

Chapter 9: Verbal Communication and Presentations
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Chapter 9

Verbal Communication and Presentations

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Chapter Introduction

Learning Objectives

1. Identify elements of effective verbal communication.
2. Examine elements of nonverbal communication.
3. Describe effective techniques for telephone communication.
4. Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.

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9-1 Verbal Communication

To be an effective administrative professional, you must develop your verbal communication skills. You will use these skills daily as you communicate with your employer, colleagues, customers, and clients, both face-to-face and on the telephone. You may have to deal with a person who is frustrated about a problem. Such a situation will test your communication skills.

Just as you've read books that were more interesting than others, you've also heard speakers and had conversations that were more captivating than others. Why are certain speakers easier to listen to and some conversations more interesting? It's because verbal communication is a skill that needs to be developed, just as writing is a skill that you work on in order to improve.

Verbal communication (The process of exchanging information through words) is the process of exchanging information through the use of words. This chapter deals primarily with two forms of verbal communication: serious conversations, such as a discussion with a coworker, client, or manager, and formal presentations, such as a presentation to a group of coworkers. Regardless of the form it takes, verbal communication involves a sender, a receiver, and a message. Successful communication occurs when a listener (receiver) has heard and understood the message of the speaker (sender).

Essentially, all speech is, to some degree, persuasive since you are trying to persuade others to listen to what you have to say. If they do not understand you or have some interest in your topic, you will not succeed.

Initially, the concept of verbal communication seems simple. Everyone understands words and knows what they mean. In actuality, verbal communication is not simple at all. Words can have different meanings for different people. In a diverse workforce, communication can be complex and challenging.

In most forms of written communication, which you studied in [Chapter 8](#), a person can go back over the message to correct errors and reword confusing sentences before sending it, but when speaking a person cannot take anything back or make corrections before the remarks are heard. This makes speaking effectively more difficult to control and emphasizes the importance of continual improvement of your verbal communication skills.

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9-1a Listen and Understand

An important step in effective verbal communication is to listen. Hearing and listening are similar to seeing and reading. You may *see* a newspaper article and not *read* it. You may *hear* someone talking but not be *listening* to that person. A large portion of your day is spent communicating, and the majority of that time is spent listening. Still, listening is a skill that most people need to improve.

Listen Actively

Listening actively means making a conscious effort to hear and understand. Listening is an activity of the mind, not the ear. To use a sports analogy, the catcher in a baseball game is just as active as the pitcher. She watches the ball, adjusts her position, and uses her muscles, balance, and thought processes in an effort to catch the ball and participate in the unfolding play. Similarly, the listener reaches out to catch the meaning of the speaker. This is true whether you are having a serious conversation with a coworker, listening to a teacher, or listening to a speaker at the annual employee assembly.

Verbal communication involves a sender, a receiver, and a message.



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Here are some tips to help you be a more active listener in almost any situation:

- If possible, maintain eye contact with the speaker, and respond occasionally. Remarks such as “yes” and “I see” will help you stay focused on the speaker’s message.
- Do not think about what you are going to say next or what you would say if you were the speaker.
- Do not interrupt. Interrupting is a clear sign that you want to be the speaker, not the listener.
- Try to discover the speaker’s main point(s).
- Be attentive to nonverbal communication, and listen for feelings as well as for words.
- Be aware of distractions. The speaker’s mannerisms, your emotions, or vocabulary you don’t understand can cause you to lose focus or stop listening.
- When possible, minimize distractions in the environment by shutting a door, turning off a phone, etc.
- Take notes on what the speaker is saying. Do not write about your thoughts but about

what the speaker actually says.

- When possible, ask for clarification if you do not understand.
- Change your body position if you find yourself getting distracted or bored.
- Practice the habit of listening. Make situations at home, school, clubs, etc., opportunities to practice.

Listening requires a conscious effort.



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Ask The Right Questions

It's already been noted that listening effectively can involve asking questions. Obviously, there will be situations when questions are not appropriate, such as during formal presentations or speeches. In conversations, however, you have more freedom to ask questions, and you can often ask questions during less formal presentations and after presentations or speeches.

Specific questions, such as *how* or *why* questions, will invite positive interactions. Less specific, open-ended questions (as suggested in [Chapter 3](#)) are easy for the responder to answer and can lead to more specific questions. Closed questions, which require only a simple yes or no answer, yield little information. Here are some examples:

Specific question: *Which HR form do we use for overtime?*

Closed question: *Is there an HR form we use for overtime?*

Open-ended question: *What happened after yesterday's HR meeting?*

Closed question: *Did something happen after yesterday's HR meeting?*

Asking the right questions is important in the skill of listening since questions help with understanding. Usually the best strategy is to paraphrase what you believe the speaker said and then ask if that is correct. To [paraphrase \(To restate a concept in different words\)](#) is to restate a concept in different terms. You do not state your opinion, but rather try to understand the speaker's point by restating it. For example, you might say, "If I understand correctly, we will be using the new overtime form starting January 1." Don't be afraid to say, "I don't understand the reason for that" or "I don't understand what you mean."

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9-1b Speak to be Understood

In addition to listening and attempting to understand what others are saying, good verbal communicators seek to speak so they are understood. They concentrate on thinking before they speak and using language appropriately to get their point across. Effective speakers also understand that good communication can help prevent or resolve conflict.

Think Before You Speak

It is easy to simply start talking when asked a question or to enter a conversation without being prepared. Try to develop the habit of pausing to think and prepare what you will say before you talk. This will help you make your remarks to the point and not overly lengthy. It will also help you clearly convey information to others or ask questions effectively.

In addition, taking time to plan what you will say gives you the opportunity to assess the situation. It is helpful to consider your audience. This is a common strategy used in public speaking, but it is also very useful for serious conversations.

Use Language Appropriately

The language people use often prevents clear communication. Cultural differences impact the meaning certain words have for individuals. For example, even though British and American people speak the same language, they use words in different ways. In England, a

Band-Aid is called a *plaster*, and an elevator is called a *lift*. If you are waiting for a taxi, you are not in a line; you are in a *queue*.

Rules for Serious Conversations

- Pick the right place and time for the conversation.
- Know in advance the substance of the conversation you want to have. This will help you have a productive, serious conversation.
- Have the conversation with the right people or person. Don't start a serious conversation when some of the people present are not appropriate for the discussion.
- Listen to the other person.
- Answer the question that was asked. Make sure you understand the question before you start talking, and then stick to answering the question. When someone asks you a question, that isn't your cue to start speaking about whatever is on your mind.
- Ask questions clearly. Be ready to phrase your question another way if the person doesn't understand it.
- Interrogating someone, that is, asking question after question without commenting on the responses, is not conversation.
- Don't interrupt when another person is speaking. If you interrupt, you are showing you are impatient to say what is on your mind and can't wait for the other person to finish.
- Don't have side conversations. Give your full attention to the person with whom you are speaking.
- Every serious conversation should have a beginning, middle, and end. Ramblings that have no purpose, do not explore the problem, or fail to come to a conclusion make serious conversations tedious.



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Source: Mortimer J. Adler, *How to Speak, How to Listen* (New York: Touchstone, 1983), 140–146.

Using language appropriately means choosing your words carefully. Make sure any terminology specific to your job is clarified if you are speaking with someone outside your area. However, you should not talk down to people—assuming they know nothing is inappropriate. If you don't know your audience, risk talking over their heads because if you talk down to people, they may feel patronized.

Here are some tips for using language appropriately:

- Pay attention to the different meanings words can have. Clarify your meaning when necessary.
- Use an appropriate tone and the proper degree of formality for the situation and the message you want to share.
- Be sensitive to whether the individual or group seems to understand what you are saying. Paraphrase when appropriate.

Communication can resolve conflict before it starts.



