



**Achieving a successful workshop: crafting a training for  
presentation skills**

Lidija Ginotite

Haaga-Helia University of applied sciences

Bachelor's degree

Thesis

2024

## Abstract

<b>Author</b> Lidija Ginotite
<b>Degree</b> Bachelor of Business Administration
<b>Thesis Title</b> Achieving a successful workshop: crafting a training for presentation skills
<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> 37 + 1
<p>This thesis explores the design and implementation of a workshop aimed at enhancing presentation skills for professionals, with a focus on crafting an effective training experience tailored to meet the expectations and needs of participants. In today's competitive professional landscape, effective communication skills, particularly presentation skills, are crucial for success. However, there remains a gap in understanding the specific expectations professionals have for presentation skills workshops and how these workshops can be optimized to promote skill development.</p> <p>Using qualitative research methods, the study explores professionals' expectations regarding presentation workshops, identifying desired skills and common challenges. It proposes a comprehensive workshop approach, blending theory and practice through interactive activities, tailored to diverse learning styles and experience levels.</p> <p>Feedback from professionals from a consulting firm refines the workshop structure, ensuring alignment with participant needs. Through data gathering questions and workshop structure feedback questions, the study gathers valuable input on the importance of presentation skills, past experiences with workshops, specific expectations for future workshops, and feedback on the proposed structure. By addressing these expectations, the thesis aims to empower professionals with the confidence and capabilities to deliver impactful presentations, contributing positively to their careers.</p> <p>The findings of the study underscore the importance of effective communication and offer valuable guidance for individuals seeking to excel in presentations. This thesis contributes to the body of knowledge surrounding presentation skills training and provides a roadmap for empowering individuals to communicate effectively and achieve success in academic and professional endeavors.</p>
<b>Keywords</b> Know-how, Presentations, workshops, development, communication, professional skills

## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Self-Presentation.....	3
2.1	Defining self-presentation.....	3
2.2	Personal branding .....	3
2.3	Self-promotion benefits for an individual.....	4
3	Skill of Presentation.....	5
3.1	Defining the skill of presentation.....	5
3.2	Communication competence in presentations .....	6
3.3	Techniques for effective presentation.....	7
3.3.1	Systematic desensitization.....	7
3.3.2	Presentation mistakes and how to avoid them .....	8
3.3.3	Presentation anxiety and how to deal with it.....	9
3.4	Strategies for effective presentation .....	10
3.4.1	Know your audience .....	10
3.4.2	Be the purple cow .....	11
3.5	Structuring an effective presentation .....	11
3.5.1	Serial-position effect .....	11
3.5.2	Time management.....	12
3.5.3	The rule of three .....	13
3.5.4	Presentation structures .....	14
3.6	The impact of presentations on career .....	18
4	Towards a training workshop.....	19
4.1	Data gathering results: finding out expectations .....	19
4.2	First workshop structure feedback.....	24
5	Crafting a beneficial training workshop .....	27
6	Conclusion and Evaluation .....	32
6.1	Conclusion .....	32
6.2	Personal learning and development .....	32
	Sources .....	34
	Appendices.....	38
	Appendix 1. Questionnaire questions .....	38

## 1 Introduction

In today's extremely competitive professional landscape, effective communication skills, particularly presentation skills, are essential for success. Whether delivering a sales pitch, leading a team meeting, or presenting at a conference, professionals across various industries rely on their ability to convey ideas persuasively and engage their audience. Recognizing the importance of mastering this skill set, organizations often seek out training workshops to enhance their employees' presentation abilities.

Being a student with presentation anxiety who has been to a presentation skills class, it was incredibly inspiring to see how greatly it helped with my self-confidence and presentation skills. For the inspiration for this thesis topic, I want to thank Jay Veenstra, a teacher who taught a business presentation course in Toyo University that I attended.

This thesis aims to explore the intricacies of crafting a successful workshop focused on enhancing presentation skills for professionals. It delves into the expectations that professionals have towards such workshops, the key skills they seek to develop, and the elements that contribute to a beneficial training experience.

The overall goal of my thesis is exploring the topics such as impact of presentation skills on career development, strategies for improving presentation skills and presentation structuring. I am designing a structure for a presentation skills workshop as the product of this thesis. I am going to give the workshop plan for comments to professionals at a consulting firm. The comments will help me receive feedback on the research and practical methods which can be used to refine and improve my work.

