

职业英语实务系列

PRESENTING IN ENGLISH

MARK POWELL

# 会议英语

——成功的讲演技巧

〔英〕马克·鲍威尔 著

 人民邮电出版社  
POSTS & TELECOM PRESS

# PRESENTING IN ENGLISH

how to give successful presentations

## 会议英语

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〔英〕马克·鲍威尔 著

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# Using this Book

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## 1. What makes a good presentation?

Without exception, all good presenters have one thing in common, enthusiasm, both for their subject and for the business of presenting it. Enthusiasm is infectious. Audiences can't help but be affected by it. And the best public speakers always make what they say sound as if it really matters. They know that if it matters to them, it will matter to their audience.

Many things contribute to the success of a presentation – new and unusual content, a clear structure, a good sense of timing, imaginative use of visual aids, the ability to make people laugh ... and think. But above and beyond all of these is enthusiasm. What kind of language and what kind of techniques will best show your enthusiasm for your subject?

## 2. How is this book different?

Based on the latest research into business communications, **Presenting in English** analyzes what makes a speaker sound dynamic and enthusiastic. It identifies the key skills employed by all effective presenters. The basics of introducing your topic, structuring your talk and referring to visual aids are dealt with in Sections 1 and 2. The remainder of the book focuses on:

**Voice and Delivery** As a presenter, the ability to pace your speech and use your voice to create impact is the single most important skill you need. You will be more effective if you are in control of your voice by your use of stress, pausing, intonation, volume, and silence.

**Content Language** You can't give a good presentation unless you have something to say. Being confident about your content is crucial. **Presenting in English** helps you to identify and organize all the key words and phrases you are likely to need and teaches you how to make simple visuals work for you.

**Rhetorical Technique** Once you are in charge of both your voice and your content you can start to think about how best to present your subject. Sections 4 and 5 teach you the techniques successful speakers use automatically. Choose the techniques that suit you best and work on perfecting them.

**Question Handling** Perhaps the most unpredictable part of a presentation is the question session. This may be after your talk or you may invite questions during it. Section 7 systematically teaches you how to field different types of question and deal effectively with the subjects your audience may raise.

## 3. Using this book

**In class** If you are an inexperienced presenter, it is probably best to work through the course section by section, making sure you do all the presentations before you move on. Pay special attention to the basic skills in Sections 1 – 3.

If you give presentations in English regularly and want to improve your style, go through the contents list with your teacher first and decide which areas to concentrate on.

When you give short presentations in class, take the time to prepare your notes thoroughly with any visuals you might need. Don't be afraid to read out some of the most important or complicated parts of your talk. As long as you read them well and keep good eye contact with your audience, this can be very effective.



**At home** If you are working alone, use the cassette as much as possible, as it will give you the vital listening input you need. Play it again at home or while driving.

If you can, get a friend or colleague to listen to you giving short presentations yourself. Try recording some of your talks and compare yourself with the speakers on the course cassette.

A lot of the presentation extracts in the course book contain phrases and expressions which you could use directly yourself. Sometimes whole sentences and paragraphs could be used with only small changes. Make a habit of noting these down for future use.

Try to study regularly if you can. Most of the units in **Presenting in English** are only one or two pages long. Try to cover three or four units a week. Even doing two units a week is better than doing nothing for months and then going into a panic the day before you have to give your presentation! Gradually build up your competence and confidence.

#### **4. Using the cassettes**

Many of the input tasks in **Presenting in English** consist of short presentation extracts which are recorded on cassette. Exercises which are on tape are marked like this **cass**.

When you have completed an input task, listen to the cassette to check your answers before looking in the key at the back of the book. This provides you with useful listening practice and a model of good delivery as well as the correct answers.

#### **5. How to become a good presenter**

##### **1. LEAVE NOTHING TO CHANCE**

Check everything before you are due to speak – room, seating, visibility, acoustics and equipment.

##### **2. KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO START**

Plan the first minute of your presentation down to the last detail. Try to memorize your opening words. This will help you to sound confident and in control.

##### **3. GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT**

Don't waste time on long boring introductions. Try to make at least one powerful statement in the first two minutes.

##### **4. TALK TO YOUR AUDIENCE**

Many of the best presentations sound more like conversations. So, keep referring back to your audience, ask them questions, respond to their reactions.

##### **5. KNOW WHAT WORKS**

Certain things are always popular with an audience: personal experiences, stories with a message, dramatic comparisons, amazing facts they didn't know. Use them to the full.

##### **6. BE CONCISE**

Keep your sentences short and simple. Use deliberate pauses to punctuate your speech.

##### **7. SPEAK NATURALLY**

Don't be afraid to hesitate when you speak, but make sure you pause in the right places. Remember, you are not an actor trying to remember lines. A certain amount of hesitation is actually quite natural.