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Examine Your Language Patterns

You will have a difficult time communicating verbally and being respected in the business community if you use language patterns that are not the norm. Record yourself in a conversation and then listen to the recording critically. Do you use filler words (known as [verbal pauses \(Words used to fill silent spaces in conversation\)](#) such as *umm*, *well*, or *like*? Do you frequently use words such as *always* and *never*? Those words can invite an argument. Do you use slang terms or poor grammar, mumble, or use nonstandard English? These habits affect how others perceive you in the workplace. You want to be perceived as a competent professional who can communicate well, so you need to make sure your speech sets you up for success.

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9-1c Resolve conflict

As you learned in [Chapter 3, conflict \(A state of opposition or disagreement\)](#) is a state of opposition or disagreement between persons, ideas, or interests. Effective communication can help resolve conflicts.

When a conflict arises at work, listen and talk with your coworkers or others involved in the situation. Although the situation may seem straightforward to you, you may find that different people have different ideas about it. In attempting to understand another person's perception of a situation, you should withhold judgment while you attempt to think from that person's point of view. Attempting to understand another person's point of view is not the same as agreeing with it. In fact, you may never agree with the person. However, attempting to understand allows you to consider another perspective and gives you a chance to learn from it.

After listening and talking with others, analyze the situation and try to determine the real cause of the conflict. Once the issues are clearly understood, work with the others involved to determine what is needed to resolve the conflict. Concentrate on solving the problem, not on assigning blame. Be tactful in expressing ideas, and show concern for the feelings of others. Do not react to an emotional outburst with an outburst of your own. If the discussion becomes too emotional, stop for a while. Resume the discussion later in the day, or wait until the next workday.

Compromises are often required to resolve conflicts. Remember to examine your role in the situation. Is your position reasonable and appropriate? What can you do to help resolve the conflict? Be willing to compromise when appropriate. [Figure 9.1](#) lists suggestions for resolving conflicts.

Figure 9.1

These suggestions can help in resolving conflicts.

Resolving Conflicts

- Identify the issue causing the conflict. Is it an injustice or the need for power, resources, recognition, or acceptance? Many times one or more of these items is at the heart of the conflict.
- Be willing to listen to the other person. By understanding the needs of the other person, you may be able to find ways to resolve the conflict.
- Identify points of agreement. Work from these points first, and then identify points of disagreement.
- Create a safe environment for discussion. Meet in a neutral location.
- Share your feelings with the other person, and keep your emotions under control.
- Be objective. Don't act too quickly. Take time to collect your thoughts and see the situation from the outside.
- Do not seek to win. Examine yourself in case pride and stubbornness

creep in.

- Listen actively. Watch the individual's eyes and body language.

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9-1d Understand Factors That Affect verbal communication

The way people understand messages is influenced by their backgrounds and experiences. Based on their backgrounds and experiences, they interpret the meaning of information they receive. They may make assumptions based on their interpretation of the information. They may also draw conclusions, adopt beliefs, or take action.

Assumptions can help or hinder communication. For example, suppose you attend a professional development seminar. The presenter is a speaker you heard in the past. This person was easy to listen to and gave practical and accurate suggestions. You may assume that the information presented today will also be practical and helpful. Because of this past experience, you are likely to listen actively during the presentation, and your assumption will make communicating the message easier for the speaker.

Being aware that many factors can affect your ability (and someone else's) to speak and listen effectively will help you develop an understanding for others and work to hone your own communication skills. Factors such as level and quality of education, self-esteem, experiences with different cultures and nationalities, family concerns, and emotional maturity level impact to some degree your ability to communicate. The best way to contend with them is to develop a tenacity for understanding. Rephrase, ask questions, listen actively, and summarize, all with an attitude of perseverance to understand and be understood.

Professional Pointers

Practice these tips when communicating with others:

- Respect cultures and traditions that are different from your own.
- Avoid stereotyping or generalizing.
- Assume people can always be trusted until proven otherwise.
- Always seek to understand others and their behaviors.
- Encourage cooperation rather than competition.

- Be willing to compromise.
- Listen to an associate's point of view without interrupting.
- Respond calmly to a loud or angry voice. An angry response only generates anger.
- If you disagree with someone's ideas, deal with the disagreement calmly and rationally—not angrily and emotionally.

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9-2 Nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication (The sharing of information through body language, gestures, voice quality, or proximity) is the sharing of information through body language, gestures, voice quality, or proximity rather than words. The non-verbal elements of a message can enhance or even change its meaning. For example, smiling and stepping forward to shake someone's hand when you first meet communicates beyond the verbal greeting. You are expressing genuine pleasure in meeting that person when you accompany the words with these gestures.

A smile is recognized in all cultures.



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As has been discussed in [Chapters 2 and 7](#), nonverbal communication is important for you as an administrative professional. Your body language, voice tone and quality, demeanor, and mannerisms communicate your attitude and interests. To make good impressions in almost all situations, have a warm and confident smile, stand tall, make eye contact, and greet people with a firm handshake. Avoid fidgeting gestures such as playing with your hair or the loose change in your pocket. A smile is probably the gesture most recognized and favorably received in all cultures.

Body language and gestures can have different meanings to people of different backgrounds or cultures. For example, in the United States it is acceptable to point at someone, use your finger or hand to beckon a person to come, and use the “OK” sign made by placing the forefinger and thumb in a circle. However, in some cultures, these gestures are considered offensive.

Another example of cultural differences in non-verbal communication is eye contact. In the United States, eye contact is seen as a sign of respect, sincerity, and interest. However, in many other cultures, the absence of eye contact is appropriate and acceptable between a manager and a subordinate. To understand nonverbal communication of a different culture, you must study that culture.

Pitch (An attribute of sound that can be described as high or low) is an attribute of sound that can be described as high or low. The pitch of your voice affects how well you communicate. A lower-pitched voice projects calm, control, and confidence. Listeners are more likely to value what you say if you use a lower pitch. When you are nervous, you are more likely to speak with a higher pitch.

The pace and volume of your speech is also important for effective communication. Speaking too quickly may mean the listener misses all or part of your message. Speaking too slowly or loudly can frustrate and irritate the listener. Be conscious of the pace and volume of your speech patterns, and speak with medium pace and volume so your message will be understood.

Being too close to or far from others can adversely affect communication. If you think someone is too close, you may be uncomfortable or distracted and unable to concentrate on the message. Be considerate and aware of the personal space boundaries of others, and be flexible with your own.

While being aware of your own nonverbal communication, you should also be aware of that of others. You are probably familiar with many types of nonverbal communication, and you should use that familiarity to help you understand what customers, coworkers, and supervisors are thinking and feeling. For example, slouching in a chair and looking at the floor, sitting with arms crossed, or leaning forward and nodding send different messages about a person's degree of interest in a conversation. [Figure 9.2](#) lists ways body language may be interpreted.

Figure 9.2

Body language may be interpreted in different ways.

Body Language

listening	Tilts head, makes eye contact, nods
evaluating	Chews on pencil/glasses, strokes chin, looks up and right
eager	Leans forward with feet under chair
bored	Stares into space, doodles
aggressive	Leans forward with fists clenched
rejecting	Moves back with arms folded and head down, walks with hands in pocket
defensive	Clenches hands, stands, crosses arms on chest
lying	Looks down, shifts in seat, glances at you
disbelief, doubt	Rubs eye
sincerity, openness	Offers open palm
confidence	Walks briskly with upright posture
authoritative	Steepled fingers
indecisive	Pulls or tugs at ear

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9-3 Telephone Communication

As an administrative professional, you will communicate by phone daily with many people. You may be the first and only contact a person will have with your organization, and that first impression will stay with the caller long after the call is completed. Professionalism and good human relations skills are crucial to making a positive impression of you and your company.

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9-3a Answering the Telephone

When your telephone rings, answer promptly—on the second ring if possible. You may lose a potential customer if you are slow in answering the telephone.

