

THE PERSUASIVE PRESENTATION

First, you should make it clear to yourself what the point is you want to make and convince the audience of during the presentation. Select the ideas/material you are going to use accordingly. You should also include some counterarguments and show how they are outweighed by the arguments for your main idea.

You should introduce this idea, support it by facts, (show benefits) and give evidence that your ideas are right. You can do this by

- giving **examples, facts and figures**
- building **strong arguments**
- showing **illustrative material**
- by using **emphatic words** - mostly adjectives and adverbs and their modifiers

e.g. *the best/the worst, major, huge, crucial, (a) significant (fall/rise in sth), (a) considerable (amount of sth), (a) great (number of sth), absolutely necessary, extremely simple, really good, etc.*

For example, the word *simply* gives added emphasis to the verb or clause that follows it.

e.g. "People simply won't use public transport."
"It is simply not true that everyone owns a car."

- **certain expressions (=personal comments)** like
There is no doubt that...; Quite frankly, ...; The fact is...; What we need to do is (save our planet and our health); What we should be doing is (building more roads); And let's not forget...; etc.

(See your book on meetings, especially Units 2, 3, 8, 9,10.)

e.g. "Quite frankly, I find it astonishing that..."

- **Rhetorical questions, linking words, the right pauses, intonation, addressing the audience directly** while using "you" also in the middle of the presentation will help you to attract people's attention, make your message clear and persuade people that your point of view is right.

e.g. "Have you ever moved house?" or
"Ladies and gentlemen, it is quite frankly absurd to suggest that..."

- It is a good device to **stress the words** you would like to emphasise. In addition, you can **put the words to be emphasised first or last in the sentence.**

e.g. "We will *no longer* stand this situation."
"And it's simply *not true* to say that..."
"*The reason why* I'm here today is ..."
"To show you the benefits of this plan is *(the reason) why* I am here with you today."

- In formal English, the **verb** is **inverted** after some sentence beginnings, such as *Rarely...; Never...; Only when...; Only in ...; Hardly...; Under no circumstances...; etc.* This emphasises the main point of the sentence.

e.g. "Under no circumstances can we let this happen."
"Never have we had such poor results before."

- The use of **should, shouldn't** and **need** will help you to remain polite and constructive.

e.g. "However, the government still needs to reach agreement on some of the details."
"What we need to do is..."; "We will need to..."; "What we shouldn't be doing is... "

"We should definitely..."; "People should drive more carefully."

- There are certain structures that will help you to focus on important information. For example, if you use **the structure The + noun + is**, then the second part of the sentence is usually a "that" clause or a "wh-" question (*which, what, when, how, etc*). Nouns used with this structure include: *answer, fact, point, problem, question, solution, thing, trouble, truth*.

e.g. "The thing is (that) the whole plan is just too risky."
"The thing is, how much money will all this cost?"

- You can also focus on important information using **a clause that begins with "what"**.

e.g. "What worries me is the time they are taking to make a decision"
"What is mainly responsible for pollution is the diesel engine."
"What we need to do is improve the quality of work."

- Conditionals with **"if"** are important for developing an argument. The linking words **"unless"** and **"otherwise"** have the meaning "if not".

e.g. "If we do not place the order now, we will not receive the goods. (And this, in turn, will negatively affect our sales.)"
"Unless we pay the invoice now, they will cut back our credit."
"You should stop talking. Otherwise, you will be punished."

- Your **choice of words** may help you to get the message across and persuade people.

Words with negative connotation are, for example,

- *absurd, difficult, inadequate, inefficient, inappropriate, unsuitable; to destroy, to fail;*
- *a problem, an illness, a difficulty, etc;*

words with positive connotation are, for example,

- *enjoyable, wonderful, reliable, delicious, excellent, perfect, brilliant; to praise, to honour;*
- *a genius, etc.*

As in all presentations, you should have **a clear structure**:

- introduction - here you should **introduce** your topic, state the exact **purpose** of your presentation, tell the audience what you are trying to convince them of and **signpost** it (introduce the main points);
- body - bring out your main points, i.e. build your **arguments**, show the relationship between **cause and effect**, weigh the **options** and justify **your choice** of the options by giving **examples** or showing **visuals**;
- conclusion - **summarise** the main points, make **a concluding statement** and/or give your **recommendations** and invite listeners to ask **questions**.

Also, the **rappport** with the audience, your **eye contact** and the right **body language** may help you to reach your goal.