##### **8. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE**

Speak for your audience, not yourself. Take every opportunity to show how much common ground you share with them. Address *their* goals, *their* needs, *their* concerns.

**9. TREAT YOUR AUDIENCE AS EQUALS**

Never talk down (or up) to your audience. Treat them as equals, no matter who they are.

**10. BE YOURSELF**

As far as possible, speak to five hundred people in much the same way you would speak to five. You will obviously need to project yourself more, but your personality shouldn't change.

**11. TAKE YOUR TIME**

Whenever you make a really important point, pause and let the full significance of what you have said sink in . . . before you move on.

**12. DON'T MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO BE FUNNY**

If you make a joke, don't stop and wait for laughs. Keep going and let the laughter (if it comes) interrupt you.

**13. LET YOUR VISUALS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES**

Good visuals are just that – visual. Don't put boring tables of figures and long lines of text on the overhead and read them out. Stick to the main points. Experiment with three-dimensional charts, cartoons, interesting typefaces – anything to catch your audience's attention.

**14. NEVER COMPETE WITH YOUR VISUALS**

When showing a visual, keep quiet and give people time to take it in. Then make brief comments only. Point to the relevant parts of the visual as you speak. If you want to say more, switch off your projector to do so.

**15. DEVELOP YOUR OWN STYLE**

Learn from other public speakers, but don't try to copy them. Be comfortable with your own abilities. Don't do anything that feels unnatural for you, just because it works for someone else.

**16. ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE**

The secret of being an excellent speaker is to enjoy the experience of speaking – try to enjoy the experience!

**17. WELCOME QUESTIONS FROM YOUR AUDIENCE**

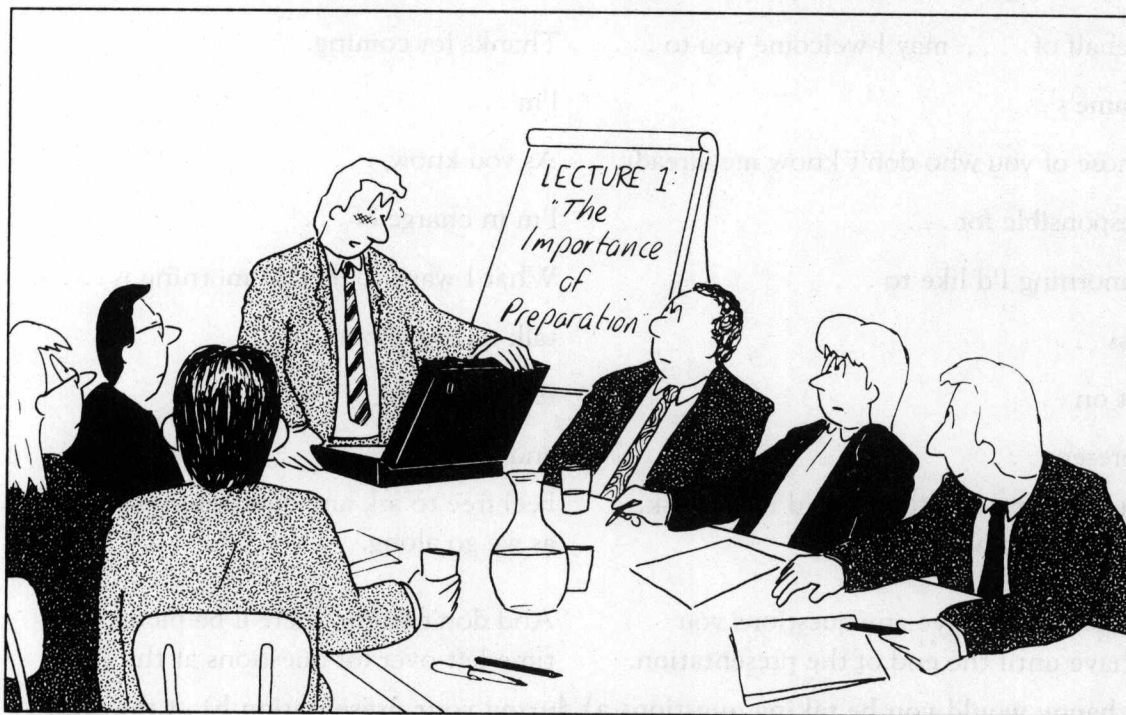
When members of your audience ask you a question, it is usually because they have a genuine interest in what you are saying and want to know more. Treat questions as an opportunity to get your message across better.

**18. FINISH STRONGLY**

When you are ready to finish your presentation, slow down, and lower your voice. Look at the audience and deliver your final words slowly and clearly. Pause, let your words hang in the air a moment longer, smile, say *Thank you* and then sit down.

# Getting Started

How to make an immediate impact on your audience



"Could you talk amongst yourselves . . . it looks as if I've left my notes in my hotel."