Most business and supervisors have specific procedures for answering the telephone. Many large organizations have voice messaging systems that identify the organization and give callers the available options. Other large companies have individuals who personally answer the phone with the name of the organization and route the incoming call to the appropriate party, who may be a supervisor's administrative professional. For example, if the call is for Ms. Diaz, you might answer her line as "Ms. Diaz's office, Dana Wilson speaking." If the call is for you, you might answer, "Good morning, Dana Wilson. How may I help you?" If you are answering the phone for your department, you might say, "Administrative Services, Julaine speaking." If you are answering an outside call directly, you might say, "Thank you for calling Kapor Pharmaceuticals; this is Terrill Grant."

Answering the telephone is a responsibility that should be taken seriously.



Elena Elisseeva/Shutterstock.com

Your voice carries clearly when you speak directly into the mouthpiece with your lips about an inch away from the transmitter. You cannot speak distinctly with something in your mouth. Do not have gum or food in your mouth when you answer the telephone. Speak in a normal tone of voice; do not mumble or speak too fast or loud. Callers may become irritated if they must ask you continually to repeat what you said or if they need to hold the telephone one or two inches from their ear.

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9-3b Managing Incoming Calls

As an administrative professional, you will need skills to effectively screen calls, place and handle calls on hold, transfer calls, take messages, and terminate calls.

Screen Calls as Instructed

Many executives have two telephone numbers, one that is published and one that is not. The executive uses the unpublished number to make calls and may also give it to colleagues, close friends, and family members.

The administrative professional is often expected to screen calls from the published number. When the executive receives a call, the administrative professional determines who is calling and why and then either handles or routes to others those calls the supervisor will

not take. If someone else in your company can handle the call, transfer it to that person after requesting permission from the caller. If the call is not of interest to your supervisor or anyone else, such as an unsolicited phone call, let the person know courteously. For example, you might say, “I appreciate the information; however, Ms. Winwright is not interested in pursuing the matter.”

An Effective Voice Message

If you use a voice mail system when you are away from your desk, make sure your message provides the appropriate information. For example, your message might say, “This is Lauren Recker. I am away from my desk now. Please leave your name, your number, and a brief message. I will return your call as soon as possible. Thank you.” If you will be out of the office or away from your desk for some time, include instructions on whom to contact if the call is urgent. Keep your message up-to-date. For example, record a new message if you will be out for the day or away for several days.

Make your voice message concise, pleasant, and professional. Your message is very important, as it can create either a favorable or an unfavorable impression on the caller.



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It is your responsibility to learn the caller’s name. Usually a caller identifies herself or himself. If not, ask for a name tactfully. Do not say, “Who is this?” Say, “May I tell Ms. Winwright who is calling, please?” Try to put yourself in the other person’s place, and ask questions the way you would want to be asked.

Manage Holds Efficiently

You may be responsible for answering your super-visor's phone when he or she is not available to take a call. A call may come in when you are on another line. A caller may request information you do not have at hand. You may need to check with someone else or look through your records for it. In instances like these, you will need to put the caller on hold.

Before putting a caller on hold, ask permission. For example, you may say, "Ms. Hoover is on another call. Would you like to hold?" or "May I place you on hold for a moment? I must answer another line" or "I need to locate the information in my files. Would you like to hold for a minute while I get it, or shall I call you back?" If you need to get information for the caller, consider how long it will take. If you know it will take an hour, say so. Tell the caller you will phone back with the information.

If the caller agrees to hold, get back to him or her as soon as possible. For longer holds, check back about every 30 seconds. Ask if the person would like to continue holding. For example, you may say, "Ms. Hoover is still on another call. May I take a message, or would you like to continue to hold?"

Once you can put through the call or have the information, thank the caller. You may say, "Thank you for waiting. Ms. Hoover is available now" or "Thank you for waiting. Here are the dates you needed."

Office Telephone Equipment

You will find a variety of telephone equipment in the workplace, including standard phone sets, cordless sets, conference call speakers, and headsets to use with computers and soft-ware. Common features on business phone sets include the following:

- Multiple phone lines
- Built-in speaker phones
- Caller identification information
- Programmable buttons
- Call forwarding and call waiting
- Conference calling
- Call transfer and hold features



Transfer Calls Properly

Before you transfer a call, explain why, and make sure the caller is willing to be transferred. You may say, “Ms. Winwright is out of the office now, but I believe Mr. Sanchez can help you. May I transfer you to Mr. Sanchez?” Do not automatically transfer clients or customers to a voice mail system. Instead, ask, “Would you like me to transfer you to Mr. Sanchez’s voice mail?”

If it is not against company policy, consider giving the caller the complete number or extension of the person to whom you are transferring the call in case you are disconnected. Stay on the line until the person picks up the phone, and announce the transfer. If the person is not in, ask if the caller would like to leave a voice message. If the caller does not want to, take the caller’s number and have someone return the call.

Make certain you know how to transfer calls on your telephone system. Callers dislike being told they are going to be transferred and then getting disconnected.

Record Messages Carefully

When taking messages, you are responsible for getting the necessary information from the caller and recording it accurately. Be prepared with a pen and message slip or paper when you answer the phone. Record the following information:

- Caller’s name (spelled correctly). If you are not sure how to spell the name, ask the caller to spell it. If necessary, repeat the spelling to the caller to be certain you recorded it correctly.
- Caller’s organization. If you are unfamiliar with the business name, ask the caller for

the correct spelling.

- Telephone number, including the area code. Repeat the number to be certain you heard it correctly.
- Message. If the person leaves a message, get the necessary details. For example, if the caller says he will call your employer tomorrow, you might respond, “May I tell him when to expect the call?”
- Date and time. This gives the recipient a point of reference for the message. The message “Mr. Wong will call you tomorrow” has no meaning if you do not know the date of the original call.
- Your initials or name. The recipient will then know to contact you with any questions.

Organizations usually have a procedure for recording and delivering messages. They may provide message pads or a form that can be completed on the computer. E-mailing the message is another possibility. [Figure 9.3](#) shows a properly filled-out message form.

Figure 9.3

Recording messages correctly is important.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR Joshua Cable

DATE 4/17/1- TIME 10:30 A.M.
P.M.

Ms. Maya Cruz

OF Tristate Dental Insurance

PHONE 513 555-0140

AREA CODE NUMBER

TELEPHONED RETURNED YOUR CALL FAX TO FOLLOW

CAME TO SEE YOU PLEASE CALL SPECIAL ATTENTION

WANTS TO SEE YOU WILL CALL AGAIN

MESSAGE Please call to discuss proposed changes to UCR schedule.

SIGNED Sami Latifpour

Terminate Calls Courteously

Have you ever noticed that characters in movies and television sitcoms don't ever seem to say goodbye when they finish a telephone call? That's a producer's way to save valuable seconds of airtime; it isn't the model for telephone etiquette in the real world. When closing a call, thank the person with whom you are speaking when appropriate. Don't make

promises you can't keep. For example, don't promise your supervisor will call someone back. Instead, let the caller know you will give your supervisor the message. Say good-bye pleasantly. Let the caller hang up first.

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9-3c Placing Calls

As an administrative professional, you may be responsible for making business calls or placing calls for your supervisor. Professional handling of outgoing calls is just as important as for incoming calls. A good strategy is to treat the call as if it were a meeting. Take a few minutes to plan your call before you make it. Know the purpose of your call, and plan what you intend to say. Always identify yourself and your company as soon as the call is answered. For example, you may say, "This is Susan Wilson of Kapor Pharmaceuticals. I'm calling to confirm your appointment with Ms. Winwright on June 13 at 3:30 p.m." If you have sensitive or confidential information to convey, do not leave it in a voice message.

If your business will take several minutes, be sure to state that, and ask if you are calling at a convenient time. This allows the person an opportunity to call you back, or to have you call back, at a more appropriate time. If you arrange to call back at a certain time, be sure to call when promised.

Remember time zone differences when placing calls. There are four standard time zones in the continental United States: Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific. Most of Alaska is in the Alaska Time Zone. A portion of the Aleutian Islands and St. Lawrence Island are in the Hawaii-Aleutian Time Zone, as is Hawaii.

