, writing and sign language in particular and language in general is classified as verbal communication whereas nonverbal communication concerns sending and receiving messages in a variety of ways without the use of verbal codes (words or symbols). Your physical expressions including facial expression, touch, smell, body motion and aesthetics including dancing and painting are a part of nonverbal communication. Verbal communication aims to inform, inspire and motivate by general communication, narrating a story or simply by asking questions. Nonverbal communication is used as a complement to verbal communication to express emotions, interpersonal attitude, accompany speech, self-present ones personality and for rituals and ceremonies

Verbal Communication	Nonverbal Communication
Verbal cues are digital	Analogical
Less universal	More universal
Less sensory directness	Offer greater sensory directness

Less spontaneous	More spontaneous

Since both modes are a form of communication, both involve a receiver and sender; both reveal emotions, exchange ideas and thoughts; both have cues that are distinct; both can have multiple meanings; both can be used for deceptive/manipulative purposes and both exhibit the property of productivity.

Repetition	Nonverbal messages strengthen verbal messages, e.g., pointing to the object of discussion
Conflicting	Verbal and nonverbal communication don't support each other, e.g., telling a lie
Complementing	Verbal messages elaborate the idea and nonverbal messages
Substituting	Nonverbal can be used instead of verbal, e.g., saying "NO" vs. shaking the head.
Regulating	Nonverbal is regulated by verbal communication, as well, by, e.g., touching indicating that you want to talk
Acceding/ Moderating	Nonverbal communication moderates our tone (part of para-verbal communication), e.g., shaking hands

22.7.1. Verbal Communication Strategies

Verbal communication is used to express emotion, to teach and to inspire by exchanging messages using orally, spoken words. Thus, communication strategies can help improve your expression by complementing, moderating or substituting verbal or nonverbal communication, as applicable. You will need to implement different strategies to achieve the goal of accurately relaying a message and ensuring that you hear and give the proper message. In general, all the relevant C's of Communication, especially the "You-Attitude", apply. We update this section for specifics regarding verbal and nonverbal communication in the context of presentations.

22.7.1.1. Ask Questions

During the process of verbal communication, the message can get muddled or confusing due to the use of jargon, ambiguity or a difference in defining the words used. For example, one person may define the word differently than another person. Rhetorical questions are a verbal communication strategy that can help to ensure clarity and accuracy of the messages being exchanged. Questions are used for clarity and to inspire more conversation. If you have a difficult time starting a presentation, use questions about the audience's opinion to spark momentum. You can use other equivalent ways to capture your audience's attention, including the use of relevant props.

22.7.1.2. Premeditate

Think about what you require and are going to present before you present it. Generally, if a person attempts to communicate a message orally without thinking through the words to be used, the message can be unorganized and lacking in clarity. Determine who the audience is for which the message is going to be communicated to and plan the delivery and word usage accordingly. This strategy works well if you are going to be speaking publicly or giving a presentation. Pre-meditated verbal communication is more

accurate, precise and condensed, making it more effective. Plan your presentation so that you don't have to spend more than 4 minutes on each slide.

22.7.2. Nonverbal Communication Strategies

The use of nonverbal with verbal communication helps to deliver the message more effectively. This includes the message you communicate with your body language. Another form of nonverbal communication is interpersonal communication which is much more than the *explicit* meaning of words, the information or message conveyed. It also includes *implicit* messages, whether intentional or not, which are expressed through nonverbal behaviors.

Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, gestures displayed through body language (*kinesics*) and the physical distance between the communicators (*proxemics*). These have to be controlled during a presentation as these nonverbal signals can give the wrong clues and furnish unnecessary information and meaning. Remember that nonverbal communication is an extremely complex yet integral part of overall communication skills. However, people are often totally unaware of their nonverbal behavior.

A basic awareness of nonverbal communication strategies, over and above what is said, can help to improve interaction with others. Knowledge of these signs can be used to encourage people to talk about their concerns and can lead to a greater shared understanding, which is, after all, the purpose of your presentation in particular, and communication, in general.

Nod actively. You will see that the audience reciprocates!

Nonverbal behavior	Interpretation
Brisk, erect walk	Confidence
Standing with hands on hips	Readiness, aggression
Sitting with legs crossed, foot kicking slightly	Boredom
Sitting, legs apart	Open, relaxed
Arms crossed on chest	Defensiveness
Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched	Dejection

22.7.3. Para-verbal Communication

Para-verbal refers to how we say the words we say, for example do we seem happy, sad, angry, determined or forceful. Some researchers suggest it accounts for about 30% of what we communicate. This is a subset of nonverbal communication.