# Introductions

How you begin your presentation depends on how formal the situation is. Most audiences prefer a relatively informal approach.

## TASK 1

Below you will find two alternative ways of introducing yourself and the subject of your presentation – one fairly formal, the other more friendly. At each stage choose the expression you would feel more comfortable using and highlight it.

### FAIRLY FORMAL

Erm, perhaps we should begin.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of . . . , may I welcome you to . . .

My name's . . .

For those of you who don't know me already,

I'm responsible for . . .

This morning I'd like to . . .

discuss . . .

report on . . .

and present . . .

If you have any questions you'd like to ask, I'll be happy to answer them.

or

Perhaps we can leave any questions you may have until the end of the presentation.

How happy would you be taking questions a) during your presentation b) at the end?

### MORE FRIENDLY

OK, let's get started.

Morning, everyone.

Thanks for coming.

I'm . . .

As you know, . . .

I'm in charge of . . .

What I want to do this morning is . . .

talk to you about . . .

tell you about . . .

and show you . . .

Feel free to ask any questions you like as we go along.

And don't worry, there'll be plenty of time left over for questions at the end.

## TASK 2

Now put together an introduction of your own using some of the expressions you chose above. Remember how important it is to be totally confident about this part of your presentation.

Don't waste a lot of time at the beginning of your presentation introducing yourself, your company and the subject of your talk. Get on with it!

# Stating Your Purpose 1

It is essential to state the purpose of your presentation near the beginning. To do this clearly and effectively you need a few simple presentation verbs:  
**take a look at, report on, give an overview of etc.**

**cass**

## TASK

Below you will find a number of ways of stating the purpose of your presentation. Complete them using the words given. Combining the sentences with the number 1 will give you a complete introduction. Then do the same with those numbered 2 etc. The cassette provides a good model for you. Use it to check your answers after you have done the exercise.

OK, let's get started. Good morning, everyone. Thanks for coming. I'm (your name).  
 This morning I'm going to be:

showing    talking    taking    reporting    telling

1. .... to you about the videophone project.
2. .... you about the collapse of the housing market in the early 90s.
3. .... you how to deal with late payers.
4. .... a look at the recent boom in virtual reality software companies.
5. .... on the results of the market study we carried out in Austria.

... so, I'll begin by:

making    outlining    bringing    giving    filling

1. .... you in on the background to the project.
2. .... a few observations about the events leading up to that collapse.
3. .... company policy on bad debt.
4. .... you an overview of the history of VR.
5. .... you up-to-date on the latest findings of the study.

... and then I'll go on to:

put    discuss    make    highlight    talk

1. .... what I see as the main advantages of the new system.
2. .... the situation into some kind of perspective.
3. .... you through our basic debt management procedure.
4. .... detailed recommendations regarding our own R&D.
5. .... in more depth the implications of the data in the files in front of you.

Highlight all the verb phrases above, eg. *talking to you about, making a few observations about*. Notice it is not the verb alone, but the whole phrase you need to learn.

## PRESENTATION

Prepare to introduce and state the purpose of a presentation of your own by completing the notes below. Then present your introduction.

Perhaps we should begin. or OK, let's get started.  
Good morning / afternoon / evening, everyone.

Thanks for coming. I'm ..... And, as you know, I .....  
.....  
.....  
.....

This morning I'm going to be

- talking to you about
- telling you
- showing you
- reporting on
- taking a look at

.....  
.....

So, I'll start off by

- filling you in on the background to
- bringing you up-to-date on
- giving you an overview of
- making a few observations about
- outlining

.....  
.....

And then I'll go on to

- highlight what I see as the main
- put the situation into some kind of perspective
- discuss in more depth the implications of
- talk you through
- make detailed recommendations regarding

.....  
.....



## Stating Your Purpose 2

When you give a presentation in English, clarity is very important, particularly if there are non-native speakers in your audience. It often helps if you state your purpose at each stage of your talk as well as at the beginning.

### TASK

Cross out the verbs which do not fit in the following presentation extracts. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. First of all, I'd like to ~~preview~~ / ~~overview~~ / outline the main points of my talk.
2. Perhaps I should start off by **pointing** / stressing / reminding that this is just a preliminary report. Nothing has been finalized as yet.
3. But later on I will, in fact, be **putting forward** / putting out / putting over several detailed proposals.
4. One thing I'll be **dealing with** / referring / regarding is the issue of a minimum wage.
5. And I'll also be **asking** / raising / putting the question of privatization.
6. So, what we're really **driving at** / aiming at / looking at are likely developments in the structure of the company over the next five to ten years.
7. If we could just **draw** / focus / attract our attention on the short-term objectives to begin with.
8. The eighteen-month plan, which by now you should've all had time to look at, **outlines** / reviews / sets out in detail our main recommendations.
9. Basically, what we're **suggesting** / asking / reviewing is a complete reorganization of staff and plant.
10. I'd now like to **turn** / draw / focus my attention to some of the difficulties we're likely to face.
11. I'm sure there's no need to **draw out** / spell out / think out what the main problem is going to be.
12. But we do need to seriously **ask** / answer / address the question of how we are going to overcome it.
13. The basic message I'm trying to **get through** / get across / get to here is simple. We can't rely on government support for much longer.
14. Disappointing end-of-year figures **underline** / undermine / underestimate the seriousness of the situation.
15. And the main conclusion we've **thought** / got to / come to is that massive corporate restructuring will be necessary before any privatization can go through.