There is a one-hour difference between neighboring zones. For example, when it is 10 a.m. in New York City (Eastern Standard Time), it is 9 a.m. in Dallas (Central Standard Time). If you need to place a call from New York to Los Angeles, you do not want to call at 9 a.m. Eastern Standard Time; it would be only 6 a.m. in Los Angeles (Pacific Standard Time). It is a good idea to note on your telephone list time differences for frequent callers. Websites that provide time zone information are available (Figure 9.4). There are also mobile apps for smartphones, such as *TimeZoner*, which give quick access to time zone information.

Figure 9.4

The Official U.S. Time Website



www.time.gov Source: National Institute of Standards and Technology/U.S. Naval Observatory, <http://www.time.gov> (accessed June 10, 2011).

Be aware of international time zones as well. For example, the person who places a call from New York to London must remember that when it is 11 a.m. in New York, it is 4 p.m. in London. If you place many international calls, you should become familiar with international time zones.

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9-3d Develop Your Telephone Personality

The way you speak on the telephone with customers and clients goes a long way toward creating a positive impression of you and your organization. You will project a positive telephone personality when you use a pleasant voice, use the caller's name, use language effectively, are helpful and discreet, and are attentive to the caller.

Use A Pleasant Voice

Always answer the telephone with a smile. If you are smiling, the caller can hear your friendly attitude reflected in your voice. Treat the caller the same as you would a person sitting across from you requesting information or assistance. Make your voice positive and full of energy and enthusiasm. Let all callers know you want to help with whatever needs they have.

Use the Caller's Name

Remember that individuals like to be recognized and called by name. Use the person's name frequently. For example, say, "Yes, Mr. Jordan. I will be happy to get the information." End the conversation with a comment such as "It was nice to talk with you, Mr. Jordan."

Use titles, such as *Ms.* or *Mr.*, even when communicating with administrative professionals from other organizations. This is a way to show respect and prevent you from offending someone unknowingly. Once another employee at your level has addressed you by first name, you can use his or her first name as well. For higher-level employees and customers, even if they call you by first name, wait until they expressly say you can use their first name before doing so.

Be aware of other titles as appropriate for the type of job you have. For example, a job in state government will require that you use titles for state senators and representatives: "Good afternoon, Senator Lewis. Congresswoman Beauregard is in a committee meeting...." Similarly, in a college or university setting, address faculty members and administrators who have doctoral degrees as *doctor*.

Use Language Effectively

Use correct English and pronunciation. People who have a good grasp of the English language develop a negative impression of your organization if they hear you use a grammatically incorrect statement. Slang is not appropriate in business calls. [Figure 9.5](#) lists several slang expressions, followed by more appropriate expressions.

Figure 9.5

Avoid slang and speak professionally on the phone.

Common Slang Expressions

Avoid	Say
Yeah.	Certainly.
OK.	Yes.
Uh-huh.	Of course.
Bye-bye.	Good-bye.
Huh? What?	I'm sorry; I didn't understand you.

Be Helpful, Yet Discreet

When someone calls and your employer is not available, tell the caller about how long your employer will be gone, or ask if someone else can help. Let the person know you are trying to help. Here are two examples of how to handle such a call—the wrong way and the right way.

Incorrect Handling of Call

Caller:

This is Pablo Rodriguez. May I speak with Shareen Edwards?

Felicia:

Ms. Edwards is out of the office.

Caller:

When will she be back?

Felicia:

I expect her back sometime this afternoon.

Caller:

Will she be back in an hour?

Felicia:

She might be.

Caller:

Ask her to call me when she comes in.

Felicia:

OK.

What is wrong with the conversation? Perhaps you do not see any glaring errors. Felicia answered Mr. Rodriguez's questions—which is precisely the point. Mr. Rodriguez had to ask all the questions; he probably thought Felicia was uncooperative. The closing "OK" was too informal. Additionally, Felicia did not get a phone number. Notice the improvement in the next example.

Correct Handling of Call

Caller:

This is Pablo Rodriguez. May I speak with Shareen Edwards?

Felicia:

Ms. Edwards is out of the office; I expect her back in about two hours. If you'd like to give me

your number, I'll ask her to call you when she returns.

Caller:

That would be fine. My number is 555-0129.

Felicia:

Thank you, Mr. Rodriguez. I'll give her the message.

Felicia has saved time for Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Edwards and has probably left a positive impression with Mr. Rodriguez.

Another important point to remember in such a situation is to be discreet. In other words, do not give the caller unnecessary information.

Incorrect Handling of Call

Caller:

This is Pablo Rodriguez. May I speak with Shareen Edwards?

Felicia:

Ms. Edwards went to see Bill Chung at Frost & Nabors about an advertising matter. I expect her back in about two hours. If you'd like to give me your number, I'll ask her to call you when she returns.

Felicia gave out too much information. It was not necessary to tell Mr. Rodriguez where Ms. Edwards was, whom she went to see, and why. Felicia could be revealing information that is confidential or that would hurt the business relationship. A good rule to remember is to be helpful about when your supervisor is returning without specifying where the supervisor is or what he or she may be doing. [Figure 9.6](#) provides examples of appropriate telephone responses.

Figure 9.6

An appropriate response is courteous but does not reveal too much information.

Appropriate Telephone Responses

Avoid	Say
She's out.	She's not in the office at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?
I don't know where he is.	He's stepped out of the office. Would you like to leave a message?

She's busy.	She's unavailable right now. Would you like to leave a message?
He hasn't come in yet.	I expect him shortly. Would you like to leave a message?
She took the day off <i>or</i> She's out sick.	She's out of the office for the day. Can someone else help you, or would you like to leave a message?
He's in the men's room.	He's stepped out of the office. Would you like to leave a message?

Be Attentive

As you are talking with the caller, visualize the person. Speak *with* the person, not *at* the phone. Listen politely to what the person is saying. Do not interrupt or do other work. If the caller is un-happy about an experience with the company, listen to the person's complaint. You will have an easier time dealing with a disgruntled caller after you hear what the caller has to say. Follow the suggestions in the "Telephone Customer Service Skills" section of [Chapter 7](#).

Take notes during a long or involved conversation so you will remember all the information. Courtesy is always important. Use words like *please* and *thank you* often. Let the caller know you care about him or her and the situation.

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9-4 Business Presentations

In the workplace, information is often presented verbally to a small or large group of people. With the team approach commonly used in organizations today, administrative professionals sometimes give presentations. These presentations may be informal ones to a small group or formal ones to a large group. You also may have occasion to speak at professional organization meetings. In addition to presenting yourself, you may be asked to develop slides for someone else to use in a presentation. Because presenting can be an important part of your professional life, the remainder of this chapter focuses on proper presentation techniques.

Many people fear presenting to even small groups of people. For most people, becoming an effective presenter is a learned skill, so don't be discouraged if presenting isn't something

you currently enjoy or do well. This skill is so important to individuals and organizations that some businesses develop training programs to help people become effective verbal presenters. As with all skill development, you must practice the skill. The next sections will help you develop your presentation skills. The Plan Ahead activity at the end of the chapter will give you the opportunity to practice these skills by preparing a brief presentation and delivering it to your instructor and classmates.

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9-4a Plan the Presentation

Preparing a good presentation takes time. A good presentation is carefully written and thoroughly practiced. It often requires research and the development of visual aids such as *PowerPoint* presentations, as well as paper or electronic hand-outs. But the first step is to plan. In the planning stage, you define the purpose of the presentation, consider the audience, and give some attention to the time and setting. Beginning preparation several weeks before the presentation is not too soon.

Determine the Purpose

The first step in planning a presentation is to define the purpose clearly. Ask yourself these questions as you begin to plan your presentation:

- Why am I giving this presentation?
- What do I want the audience to know as a result of my presentation?
- What, if anything, do I want the audience to do as a result of my presentation?