This thesis is a product-based thesis which will be derived from qualitative research. It is a method of inquiry used to explore and understand phenomena in their natural settings. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research emphasizes subjective experiences, meanings, and interpretations. (Bhandari 19.6.2020.)

### **Expectations of Professionals**

In this thesis, I aim to discover professionals' expectations for presentations and workshops targeted at improving their presenting abilities. My objective is to dive into the reasoning underlying these expectations, attempting to understand why professionals have specific preferences and goals for professional growth in presentation skills.

While the significance of presenting skills is widely acknowledged, there is still a lack of awareness about the precise expectations and wishes that professionals have for workshops and training programs aimed to improve these abilities. By putting light on these expectations, I want to give useful insights into how workshops might be adjusted to better suit the requirements and goals of professionals.

### **Defining a successful Workshop**

A successful presentation skills workshop would offer a comprehensive approach to skill development, encompassing both theoretical knowledge and hands-on practice. It would incorporate interactive activities and real-world simulations to simulate authentic presentation scenarios. Moreover, the workshop would address diverse learning styles and preferences, catering to participants with varying levels of experience and expertise. Constructing a successful training workshop for enhancing presentation skills requires careful planning, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of participants' needs and objectives.

## 2 Self-Presentation

### 2.1 Defining self-presentation

Self-presentation refers to the intentional process of portraying oneself to others in a manner that aligns with specific goals, social norms, or desired impressions. It involves conscious efforts to manage and control the way individuals are perceived by others, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal behaviors. In various social and professional contexts, effective self-presentation is crucial for building relationships, influencing perceptions, and achieving personal or career objectives. Elements of self-presentation may include clothing choices, body language, speech patterns, and overall demeanor. (Cooks-Campbell 25.4.2021.) The concept is particularly relevant in job interviews, networking events, and other situations where individuals seek to make positive impressions. Authenticity and consistency are essential in self-presentation, as the alignment between one's self-image and the image projected to others fosters trust and credibility. Developing self-awareness and interpersonal skills are integral to mastering the art of self-presentation, enabling individuals to navigate social dynamics and achieve their communication objectives with authenticity and effectiveness. (Indeed 15.12.2022.)

Erving Goffman's (1956) self-presentation theory offers a captivating perspective on the intricate dynamics of human interaction. Goffman conceptualizes social life as a theatrical performance, where individuals act as both performers and audiences in the grand play of everyday existence. The theory introduces the concepts of front stage and backstage, delineating between the public persona individuals present to the world and the more private, authentic self. Goffman emphasizes the strategic nature of impression management, wherein individuals carefully craft and control the image they project to others. Roles, scripts, and the performative aspects of social behavior play a pivotal role, allowing individuals to navigate diverse social situations. This theory sheds light on how people use diverse tactics to influence perceptions, preserve social peace, and develop their identities in the complicated social life. (Goffman 1956.)

### 2.2 Personal branding

Personal branding is the deliberate act of controlling and promoting how you are seen by others. It entails creating a distinct identity and reputation that are consistent with your aims, beliefs, and skills. Individuals may establish personal brands to distinguish themselves in both their professional and personal life, much as businesses do. At its foundation, personal branding is about identifying who you are and what you stand for. This involves determining your skills, values, interests, and distinguishing characteristics that set you different from others. (Personalbrand s. a.) Understanding your target audience is critical to successful personal branding. Consider who you want to

engage with, whether they be employers, clients, coworkers, or industry peers, and design your brand messaging appropriately. Consistency is essential for creating a strong personal brand. Internet presence, offline interactions, communication style, and visual representation should all convey a consistent picture that maintains your brand identity. Authenticity is crucial; your brand should represent who you are, rather than projecting a fabricated or inauthentic image. Determine what value you provide to your audience or target market. Define your unique selling points, abilities, knowledge, and the value you provide to others. Increasing your visibility is critical for developing a personal brand. Actively market yourself via a variety of outlets, including social media, networking events, speaking engagements, and professional groups. (Marwick et al. 2011.)

