

# ***Stand & Deliver:*** ***Tips for Delivering Effective*** ***Presentations***

**U.S. EPA Community Involvement University**  
**CIU Presents Webinar**

**January 14 and 15, 2020**

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# Introduction

**Pam Avery**  
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“Ninety percent of leadership is the ability to communicate something people want.”

– U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein

**“Speech is power, speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel.”**

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

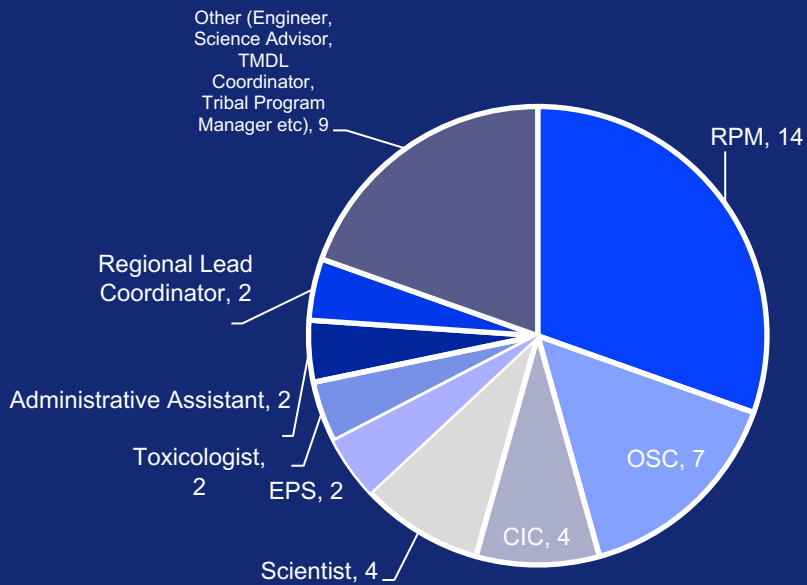
# Webinar Agenda

- Presentation Fundamentals
- Rules of Audience Engagement
- Confidence Creates Credibility – Tips on delivery and body language
- Coping with conflict
- Dealing effectively with difficult people or situations
- Questions & Comments

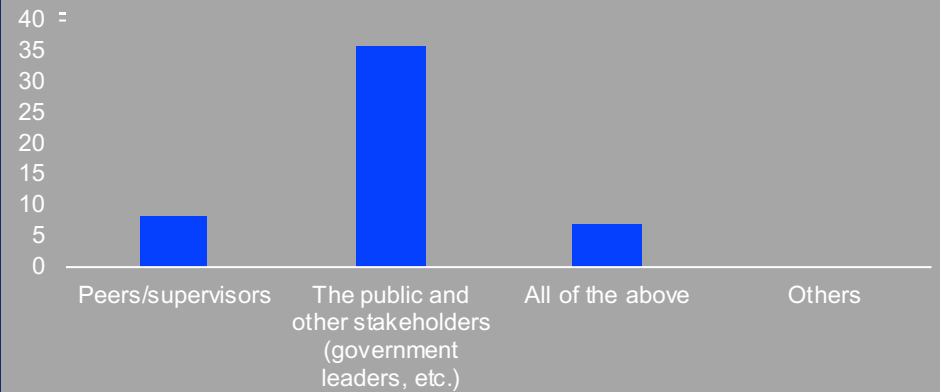
**What is the very *first* rule of  
Audience Engagement?**