Know Your Audience

Consider the characteristics of the people who will hear the presentation. Try to determine areas of common interest to which you can relate points of information. For example, if your audience is a group of administrative professionals, you know some of their interests. You can use anecdotes or stories that have meaning for them. If you are speaking to a group of colleagues from your workplace, again you know some of their interests. You can tailor your message to meet their needs. If you are speaking to a general audience, keep the following questions in mind as you begin to plan your remarks:

- What are the **demographics (Characteristics of a group of people such as age, gender, and educational level)** of the audience (characteristics such as age, gender, and educational level)?
- What does the audience know about the subject?
- What preconceived ideas or biases may audience members have?

- What will be the size of the audience?

A small audience allows greater interaction. With a large audience, there is little chance for interaction other than a question-and-answer period at the end of the presentation. The event organizer is a good resource for this and other information.

Consider the Time and Setting

Ask the meeting organizer when you will present and how long the presentation should be. Plan a presentation that you can give effectively within the allotted time. The time of day when you will present may affect how you cover your topic. For example, at mid-morning listeners are typically alert. Right after lunch, listeners may become drowsy if you show slides that require the lights to be low.

Find out whether any other activities are scheduled immediately before or after your presentation. That way, you will know when the room can be set up and how quickly you need to remove any materials or equipment.

Consider where the presentation will be given. Is it in the workplace, a hotel, a conference center, or a school? What is the size of the room, and what are the seating arrangements? If the audience is small, will they be sitting around a table? Are the chairs to be set up in a circle?

If you have an opportunity to influence the setting, do so. Be certain the size of the room is appropriate. You do not want to give a presentation to 12 people in a room designed for 100 people. It will look as though you gave a party and no one came. Nor do you want to give a presentation to 50 people in a room designed for 25. People are not comfortable when they are crowded. As far as possible, be sure the chairs are comfortable, the temperature is pleasant, the room is clean, the lighting is appropriate, and the acoustics are good.

Consider your audience when planning a presentation.



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9-4b Research and Write the Presentation

Research the topic, if necessary, using resources from your company, a library, or the Internet. If you are researching on the Web, take special care to be sure your sources are credible. In [Chapter 8](#) you learned about evaluating online information. Anyone can have a website about anything, and all or none of it may be factual or appropriate. As the speaker, it is up to you to determine if the information you present is correct. Public wikis, such as Wikipedia, are not generally considered a credible source when giving a business presentation. These sites may afford you a place to start but should never be relied upon for valid information.

Conduct original research if needed. For example, you may be developing a presentation for the local chapter of the IAAP on e-mail ethics. Therefore, you decide to do primary research with IAAP members on ethical and unethical e-mail practices they have observed in their organizations.

Research your topic, taking care to use credible sources.



jhorrocks/iStockphoto.com

If your talk will include a question-and-answer session, identify questions listeners are likely to have and prepare answers. Learn as much as you can about the topic of the presentation so you will be better able to answer questions you did not anticipate.

Individuals usually gather more information during research than they can use in a presentation. An audience can absorb only so much information. You do not want to burden your audience by giving them more information than they can comprehend and remember. Your next step is to select the most relevant material appropriate to the subject and audience for the presentation.

Organize the Material

Organize the main points of the material by first reading thoroughly the information you collected, underlining, highlighting, and making notes as you come across potential information for your presentation. Go back to the purpose of the presentation, which you established earlier, and then develop several main points. Make an outline or numbered list of the main points you want to include. Then work on each item to develop it individually. Later you can decide on the best order in which to present the main points.

Do not attempt to cover too many points. If you do, you will lose your audience quickly. Three or four is usually enough. If your audience is knowledgeable about the topic, you may be able to cover as many as ten main points; however, that number is too many for most audiences. Generally, with fewer points that are more developed, you will retain the audience's attention to a greater degree.

Develop an Opening

The opening for a presentation should get the audience's attention immediately. For example, you may do one of the following:

- Tell a story.
- Use a quotation.
- Ask a question.
- Refer to a current event.

Starting with a brief story that has a connection to your topic is an effective way to get your audience interested. For example, suppose you are speaking to an eighth-grade class about your work, specifically proper etiquette at a business dinner. You start with a story about how, when you were growing up, your mother made you use proper table manners. She thought it was so important that she devised a game for the dinner table that encouraged proper etiquette. Relating this story would be a good way to get the audience interested and to make the topic relevant to their age and experience.

Knowing what *you* do best is important. If you can never remember the punch line of a joke, do not try to tell a joke. Nothing is worse than an opening that flops. If you do tell jokes well and decide to tell one, make sure the joke is in good taste. Jokes based on ethnicity, race, gender, or religion are never appropriate. Anything crude is not acceptable for any audience.

Speak with Credibility

Credibility (Believability or trustworthiness) (being perceived as reliable or believable) is important for a successful presentation. When your audience thinks you are credible, they will be more likely to accept your message or take the action you want them to take. One obvious way to appear credible is to be very knowledgeable about the topic of your presentation. Use examples from your own experience. Be able to answer questions or provide more details about the topic when asked. If you make contradictory statements or give incorrect information, the audience will not find you credible. State the source of facts and figures you present. These steps will lend credibility to your presentation.



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Write the Body

Look at the main points for the presentation that you identified earlier. Expand on each point, including appropriate details. Make notes about visuals you could use to emphasize various points. Use language creatively to help keep listeners' attention and convey your points. The following techniques can help you write the body of the presentation:

- Establish a link with your audience. For example, if your audience is a group of administrative professionals, what concerns do audience members have in common? Relate your major points to experiences common to both you and the audience.
- Use interesting facts, figures, and quotations. If you are giving a motivational talk on the importance of service, for example, you might cite facts about Mother Teresa's work and use a quote from her. Relate the quote to a point in your presentation.
- Use direct language. Do not use long words when simpler words would be just as powerful, but at the same time, do not talk down to your audience.
- Personalize your talk. Address your audience directly; use *you* frequently.
- Talk in a conversational tone.
- Use the active rather than the passive voice. For example, say "I believe..." rather than "It is believed..."
- Use analogies (comparisons of different things that stress their similarities) to help explain your ideas. For example: *Stress is like a roller-coaster ride; it has numerous*

highs and lows. Tie the analogy directly to the presentation subject matter.

Develop a Strong Closing

The closing must tie together the opening and the overall purpose of your presentation. The conclusion is your destination. It is the part of your presentation that should take your audience where you want them to be—to what you want them to learn or do. A good conclusion gets the audience's attention. It helps them see the relationship between each part of your presentation—between the opening and the body and the body and the conclusion. The closing puts the pieces of your presentation together in a creative and interesting way so the audience leaves thinking you have helped them learn and/or have motivated them to take some action.

Let the audience know you are ready to conclude by stating simply, “In conclusion” or “My final point is...” Make the conclusion short (about 5 to 10 percent of your talk) and powerful. The conclusion can be a moving statement, story, call to action, or challenge. For example, if you are delivering a presentation on human potential, you might end by saying, “I leave you with three challenges—to do your best always, to reach beyond yourself, and to continue to grow and learn.” The last few lines of your conclusion should be memorable. They should help you connect with the audience for one final moment—to make them laugh or think.

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9-4c Prepare visuals

A [visual aid \(An object or image used to help an audience understand a spoken or written message\)](#) is an object or image used to help an audience understand a spoken or written message. A *PowerPoint* presentation is one of the most common computer-based visual aids used today. Computer-based visual aids are generally easy to use. With presentation software or a web presentation tool, a speaker can create slides with text, images, video clips, web links, and other elements and navigate through them with ease. Flip charts and whiteboards are also common visual aids. According to research by Edward Dale, an educator at Ohio State University, on average people retain about 20 percent of what they hear, about 30 percent of what they see, and about 50 percent of what they see and hear. If you want your audience to remember what you say, show them effective visuals during your presentation.

An interactive whiteboard is an effective visual aid.



