

## Hints for gaining confidence in lecturing, teaching and presenting

Take chances to get training, to be peer-reviewed or to get performance experience eg acting or singing.

Do make sure you know your subject! And know the audience, so you can choose relevant examples and depth of explanation. Emphasise why they need to know this stuff-*getting better marks* is key.

Spell out implicit assumptions- eg, explicitly say that the library and library staff are a resource for them for their whole course. Get a non-librarian to listen to your run-through, preferably one with English as a second language. Define any library terms you need to use. ("Catalogue". "Reservation". "Citation". "Keyword search".)

The academic hour is fifty minutes. There will be latecomers, you will need to explain something in different words, a lecturer will want to talk to them for a moment... assume you can get through about 40-minutes worth of material. Better to leave yourself time to expand on something or let them out early, than find yourself trying to rush through ten slides in two minutes at the end.

Use a framework of what they already know; start with a book, move on to a book with an editor and chapter authors, then to journal articles (and use a magazine analogy here.)

Know the room you'll be in. Do you need to find someone to let you in, can you work the PC/sound/projector controls, do you need to take a laptop (can you connect it up), can you get the internet, is there an OHP, do some seats face the wrong way, do you need a mike to be heard at the back?

Get your stuff put together in advance- not just your slides (and a backup of the slides on a different USB key... or email them to yourself) but cards with your key points on them, handouts (checked for accessibility), visual aids, quiz prizes (we like prizes), whiteboard markers etc. On the day, allows tons of time to set up. Have a backup plan- what will you do if the network goes down?

A register is useful for your own information and the department's, and can also make the students pay more attention.

Being nervous is normal. Actors say they need stage fright to key them up for a better performance.

It's very helpful if you can get a lecturer to introduce you and say how important the library is (and stay around if possible!- having more than one person in the room is very useful- a library assistant to help you hand out quiz papers, if not a fellow librarian or tutor team-teaching.)

Say something before you really start- just "turn your phones off" or anything- to get a feel for how loud you sound and get any creaks out of your voice. It can be useful to calmly set out how you expect them to behave.

Try to have at least one change of pace- an audience activity is very good. Think about finding a relevant video clip to start off with. Waving physical objects around is often good (take a print journal any time you are talking about periodicals. It massively helps them get what journals are.) This both helps students who have different learning styles and wakes up the whole room.

If there's something you're interested in, do let yourself go "off-script" for a minute; genuine enthusiasm will really boost your energy.

Be honest; if something's a bit dull but they still need to know it, why not say so? If someone asks a question you don't know the answer to, don't bluff- if you can think of a partial answer or how you would start to find out, give them that, then take their details and get back to them with the answer (you could always add the information to the slides if they're going up on the web)

You can leave the front of the room. Back-row talkers really don't like you walking up to them.

If you have a slide of (eg) some journal article titles, give them time to read it (and to see that they are relevant to their degree!)

Look up- you don't have to focus on faces, but a scan around the room helps draw them in to you.

The more self-conscious you seem, the more they will notice *you* instead of listening to what you are talking about. Standing up straight, speaking slower than usual, not fidgeting- the tricks of public speaking- all work because they subconsciously make the audience see you as confident and knowledgeable: as an authority. They work on yourself too! Remember, you know more than the audience, and they will gain by listening to you.

Relax. Breathe. Smile.

From questions:

What if you start gabbling or feeling nervous partway through?

Have a sip of water, or get to the end of a slide and pause, or ask if there are any questions so far; basically have a tiny break, take a slow deep breath, consciously relax and make a new start.

What do you do with your hands?

Gestures are fine (keep them large and deliberate so it doesn't look like fidgeting), or hold a slide clicker, or have them by your sides, or clasped in front of you; you're a lot more conscious of what you're doing with them than the audience are, so don't worry too much.