# That's Right. Be Prepared!

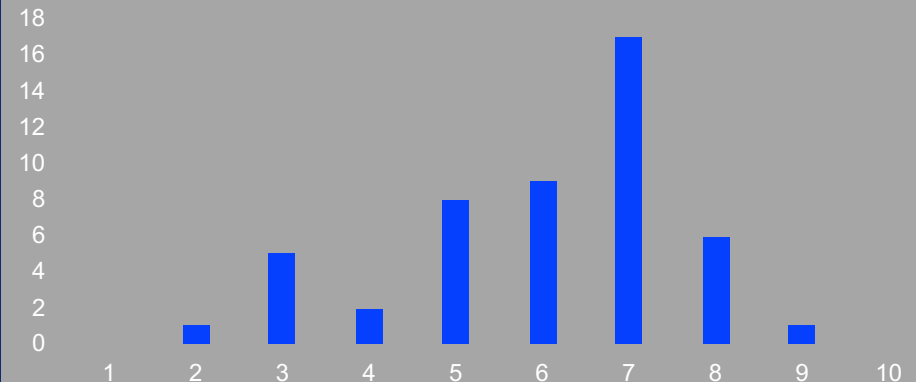
What is your job title?



Have you conducted presentations as an EPA employee? If so do you mostly present to:



On a scale of 1 - 10, 10 being very skilled, how would you rate your skills as a presenter?



# What do you consider as a presenter are your greatest...

## Strengths

- Advocacy
- Confidence
- Easy to understand, **approachable**
- **Effective use of graphics** / photos
- Energy, concise and focused presentations, **eye-contact**
- Knowledge of the subject -- and **rehearsing presentations** to be sure necessary technology works
- material **organization**
- **No fear** of standing in front of an audience; able to engage the audience
- voice
- **Passion**

## Challenges

- a "female-voice" that is perhaps high and sounds a bit childish so I **don't garner the same respect and confident demeanor** that my male colleagues might
- **aggressive audiences**
- Answering questions I don't know the answer to
- **Anxiety**
- Articulation
- Clearly **presenting complex ideas** to the public
- comfort in front of audience
- Getting **enough time to develop good presentations**
- **Getting off track on messages**, going off on tangents that can distract and dilute focus. Need more self confidence.
- **Getting people engaged** with the topic enough to change their methods (i.e. building 508-accessibility into text; using headings and writing style choices that make documents more accessible)
- Knowing what **my message my body posture and non-verbal gestures** are giving my audience.
- **Getting off track on messages**, going off on tangents that can distract and dilute focus. Need more self confidence.

# What do you hope to take away from this webinar?

- Coping with **conflict and anger**
- How to build confidence to **overcome nerves**.
- Reminders on how to prepare, focus, **project confidence**
- Strong **concise messages**
- The ability and skills to **get other people engaged**
- better tools to address tough questions, ability to **think on my feet better**, ways to make presentations more interesting to public, more engaging presentations.



# Be Prepared: First up Know your Audience

Who do we need to *reach*?  
(Audiences/Stakeholders)



# Be Prepared: Presentation Fundamentals

## Have a Clear Agenda

- Know your audience.
- Know what they want and need.
- Know the three or four messages you want to convey to them.
- Know what you want them to do in response.

# Presentation Fundamentals

1. **Content** – How much information can the audience absorb in one sitting?
2. **Structure** – A logical beginning, middle and end.
3. **Packaging** – Well prepared and delivered.
4. **You!** – Your style counts.

# Rules of Audience Engagement

"According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death... This means if you go to a funeral you are better off in the coffin than doing the eulogy."

– Jerry Seinfeld

# **Rules of Audience Engagement**

**What do stakeholders expect of  
the Public Participation Process?**

# Rules of Audience Engagement

## What do they expect?

- General Information
- Process and timeline
- A clear role
- A significant role
- Respect
- Responsiveness
- Empathy

# Rules of Audience Engagement

## Identify Your Audience's Level of Understanding

- Am I presenting to experts? If so, assume they know the terms and the basic info.
- Have they heard similar talks?
- What do they expect to hear?
- What do they need to do with the information?

# Rules of Audience Engagement

## Simplify, Simplify, Simplify

- **Ditch the jargon**, except with peers.  
*Quick what does ATSDR mean? How about CERCLA? RCRA?*
- **Rule of three**. Convey three key messages per presentation
- **Use analogies** where appropriate.  
(Level of risk, size of a particle, etc.)



# Rules of Audience Engagement

## Actively Engage Your Audience

Ask questions that *require* audience interaction. For example, start the meeting with introductions.

