

Top 5 Tips for Orals Presentation Day

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**OPPORTUNITY
MANAGEMENT**

Introduction



Oral presentations can be quite daunting to both an individual and the team. Despite all the practicing and work put in ahead of time, there is something different about being center stage and having the spotlight focused right on you.

It does not take much to be ready for an oral presentation on the day of. You have put all the hard work in already. You've developed the slide deck, written your scripts and talking points, and practiced your content over and over. You are ready.

There are some basic steps you and

your team can take to be ready to tackle the presentation. The following pages details the five key tips I have identified from my years of working with a wide range of teams. These tips vary slightly for in-person versus virtual oral presentations, but they remain the same at their core. Be true to who you are.

In sum, these tips are:

1. **Do not make major changes right before the day of your presentation.**
2. **Lay out all you need the night before.**
3. **Dress right.**
4. **Be ready ahead of time.**
5. **Have a pre-presentation routine.**

If you incorporate these best practices and ideas into your routine the 24 hours before the presentation, you will be a success.



Tip 1 – Do Not Make Major Changes Right Before



People always want to improve themselves – it’s part of human nature. We promise ourselves we are going to work out more, eat healthier, stop our vices, and whatever else we need to do to “live right.”

We also like to be adventurous. Let’s go try skydiving or try the super mega lava-level heat buffalo wings for the first time.

These are admirable goals. However, the days before your oral presentation are **not** the time to quit smoking or get the extra spicy chicken vindaloo when

you’ve never even tried a spicy curry.

Changing your habits and routines can throw off your body. And if your body is not quite right it can throw off your presentation. So, whenever possible, do not make any changes right before your presentation. Keep your routines the same as you always do. If you work out every morning, then continue to do so. Keep your bedtime routine, including timing, the same. No need to tempt fate by being too tired. Eat when and how you normally do. If you always have breakfast, then do so! If

not, then don’t choose presentation day to eat a three-egg omelet and hash browns. It will make you sluggish.

Do what makes sense to you and what keeps you centered. The less you have to think of the day of your presentation, the better.



Tip 2 – Lay Out All You Need the Night Before



The last thing we want to do is scramble the morning of our presentation for any of our needed materials. Therefore, I highly recommend my teams get all of their personal and professional materials together the night before the presentation.

Both In-Person and Virtual

- Lay out your clothing for the presentation (see Tip 3 for specific advice on clothing)

In-Person Orals

- Have your backpack/briefcase packed with soft and hard copies of your presentation, your speaking notes, a laptop computer, pens, paper, identification needs, and anything else you are responsible for
- Have your wallet/purse, car keys, cell phone, and any other personal needs in one place

Virtual Orals

- Have your computer workstation ready and at the position you will

use for your presentation

- Have your notes, pens, paper, water cup, and any other needs at your workstation
- Have any personal needs at your workstation





Tip 3 – Dress Right

A question my teams always ask me are, “how should I dress for our presentation?” My advice is always the same. If you know what your potential client wears, then go one step more professional (within limits). For example, if your client wears business casual, then the gentlemen should wear a tie.

If we do not know what the client’s normal dress is, we should look for a professional look. Gentlemen should wear at least professional slacks, button down shirt, and jacket. I often advise a tie. For women, the same advice

applies – a professional style suit or dress would be best.

Dress conservative – “funny” ties or overly elaborate patterns can alienate some of your audience. Avoid loud jewelry, both in terms of being ostentatious and volume. For example, do not wear multiple bangle bracelets that clang against each other when you move your arms.

Finally, a common theme is fine. Using the same shade for your outfit’s accents can reinforce the idea that you are a team. However, do not come to the presentation wearing the same exact

outfit. I have had teams, for extremely casual presentation, wear a polo shirt with a corporate logo. That can be okay, but I would recommend you wear different color shirts (when possible) and different colored pants.



Tip 4 – Be There Ahead of Time



No one wants to be late to a presentation. Not only is it ridiculously unprofessional, it also eats into valuable presentation time. In addition, your team has no time to prepare and comes into the presentation flustered and simply off their game. When you're late, you've set yourself up to fail from the start.

In Person

When we have an in-person orals presentation, it makes sense to have the team travel together. This approach allows the team to go over any final

talking points and to build each other up. If you are in a metropolitan area with mass transit options, it can make sense to have the team meet up ahead of time at a location near the presentation site.

Virtual

When we have virtual orals, we need to be at our workstation and ready ahead of time. I provide my teams with a timeline of activities to do 1 hour, 30 minutes, and 5 minutes before the oral presentation begins. That allows the individual to have their workstation

and materials ready prior to the beginning of the session.

The team should meet up virtually prior to the start of the session. Open a separate virtual meeting approximately 30 minutes prior to the presentation window. This allows the team to do what our in-person team does in their commute. It also allows the team to ensure everyone has a strong internet connection.



Tip 5 – Have a Pre-Presentation Routine



All great athletes and presenters have a “pre-game” routine they use to get themselves mentally prepared for the task at hand. Having a routine allows us to enter the right mindset and clear our heads.

Personally, before I have a presentation, I go somewhere quiet on my own. I put on music from my favorite artist, Bruce Springsteen. I walk through my first three lines of

my presentation in my head. Then, I just sit in the quiet and, with my eyes closed, focus. I clear my head and prepare for what’s coming. When I open my eyes, I am ready to go.

Do what makes sense for you. The key thing is to be in your best mental place to deliver the best presentation.



Conclusion

Oral presentations can be daunting to those who have not delivered one before. They do not have to be. Your team has done the preparation and practice to be ready to deliver. Now, you just need to execute.

The five steps in this book provides you with the tools you need to be ready on the day of your presentation. Now, go for it and succeed!