## Effective Openings

Communications experts are all agreed that the first three minutes of a presentation are the most important. They talk about 'hooks' – simple techniques for getting the immediate attention of the audience. A good start makes you feel more confident. Here's how the experts suggest you 'hook' your audience:

1. Give them a problem to think about.
2. Give them some amazing facts.
3. Give them a story or personal anecdote.

### **cass** TASK

Look at the presentation openings below and divide them under three headings:

PROBLEMS	AMAZING FACTS	STORIES
----------	---------------	---------

What do you think each presentation was about?

1. **Did you know that** Japanese companies spend four times more on entertaining clients in a year than the entire GDP of Bulgaria? 40 billion dollars, **to be precise**. **You know, that's** twice Colombia's total foreign debt. You could buy General Motors for the same money.
2. **Suppose** your advertising budget was cut by 99% tomorrow. **How would you** go about promoting your product?
3. **According to the latest study**, by 2050 only one in every four people in Western Europe will be going to work. And two will be old age pensioners.
4. **You know**, R&D is 90% luck. **When I think** about creativity, I'm reminded of the man who invented the microwave oven. He spent years messing around with radar transmitters, then noticed the chocolate in his pocket was starting to melt!
5. **Statistics show that** in the last ten years more people have legally emigrated to the United States than to the rest of the world put together – about half a million of them a year, **in fact**. **Now, over ten years, that's roughly equivalent** to the population of Greece.
6. **Have you ever wondered why it is that** Americans are easier to sell to than Europeans? And why nine out of ten sales gurus are American? **You have?** Well, if I could show you what stops Europeans buying, would you be interested?

7. I read somewhere the other day that the world's highest paid executive works for Disney and gets \$230 million a year. Now that's about \$2000 a minute! That means he's currently making more money than Volkswagen.

8. How many people here this morning hate going to meetings? Just about everybody, right? Well, imagine a company where there were never any meetings and everything ran smoothly. Do you think that's possible?

9. Have you ever been in the situation where you've had to negotiate with the Japanese? I remember when I was working in Nagoya and everybody had told me the Japanese don't like saying no. So in meetings I just kept saying yeah to everything. And they hated it. It turned out yeah sounds like no in Japanese!

## PRESENTATION

Use the frames below to help you prepare effective openings, using the problem, amazing facts, or story technique. Whatever technique you choose, prepare your opening carefully. You should always know exactly how you are going to start.

### PROBLEM TECHNIQUE

1. Suppose .....  
How would you ..... ?
2. Have you ever wondered why it is that .....  
..... ? You have?  
Well, if I could show you .....  
..... would you be interested?
3. How many people here this morning / afternoon / evening .....  
..... ?  
Well, imagine .....  
..... Do you think that's possible?

### AMAZING FACTS TECHNIQUE

1. Did you know that ..... ?
2. According to the latest study, .....
3. Statistics show that .....
4. I read somewhere the other day that .....

### STORY / ANECDOTE TECHNIQUE

1. You know, .....  
When I think about .....  
I'm reminded of .....
2. Have you ever been in the situation where. .... ?  
I remember when. ....  
It turned out .....



# Signposting

In a good presentation, what you say – the content – is much more important than anything else. But a clear structure helps. When you move on to your next point or change direction, tell the audience.

You can do this easily and effectively, using simple phrases as 'signposts' to guide the audience through your presentation:

**To move on**  
**To expand on**  
**To digress**

**To go back**  
**To recap**  
**To conclude**

**To summarize**  
**To turn to**  
**To elaborate on**

## TASK 1

Choose one of the 'signpost' expressions from the box above for the following situations:

1. When you want to make your next point. To .....
2. When you want to change direction. To .....
3. When you want to refer to an earlier point. To .....
4. When you want to repeat the main points. To .....
5. When you want to give a wider perspective. To .....
6. When you want to do a deeper analysis. To .....
7. When you just want to give the basics. To .....
8. When you want to depart from your plan. To .....
9. When you want to finish your talk. To .....

## **cass** TASK 2

These nine basic signposts are all you need, but you have to remember them automatically. Listen to your cassette or your teacher. When you hear an instruction, for example, *make your next point*, write the correct phrase:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....
9. ....