The more an audience member feels like a part of the presentation, the more attentive he or she will be.

# Set the Stage for Effective Engagement

## Make the most of room dynamics:

- Check out the room before the meeting. (Equipment, too!)
- Make sure you have room key or cell phone #s of meeting space contact.
- Present from same level as audience. **Not on a stage.**
- Arrive an hour early day of meeting. Greet participants as they arrive.

# Set the Stage for Effective Engagement

**Make room dynamics work for you:**

- **Group smaller than expected?** Urge everyone to move upfront.
- **Really small group?** Form a semi-circle, chuck the PPT and work from your outline. Key is flexibility.
- **Group larger than expected?** Apologize. Move to larger room; bring in more chairs; or ask folks to get comfortable as they can.

# Set the Stage for Effective Engagement

## Agree on Ground Rules

- Purpose of the meeting.
- Meeting format & length. (Emphasize plenty of time for questions.)
- Q&A format. If large meeting, time limit.
- Expectation of mutual respect.

# Confidence Creates Credibility

*“There are four ways, and only four ways, in which we have contact with the world. We are evaluated and classified by these four contacts: what we do, how we look, what we say, and how we say it.”*

– Dale Carnegie

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Body Language Speaks Volumes

Research on total impact of a message found:

- *55% is nonverbal.*
- *38% is vocal, including tone of voice, inflection, etc.*
- *7% are the words alone.*

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Body Language Speaks Volumes

### Start with the Right Posture

- Stand feet shoulder-width apart, weight equally distributed.
- Raise arms up over your head.
- Breathe in deeply.
- Exhale, slowly lowering arms down to your sides, keep your ribcage as is.

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Stance

- If using a podium, beware the “death grip.” Move to the side to engage with audience. (Use a clip-on or portable microphone.)
- Avoid swaying back and forth. Plant feet in an inverted pyramid.
- Keep hands out of pockets. Don’t jingle change.
- ***About those hands!*** Gesture waist to shoulder. Cup resting hands.



# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Facial Expression

- Smile. It relaxes your audience and makes you look and sound friendly.
- Use facial expressions to make a point (e.g. Raise eyebrows, etc.)

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Eye Contact

- Don't read continually from notes or PPT.
- Gaze around room, rather than at one person or spot.
- Look at the audience – not over their heads.

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Voice – your most valuable tool

- Warm your voice. Hum, talk to self.
- Avoid dry throat. Sip water.
- Watch out for speed bumps, e.g. *“blood lead levels.”*
- Vary volume, pitch, speed.

Say: “This new CERCLA policy is going to be extremely effective.”

***Change tone: Add surprise, irony, anger.***

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Speak “On the Breath”

- Take in a full breath.
- Use it to support your words, letting the breath out steadily through the entire sentence.

## Exercise:

- Breath in then exhale 1..2..3..4..5
- Exhale: *“Hello my name is \_\_\_\_\_”*

# Confidence Creates Credibility

Avoid Upspeak (making statements sound like questions). Repeat:

*“I have something to **say**?”*

*“I have **something to say.**”*

And finally, **smile**. It adds warmth.

# Confidence Creates Credibility

"The best speakers know enough to be scared. . . the only difference between the pros and the novices is that the pros have trained the butterflies to fly in formation."

– Edward R. Murrow



# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Make the Butterflies Work for *You*

An adrenaline rush can make for a more animated and enthusiastic performance. It's better than a shot of caffeine. (*Just don't do a screamer guy!*)

# Confidence Creates Credibility

## Control Anxiety – *Stress-Buster Exercises*

- Stand on one leg and shake the other. Switch leg and shake. (Remove high heels or cowboy boots.)
- Shake your hands... fast. Hold them above your head, bending at the wrist and elbow and then bring your hands back down.



# Confidence Creates Credibility

## *More Stress-Buster Exercises*

- Ease tense facial muscles by opening your mouth as wide as possible. Then close. Open and close.
- Do shoulder and neck rolls. Imagine you're eye level with a clock. As you look at 12, pull as much of your face up to 12 as you can; now move it to 3, then down to 6 and finally over to 9. Reverse direction.