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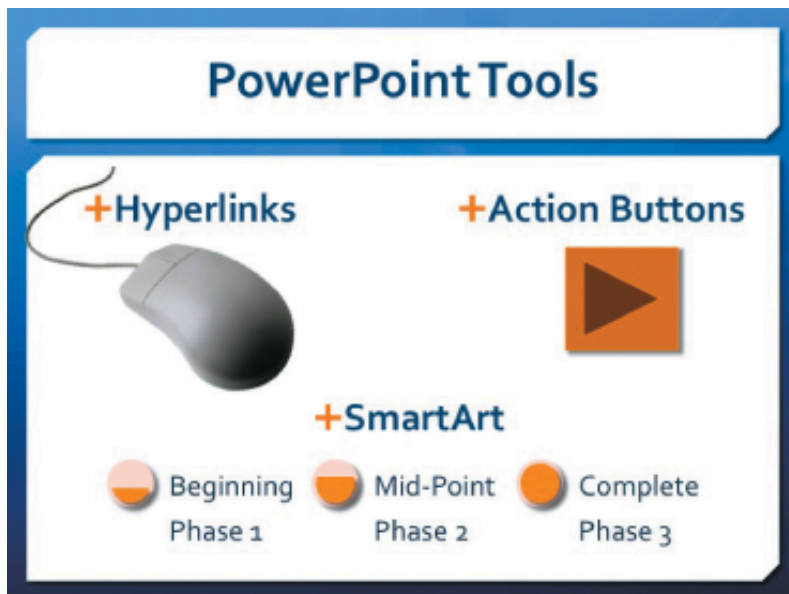
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The medium you choose will depend on the equipment you will have available during the presentation and the size of the audience. **flip chart** (A tablet of large paper for drawing pictures or recording notes during a presentation) are tablets of large paper for drawing pictures or recording notes during a presentation. They are effective for small, informal group meetings. Some presentation venues may have electronic or interactive whiteboards. An **electronic whiteboard** (A device that has the ability to electronically scan images drawn or written on it and transfer the data to a computer where it can be edited, printed, or e-mailed) scans whatever is drawn on it so the drawing can be printed or delivered electronically. An **interactive whiteboard** (A large display board connected to a computer that is used to capture images and notes or access computer programs or the Internet) displays a computer desktop by a connection with a digital projector; the user can interact with the computer by touching the board. Do not be afraid to try these devices if you have the opportunity, but make sure you practice on one beforehand or arrive early so you can see how it will work with your presentation.

Slide shows are effective for small or large groups and formal or informal presentations. They can be created easily with *PowerPoint* or other presentation software or web presentation tools. **Figure 9.7** is an example of a slide created in *PowerPoint* software. Here are a few points to consider as you prepare electronic presentations:

Figure 9.7

Images add interest and illustrate points.



- It is typically very easy to choose a theme or color scheme that will make your slides look professional and appropriate for the topic.
- Images can be used to add interest or illustrate points. They also help break up the text on a slide. Be sure to follow any copyright restrictions on Internet images.
- Videos embedded in a presentation can illustrate points, help the audience understand the topic, and help retain their interest.
- Sound can be used effectively to build excitement or emphasize transitions. Use it only for a specific purpose, and do not overuse it.
- Graphs can be used to illustrate data visually.
- Transitions between slides and slide animations provide an interesting way to reveal points as you make them. Both, especially animations, are easy to overuse.
- Don't plan to read your slides to the audience. Make short bullet points, not full sentences. Generally, use no more than six lines per slide and six words per line.
- Do not crowd the text or images on the slides.
- Know your equipment. Will you use your own laptop or is one provided? Do you have videos that need to be buffered? Is there sound, and will you need external speakers?
- Make sure visuals can be read easily. Text should be 28 to 32 points in a sans serif font such as Arial or Calibri.
- Use only one or two fonts (one for the title and another for the bullet points).
- Use a contrasting font color, such as yellow on a dark blue background. Do not use a red font.

Although visual aids can be effective, they can also detract from your presentation if you do not use them well. Visuals must be clear and large enough to be read easily. Every visual must relate to the presentation, and there should not be too many (Figure 9.8). One slide for every two or three minutes of your presentation is a good rule. Visuals should be proofread carefully so they are error-free.

Figure 9.8

Avoid using too many slides in your presentation.



DILBERT © 2000 Scott Adams. Used by permission of UNIVERSAL UCLICK. All rights reserved.

Handouts are not necessary but can be helpful if you are presenting a lot of information that is instructional or that the audience may need later. For example, if you are doing a presentation about the new human resources forms for new hires, you may wish to prepare a handout of screen shots or links for your audience to use when they return to their desks. The simplest handouts are copies of the slides. Other handouts list the main points to be discussed and provide space for notes. Some presenters like to offer a [green handout \(Handout information provided on a website rather than on paper\)](#)—information provided on a website. The presenter tells the audience the URL or provides a small slip of paper or card with the URL on it. Handouts should be attractive, easy to read, and free of errors.

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9-4d Practice and Prepare to Present

Rehearse the presentation exactly as you plan to give it. If you will stand at a lectern during the presentation, stand at one during the rehearsal. If you will use a microphone during the presentation, use one during the rehearsal. If you plan to use visuals during the presentation, use them in the rehearsal. Practice facing the audience during your presentation. Do not turn around and look at the slides.

You might ask a trusted colleague to listen to and critique your rehearsal presentation. Ask the person to be totally honest with you. You want to be able to correct your errors before you make your presentation.

Manage Fear and Anxiety

Remember that it is normal to be nervous and have some fear of speaking in public. Even professionals experience it. Practicing helps you become confident in yourself and thus less nervous. You know who your audience is, what you intend to say, and how you will say it. A well-prepared and well-rehearsed presentation can eliminate many of your fears. Try not to push yourself to the limit with work responsibilities in the last few days before a presentation. When you are overly tired, you increase your chances of being nervous.

Check the Room and Equipment

Visit the room where you will make your presentation. Know how the room will be set up. Find out where the lectern is going to be if you are using one. If you have a slide presentation, check it on the actual equipment if possible, especially if you have links and videos embedded. Be certain the equipment is in good working order and you know how to use it. How will you advance your slides? If you are at all uncomfortable using the equipment, ask a colleague to assist you by operating it. Stand in different parts of the room to make sure visuals can be seen and read.

Consider Your Appearance

Decide what you will wear several days before the presentation. The usual attire for women is a suit or dress; for men, a suit and tie. Wear something that is comfortable and looks good on you. Bright colors are perfectly acceptable. Avoid necklaces and earrings that are large and showy. Rings and bracelets are appropriate, but avoid large, noisy bracelets. Hair should be well groomed and away from the face.

Write Your Introduction

One way to build credibility with your audience is to tell them your credentials. Write a succinct statement (that will take no more than two minutes to deliver) highlighting your major accomplishments. If you will be introduced by someone, send it to that person. Do not send a packet with pages of information about you and leave it up to the introducer to determine the important points to make. Take a copy of the introduction with you on the day of the presentation in case the introducer has misplaced the copy you sent. If your presentation will include a question-and-answer session, prepare a short closing statement to deliver after the questions.

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9-4e Deliver the Presentation

Arrive early enough to check out the microphone, the equipment, and the layout of the room. Confirm that the temperature is comfortable, the room is clean, and the lighting is appropriate. If changes need to be made, find someone who can assist you. In the 10 or 15 minutes before your presentation begins, find a private place (maybe a small room away from the gathering audience) and sit quietly to relax.

Pay attention to your body language as you are being introduced. Use nonverbal cues to help establish your credibility. Look at the person who is speaking, and then look slowly at the audience. As you approach the lectern, walk with confidence. Place your notes (paper or electronic) where you can refer to them easily. Respond briefly to the introduction. You might say, “Thank you very much” and exchange a handshake. If you are not being introduced by another person, introduce yourself as you begin.

