

TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION BEFORE AND AFTER THE SPEECH

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Presentations are an excellent way to establish yourself as an industry expert and your company as a source for an expert opinion. Although the content of your speech is critical, it is not enough to simply read the text. A speaker needs to actively engage the audience at all times whether that means walking around the room, showing a video, clicking through animation, or asking questions.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

PowerPoint has become the favored crutch for many presenters with mixed audience reviews. On a positive note, PowerPoint is one of the best ways to showcase photos, videos and animation in a presentation. However, when presenters neglect the use of images and instead read every word from a plain slide, they lose audience attention quickly. It is essential when using PowerPoint to provide the audience with photos or animation to illustrate speaking points, but do not overuse these tools. Images and videos should be as current as possible to avoid a perception that your presentation is outdated. The presentation should have a white or light color background and dark text so it is easy to read. Make sure to also keep your text as fragmented thoughts instead of full sentences to keep from reading the slides verbatim. Add in screen shots of your website and other information sources where the audience can learn more about the topic presented.

VIRTUAL PRESENTING

Webinars and podcasts are an easy, convenient way to share a presentation with a large audience and avoid meeting costs. By using these methods, presenters have the ability to engage a much larger audience, but lose out on the networking aspect of a physical presentation. Provide links to additional resources if using either of these presentation methods.

Before beginning a webinar, it is important to provide viewers with an outline of your points and guidelines on how to participate with you. Ask questions during the presentation and leave time to answer questions at the end. Speak loudly and clearly throughout the webinar and share information in short segments.

A podcast should consist of short audio clips of the main points of your presentation. These five minute segments should be accessible through both your website, Youtube, and possibly iTunes as a series on your presentation topic.

THE PRESENTATION AS A MARKETING TOOL

With each presentation keep in mind the goal of promoting both your company and yourself as an expert in your field. Whether it is a physical or virtual presentation, keep your contact information very apparent clearly visible along with your logo. It is a good strategy to use the same presentation over and over again as long as it is general enough for a diverse audience or you tailor it based upon your audience.

PROMOTION

Speakers should write a press release about their presentation both before and after the event and send it to organizations and publications related to the subject matter. Speakers may also consider starting a blog or Twitter account on the presentation topic. Presentation engagements should be regularly updated on the organization's website and announcements should be sent regularly to industry publications to get maximum value out of presentations and speaking engagements.

About Sarah S. Berman, President, The Berman Group, Inc. Sarah S. Berman serves as President of The Berman Group, a full-service marketing, public relations and special events firm based in New York City. The firm specializes in serving business-to-business clients in the real estate, construction and professional services industries. The firm's website can be found at bermangrp.com.