# Coping with Conflict

·  
"Conflict is inevitable.  
War is not.

– Douglas Fry, Anthropologist

# Coping with Conflict

**Myths about Conflict.** (True or False?)

- If I'm doing my job right, there should be no conflict.
- The person or group I'm in conflict with is my enemy.
- All conflicts can be resolved.
- Conflicts are simply caused by poor communications.

# **Coping with Conflict**

**What Converts Conflict to Anger?**

# Coping with Conflict

## What Converts Conflict to Anger

- Fear of the unknown.
- Differences in values leading to:
  - Deep-seated distrust.
  - Feelings that concerns are not validated.
  - Feeling excluded from decision making.
- Sense of powerlessness.

# Coping with Conflict

## Dealing with Difficult Participants

- Not everyone will agree with you. Don't get rattled. Remember, you are the expert.
- Find a way to agree with part of the questioner's argument: "I understand your point, however. . ."
- Respond to the entire audience, not just the questioner.

# Coping with Conflict

## Dealing with Difficult Participants

- Do not debate. Suggest meeting during a break or after the presentation.
- If nothing works, ask a supporter to intervene.
- If you know the meeting will be contentious, retain a **neutral facilitator**.

# Coping with Conflict

## Least to Most Disruptive

### Rambling:

- Be patient. Allow speaker to gather thoughts.
- Validate question/Comments: *It appears you know a lot about this topic. Can you help us pull a few key points that relate back to . . . .”*
- If necessary, interrupt to say you would be happy to continue the discussion after the meeting.
- Consider a “parking lot” for ideas.



# Coping with Conflict

## Repetitive Questions:

- Acknowledge speaker. Refer him/her to where the information was or will be discussed.
- Confirm rest of group understands info, e.g.,  
*“Does everyone in the room feel comfortable with where we are in the discussion, or do we need to revisit some points. . .”*
- If necessary, move on politely, but say you will be available to discuss further after the meeting.

# Coping with Conflict

## Skepticism of Data/Facts:

- Provide the facts in simple, clear language. Include images graphics, etc., for 70% of visual-learner adults.
- Describe process, assure participants their comments will be considered.
- Do NOT become defensive. With defensiveness comes loss of credibility.
- Have a technical resource available to discuss how data was collected, analyzed.
- Have handouts available.
- Be available after the meeting.

# Coping with Conflict

## Argument/Escalating Conflict:

- **Prepare.** Anticipate a contentious meeting? Retain a neutral facilitator. (EPA CPRC has contract for facilitation services.)
- **Don't get rattled.** Remember not everyone will agree with you.
- **Disagreement can be constructive.**
- **Listen intently** to the speaker's remarks and summarize what you heard.
- (If possible) **Acknowledge part of the questioner's argument:** "I understand your point, however. . ."

# Coping with Conflict

## Verbal Attack:

- Directed at another speaker? Call for a “time out.”
- Remind entire group of ground rules.
- Designate a colleague who can meet in a separate area with the person.

# Coping with Conflict

## Threat of (or Actual) Physical Attack:

- Stop the meeting immediately.
- Let participants know they will be notified of next meeting or engagement.
- Take deep breath and then meet with team to determine next steps.
- Consider other public involvement formats.
- If public meeting is required, retain a facilitator and have security or law enforcement present.

*"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."*

– Winston Churchill

**"When people talk, listen completely.  
Most people never listen."**

- Ernest Hemingway

# Flight or Fight is Not an Option

- **Do NOT become defensive.** This is not about you.
- **Project Confidence.** Body language counts.
- **Time Out.** Raise your hand for silence.
- **You Are Not Alone.** You do have friends in the audience.
- **Know Your Limitations.** You do not have all the power. Accept that you have done the best you can.
- **This too will pass.** Plus, you will have another survival story to share with colleagues!

*“Leadership has been defined  
as the ability to hide your  
panic from others.”*

- Anonymous

**Questions or Comments?**