Connect with the Audience

Pause for a moment before beginning your presentation. Let your eyes sweep the room. Do not think about being nervous. Focus on sharing your message with the audience. Remember these points to help you deliver a successful presentation:

- Maintain eye contact with the audience. As you speak, focus on one side of the room and then (after a period of time) the other. Make eye contact with as many people as you can.
- Watch for nonverbal feedback. For example, puzzled looks or blank stares are obvious cues that the audience does not understand. You may need to speak more slowly and give examples.
- Use natural gestures. It’s fine to use your arms and hands to emphasize points, but too many gestures can distract the audience.
- Be natural; do not perform. Speak in a normal tone of voice and at an appropriate rate—not too fast and not too slow.
- Speak loudly enough so everyone can hear you.

Answer Questions

Your presentation may include a question-and-answer session. Unless the audience is a very small group in which everyone can be heard easily, repeat each question before answering it. This helps ensure that everyone will know what was asked and gives you a minute to think about the answer. If you do not know the answer to a question, admit it. Offer to find the answer and provide it later, if appropriate, or suggest another source for the information. End the session with the short closing statement you prepared.

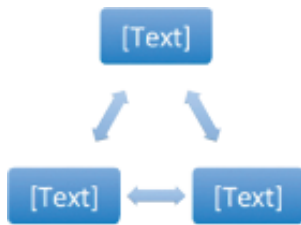
Tech Talk

Advanced *PowerPoint* Features

Several often-overlooked features of *PowerPoint* presentation software are particularly valuable. They include SmartArt, Outline, hyperlinks, and action buttons.

smartart SmartArt allows you to make visual representations of processes, relationships, cycles, lists, and hierarchies, as well as custom visuals, easily. You can

use it, for example, to illustrate steps in a series or an organizational chart. SmartArt is located on the Insert tab.



Outline Some presenters find it easier to key their slide text into the presentation before selecting fonts, backgrounds, images, etc. With the Outline tab, available in Normal view, you can easily insert all the text for your presentation. You can also see the organization of your presentation at a glance, which may help you spot connections or organizational issues before you begin the visual design.

Hyperlinks A [hyperlink \(Text or a graphic that links to another place in a file, a website, or another file\)](#) is a piece of text or graphic that links to another place in a file, a website, or another file. In *PowerPoint* software, you can use hyperlinks to move around in your presentation and to access examples on the Internet. To create a hyperlink, simply select the text or object and choose Hyperlink from the Insert tab.

Action buttons An action button is a type of hyperlink that allows you to jump from one slide to another by using a graphic that looks like a button, rather than text or a picture. Action buttons help you keep focused, show the organization of your presentation, and remind the audience of where you have been and where you are going. They are located in Shapes on the Home tab.



Communication/Collaboration

Prepare

Fear of speaking in public is a common fear. While you may never be totally free from this fear when speaking to large groups, you can take some steps to minimize it. Preparation is the best way to alleviate many fears. The following acronym will help you think about your preparations and reduce anxiety.

- **Package**—you are preparing a package to present to a group of people. As you

prepare, consider the big picture and how one section flows into another.

- Relax—intentionally remind yourself to relax.
- Expectations—what are the expectations for what your audience will take away from your talk? Make sure you have established in your own mind the objectives for the talk you are giving.
- Panic isn't an option, so plan panic out of your talk. Do you have an outline? Are your notes large enough and well organized? Could they get out of order? Think about what could go wrong, and then plan it out of the picture as much as possible.
- Audience—when preparing, keep your audience in mind. consider their skills and interests. For example, if you will be speaking to a group of administrative professionals about how to use the newest travel form, consider what might be most helpful to them. This will help you have confidence in the value of what you are presenting.
- Race—it isn't a race. The point is not to get it done, but rather to relay information to your audience. Focus on the objectives of the speech and how you can best fulfill them. Remind yourself to slow down.
- Enthusiasm—get excited about your topic, and your audience will follow suit. In addition, you will relax and enjoy it more.

Activity

Consider a talk or speech you gave in the past, such as a report in class or information in a meeting for work or a club. Share with the class how you did or did not prepare properly, considering just one of the concepts above.

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9-4f Evaluate Your Presentation

Within a day after the presentation, critique your performance. Think objectively about it. List what you did well, and identify one or two items you need to improve. Make notes on these items. Repeat the process each time you give a presentation. Evaluation is an ongoing process. Give yourself credit for the improvements you make.

Additionally, get feedback from other people. You can ask a respected colleague to evaluate

you. You or the individuals who asked you to speak may provide evaluation forms for the audience. Review the evaluations carefully. Do not let yourself become upset over a few negative comments. Know that there will always be some negative feedback. Take valid points seriously, and strive to address them in your next presentation.

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9-4g Team Presentations

You learned in [Chapter 3](#) that teams are used extensively in business today. They often report on their activities or findings in a team verbal presentation. Team members work together to prepare and deliver the presentation. The techniques presented in the previous section also apply to team presentations. Some additional suggestions for team planning are given below.

- Discuss as a team the goal or purpose of the presentation, the main points it will include, and how best to present the information.
- Decide who will deliver each part of the presentation.
- Determine how you will make the transition from one speaker to another. One way is for the speaker who is finishing to introduce the next speaker.
- Practice your presentation as a group. If visual aids or handouts are part of the presentation, decide who will prepare them.
- Determine appropriate dress. Speakers should dress in a similar fashion. For example, they may all wear suits.
- Determine how the group will be seated before and after each person's part of the presentation. Will the speakers be on a stage? In what order will they be seated? The first speaker should be closest to the podium.

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9-5 Chapter Review

9-5a Summary

To reinforce what you have learned in this chapter, study this summary.

- It is important for administrative professionals to develop skills in verbal

communication so they can listen well, speak in a professional manner, resolve conflict, and understand factors that affect communication.

- Nonverbal communication differs for each culture. Considering body language, voice quality, and personal space will help the administrative professional be a more effective communicator.
- using good human relations skills in handling telephone calls leaves the caller with a positive impression of the administrative professional and the organization.
- To give a successful business presentation, the administrative professional must plan, research, write, prepare visuals, practice, deliver, and then evaluate the presentation.

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Chapter Review

9-5b Key Terms

conflict (A state of opposition or disagreement)

Credibility (Believability or trustworthiness)

demographics (Characteristics of a group of people such as age, gender, and educational level)

electronic whiteboard (A device that has the ability to electronically scan images drawn or written on it and transfer the data to a computer where it can be edited, printed, or e-mailed)

flip chart (A tablet of large paper for drawing pictures or recording notes during a presentation)

green handout (Handout information provided on a website rather than on paper)

hyperlink (Text or a graphic that links to another place in a file, a website, or another file)

interactive whiteboard (A large display board connected to a computer that is used to capture images and notes or access computer programs or the Internet)

Nonverbal communication (The sharing of information through body language, gestures, voice quality, or proximity)

paraphrase (To restate a concept in different words)

Pitch (An attribute of sound that can be described as high or low)

Verbal communication (The process of exchanging information through words)

verbal pauses (Words used to fill silent spaces in conversation)

visual aid (An object or image used to help an audience understand a spoken or written message)

Study Tools

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Chapter Review

9-5c Let's Discuss

1. How can you be an active listener?
2. How is listening different from hearing?
3. Are speaking and listening of equal value? Why or why not?
4. Describe some of the messages body language sends.
5. Describe how an administrative professional should respond when someone phones and asks to speak with an absent supervisor.

6. Describe the elements of a telephone personality.
7. What activities should be completed when planning a presentation?
8. What activities should be completed when researching and writing a presentation?
9. What are some general rules to consider when creating a *PowerPoint* show for use in a presentation?
10. What strategies can you use to help you connect with the audience during a presentation?

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Chapter Review

9-5d Put It To Work

Presentation adjustment Gloria Delgado is an administrative professional in the human resources department of her company. Gloria's supervisor asked her to give a presentation to 20 employees regarding changes to employee benefits that will take effect in the following year. Gloria reviewed a report that summarized the changes and prepared her comments using information from the report. Gloria assumed the audience for her presentation would be other administrative professionals, so she prepared opening comments and examples to which other administrative professionals would relate.