Tone of voice and the way in which we choose our words is important here. When we are angry, we tend to speak more rapidly and at a higher pitch. If we feel someone is attacking us, we tend to respond in short, curt, sentences. You can usually tell if a person is bored by a tendency towards a slow and monotone delivery.

However, para-verbal can also be misread. Regional or culturally influenced accents can confuse our reading of tone. Some people tend to end their sentences on an upward note, others on a downward note, regardless of the mood they are in.

22.7.4. Starting Your Talk

Now that we have explained what the types of communication are in the aspect of presentation, let's get into the details. Whenever you start your presentation, your basic initial should be to gain attention of the audience, to attract interest, to create desire and to stimulate action. You may greet your audience using either one of the following:

- *"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen!"*
- *"Welcome to my presentation!"*
- *"It's very nice to see you all here today."*
- *"Can we get started?"*
- *"Let me say just a few words about my background…"*

22.7.4.1. Making an Effective Opening

There are several ways of attracting the audience right from the beginning. Think of one of the following techniques to introduce your talk:

- Give them a problem to think about (Suppose you… Why is it that…)
- Give them some amazing facts (Did you know that…?)
- Give them a story or a personal anecdote as stories always atract attention.
- Use a citation (if you want to start on a more philosophical note)
- Make a funny remark. However, you need to be careful with humour, not all jokes work well.

To hit the point home, you may use one of the following phrases:

- *"What I want to do this morning is to…"*
- *"My talk will take about 30 minutes."*
- *"During my presentation, I'm going to be focusing on four main areas."*
- *"I'll be giving out copies of my transparencies at the end."*
- *"If you have any questions, or comments you'd like to make, please don't hesitate to stop me."*

22.7.5. Ending Your Talk

Don't just end up abruptly without giving a conclusion.The purpose of the conclusion is to "tell the people what you have told them".

Follow this scheme: summarise facts first, followed by recommendations and proposals. Finally, thank the audience and then invite questions.

You can wrap up using either one of the following phrases:

- *"This brings me to the end of my presentation."*
- *"Let me just run over the key points again…"*
- *"To sum up briefly…"*
- *"To conclude…"*
- *"As we've seen…"*
- *"So, my recommendation is…"*
- *"I would welcome any suggestions."*
- *"Thank you for your attention and if you have any questions, I'll be pleased to answer them."*
- *"Now, I'll be happy to answer if you have any questions."*
- *"Are there any questions you'd like to ask?"*

- Summarise facts
- Give recommendations
- Give proposals

Thank the audience

Invite questions

22.8. Nervousness

If someone is nervous, they are frightened or worried about something that is happening or might happen, and show this in their behavior. An expression of nervousness stems from anxiety, which is based on fear, as discussed in the opening of this handout. Although the tips presented above should be able to help you better prepare for your presentation and result in more confidence, nevertheless this part directly addresses how to overcome nervousness. This isn't just a combination of getting yourself together emotionally and simple deep breathing but being actually prepared.

22.8.1. Get Organized

When you organize all your thoughts and materials, it helps you to become more relaxed and calmer. When you have clear, organized thoughts, it can greatly reduce your speaking anxiety because you can better focus on the one thing at hand, giving a great presentation.

22.8.2. Practice and Prepare Extensively

Nothing takes the place of practicing and preparing for your speech. Write out a script of your key points, but don't read from the script word for word. Prepare for your speech so well that you could answer any possible question thrown at you. It is always helpful to familiarize yourself with your presentation stage in advance and your presentation slides thoroughly.

22.8.3. Eliminate Fear of Rejection

Questions such as *"What if my audience hates my speech? What if they boo me off stage?"* are usually irrational and don't happen in the real world. Try to eliminate all your fears of rejection. The audience is there to listen to you for a reason. Realize that people will actually want you to succeed.

22.8.4. Focus on Patterns

When you speak try, to get into a rhythm or a flow. Keep your sentences short and to the point and repeat key points. A short pause in between points can add anticipation to what you are going to say next.

22.8.5. Watch Yourself in The Mirror

Practice your speech in front of the mirror as if you were speaking directly to someone. If you really want to learn how to improve public speaking skills, then pay attention to your facial expressions, your gestures, your body movements and how welcoming you appear. When you have gentle expressions and a calm demeanor during your presentation, you will be more welcoming to your audience.

22.8.6. Focus on yourself

Finally, you need to understand that your adrenaline response, your natural biological mechanism against fear, may be used positively to instill energy into your presentation. Forgive yourself for small mistakes – no one is perfect. Just focus on your presentation, keep your nonverbal cues to complement your verbal communication, focus on the message try not to mention that you're nervous. Of course you can still do this if you're presenting to your peers.

References: This handout has been prepared using
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