On the day of the presentation, Gloria was surprised to see that the audience included people from several different departments and job positions. During the question-and-answer session, several people asked about aspects of the benefit plan other than the changes. Some listeners seem annoyed when Gloria was not prepared to answer these questions.

What went wrong? What should Gloria have done differently in preparing for the presentation? What could she have done during the presentation when she realized that some of her assumptions were incorrect? (Learning Objective 4 - Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.)

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Chapter Review

9-5e Communicate Successfully

1. **Voice mail** You are about to call Mr. Adrian Tarniceriu of Rom National Timber Company regarding a pulp and paper grant his company applied for last month. You work for Laramie Paper Company as an administrative professional. You need to know if he is still interested in the grant, and if so, what rate he would consider equitable. You know that Mr. Tarniceriu is away at a conference but that he will be checking voice mail. With a partner, simulate the voice mail you will leave. Critique each other's work. (Learning Objectives 1 - Identify elements of effective verbal communication, and 3 - Describe effective techniques for telephone communication.)
2. **Telephone responses** You work as an administrative assistant for Teresa Winwright, vice president of marketing at Kapor Pharmaceuticals. One of your responsibilities is to screen calls for her. Analyze the following situations and determine an appropriate response. (Learning Objective 3 - Describe effective techniques for telephone communication.)
 - a. Ms. Winwright leaves the office at 11:30 a.m. for a luncheon with the Fort Worth mayor. She tells you she will return at approximately 2:30 p.m. The luncheon is at the Hammersmith Country Club. David Anderson, president of Kapor Pharmaceuticals, calls at 1:30. He says he needs to speak with Ms. Winwright immediately.
 - b. At 2:30, Ms. Winwright leaves for a meeting in David Anderson's office. She says she does not know exactly when she will be back. Maurice Templeton, Kapor's senior vice president and general counsel, calls and asks to see her at 8 the following morning. He says the meeting is urgent and will take approximately 30 minutes. He informs you he cannot meet after 8:30. You see that Ms. Winwright already has a meeting scheduled for 8 to 8:30 on her calendar. However, you know she will not want to miss the 8 a.m. meeting with Mr. Templeton.
 - c. At 3, a man calls for Ms. Winwright. He refuses to give his name or the purpose of his call. He says he must talk with her. Ms. Winwright has not returned from her meeting with Mr. Anderson.
 - d. At 3:30, a reporter from a local television news station calls and asks to speak with Ms. Winwright. (She has not returned from her meeting with Mr. Anderson. She also has a 4 p.m. meeting scheduled.) The reporter tells you he is working on a story about a drug being developed by Kapor. The story will air on tomorrow's early morning show.
 - e. At 4, Ms. Winwright is in a conference call with two managers who report to

her. Before going into the meeting, she asked that she not be disturbed. She told you the meeting would last approximately an hour and a half. At 4:30, Alexander Espinosa, chairperson of the Fort Worth Arts Committee, of which Ms. Winwright is a member, calls and ask to speak with her.

3. Importance of verbal communication Add a new post to the blog you created in [Chapter 1](#). In this entry, reflect on the following statement: **Verbal communication skills are important for me to have as an administrative professional for the following reasons.** (Learning Objective 1 - Identify elements of effective verbal communication.)

Blog



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Chapter Review

9-5f Develop Workplace Skills

4. Listening skills You are the executive secretary to Linda Jones. She will be in a meeting this morning, but she has left you a voice mail with some assignments. Access the sound file *Ch09_Assignments* from the data files. Play the file, taking notes as you listen. Do not pause the recording or replay the file. Working from memory and your notes, list everything you can remember. Now play the file again. Were you able to list all the assignments? Fill in any tasks you missed. (Learning Objective 1 - Identify elements of effective verbal communication.)
5. Nonverbal communication Connie is a senior administrative associate for a company that trains entrepreneurs. She is in Japan, assisting her supervisor with a conference the company is conducting with business students in that country. After a few days, one of the students tells her that the students are a little frustrated because she bows too low. Connie decides she needs to research cultural and business customs in Japan. Using the Internet, make a short list of tips for business travelers to Japan that you think will be useful. Include advice on how Connie should bow. (Learning Objective 2 - Examine elements of nonverbal communication.)
6. Telephone etiquette practice Access the *Word* file *Ch09_Telephone_Rating_Form* from the data files. Choose a class member to work with. Call each other,

recreating the five situations in Activity 2. One of you should be the caller; the other should be the administrative professional. Then switch roles and replay each situation. Use the form to rate each other and the handling of each situation. Individually, prepare an action plan for improvement. (Learning Objective 3 - Describe effective techniques for telephone communication.)

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Chapter Review

9-5g Build Relationships

7. Evaluation With one or two classmates, prepare an evaluation form for *PowerPoint* presentations in the college classroom using the information in the “Business Presentations” section of the chapter. The form can be a rubric, checklist, or any other type of evaluation your team believes will help in effectively judging the quality of presentations. (Learning Objective 4 - Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.)
8. Resolving conflict Think of a situation that involved a conflict. The situation could be one in which you were involved personally, read about or viewed on television or the Internet, or witnessed at work. Answer the following questions. (Learning Objective 1 - Identify elements of effective verbal communication.)
 - a. Who were the people involved in the conflict?
 - b. Describe the conflict situation. What was the cause, or what were the underlying issues?
 - c. Did you or someone else listen and attempt to understand the conflict? If so, describe how.
 - d. Was the conflict resolved? If it was, explain how. If it was not, explain why you think no resolution was reached.
 - e. What could you have done differently (if you were involved) to improve communication and help resolve the conflict?

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Chapter Review

9-5h Use Tech Tools

9. Advanced features Access the *PowerPoint* file *Ch09_Presentation* from the data files. This presentation has prepared slides, which need some additions. Open the file and do the following: (Learning Objective 4 - Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.)
 - a. On Slide 2, select the text **Point 1**. Make it a hyperlink to Slide 3.
 - b. On Slide 2, select the text **Point 2**. Make it a hyperlink to Slide 4. Do the same for **Point 3**, linking it to the appropriate slide.
 - c. On Slides 3, 4, and 5, add an action button that links to Slide 2. You can create the button on one slide and copy and paste it onto the other two.
 - d. Add a professional theme or choose a professional background so all slides are uniform in appearance.
10. Outside the box Prezi is an example of webbased presentation tool. With Prezi, you can create presentations on a single digital canvas, rather than slide by slide, and show them on a whiteboard, for example. Explore Prezi (link found on the textbook website). Watch some sample presentations. Pair up with a classmate and share at least one presentation you enjoyed. Compare Prezi to the *PowerPoint* software. What are some advantages and disadvantages of Prezi? (Learning Objective 4 - Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.)
11. Recording Record the voice mail you practiced with a partner in Activity 1. Computers have recorders as standard software, or you can download free recording software such as Audacity (link found on the textbook website). Listen to yourself, noting improvements you could make, and then record the voice mail again. (Learning Objectives 1 - Identify elements of effective verbal communication. and 3 - Describe effective techniques for telephone communication.)

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Chapter Review

9-5i Plan Ahead

Presentation Choose one of the following topics, and prepare a five- to ten-minute presentation for your class. Follow the steps in this chapter to plan, prepare, and deliver your presentation. Plan for two to three main points, each developed through research. Create slides for the title, table of contents/main points, body, and credits. Use action buttons linked to points in the presentation, smart art, hyperlinks, backgrounds, and multiple images. Add a copy of your computer-based visual aids and notes to your online portfolio. (Learning Objective 4 - Prepare and demonstrate an effective presentation.)

Topics

- Time management
- Stress management
- Conflict resolution
- Public speaking tips
- Overcoming fear on stage
- Telephone etiquette
- Dress for success
- Developing a professional portfolio
- Leadership tips
- Plagiarism in workplace writing
- Ethics of social networking at work
- Another topic your instructor approves

e-Portfolio



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