### **2.3 Self-promotion benefits for an individual**

Self-promotion is often associated with negative connotations, linked to boasting or showboating. Many shy away from self-promotion, fearing it might come off as arrogance or bragging. However, effective self-promotion, when done right, can be beneficial both personally and professionally. (Ranstad 16.3.2022.) Rather than focusing on boasting, successful self-promotion centers around constructive engagement and contribution. Shameless self-promoters strike a balance, ensuring their self-promotion benefits the collective without overshadowing others. By emphasizing ideas, growth, and collaboration, shameless self-promotion becomes magnetic and conducive to progress. The key to guilt-free self-promotion lies in authenticity and humility. (Joki 2.6.2022.) Actions speak louder than words, making consistent, results-driven efforts the cornerstone of effective self-promotion. Moreover, self-promotion should be about promoting ideas and visions, not just personal accomplishments. Highlighting current and future activities rather than concentrating on previous triumphs promotes forward momentum. (Farpi 18.2.2020.)

Honing humility and modesty are crucial for successful self-promotion. Balancing pride in achievements with a humble perspective ensures credibility and fosters positive relationships. Modesty, expressed through behavior and language, allows individuals to present themselves modestly while still showcasing their strengths. (Javelina s. a.) To master guilt-free self-promotion, individuals must let their actions speak, focus on ideas and visions, emphasize present and future contributions, and cultivate humility and modesty. By positioning themselves effectively, showcasing expertise, and fostering recognition, individuals can elevate their careers and make a lasting impact. (Ranstad 16.3.2022.)

### 3 Skill of Presentation

This chapter is dedicated to exploring strategies and techniques vital for mastering effective presentations. Most of the topics covered were picked by me based on my experience of attending presentation classes. Some of the topics were added after or covered in greater detail, like time management, as per the results from the data gathering process. I also cover how presentation skills can affect career development, since multiple professionals considered that presentations affect their career.

#### Defining strategies

According to Harvard Business Review, the goal of a competitive strategy is to stand out. Strategy is the development of a distinct and valued position via a variety of actions (Porter s. a.). A strategy is a broad plan designed to accomplish one or more long-term or overall objectives in an unpredictable environment. It involves setting long-term objectives and outlining the general direction and actions to be taken to achieve those objectives. (Wragg et al. 1973.) Strategies provide a framework for decision-making and guide the plan of action. They are more focused on the “what” and “why” of a goal.

Developing a strategy to improve presentation skills might involve setting a goal of enhancing overall confidence, identifying key areas of improvement, and determining the overall approach to be taken, such as incorporating storytelling techniques or practicing visualization exercises. Naqvi (28.2.2016) describes it as a plan of action aimed at attaining an overarching goal.

#### Defining techniques

Techniques, on the other hand, are specific methods, tools, or practices employed to accomplish a particular task within the broader strategy (Naqvi 28.2.2016). They are more focused on the “how” of achieving a goal. Techniques are practical and actionable steps that can be applied to execute the strategy effectively.

When it comes to improving presentation skills, techniques could include specific practices like structuring presentations using the “Introduction-Body-Conclusion” format, utilizing visual aids effectively, practicing vocal projection and body language, or using persuasive storytelling techniques to engage the audience. (Prezent s. a.)

#### 3.1 Defining the skill of presentation

A presentation is a method of communication that involves the organized delivery of information to an audience. It encompasses both Presentation Skills and Personal Presentation, which include

the preparation, presentation, and practice of verbal and non-verbal communication. (Oxford Dictionaries 26.9.2016.) Presentations can take various forms, adapting to different speaking situations such as addressing a group, leading a meeting, or giving a briefing. The effectiveness of a presentation often relies on careful planning and consideration of key elements, including the context of the presentation. This context involves factors such as the location, formality, audience size, familiarity with the audience, available equipment, and the audience's expectations. Whether in a formal or informal setting, presentations serve as a means to convey thoughts and ideas, often containing persuasive elements. (Skillsyouneed s. a.) The important components of a presentation include the overall context, the target audience, and the message one wishes to convey, highlighting the significance of clear and compelling communication in a variety of professional and social settings (Skillsyouneed s. a.).

Giving presentations and public speeches are important skills in working life, especially in leadership and management positions. Effective presentation skills can help establish influence, persuade others, and advance professional success. Well-planned and executed presentations can also have a significant impact on the audience, inspiring, motivating, teaching, and helping people gain new perspectives. In addition to professional benefits, good presentation skills can also help build personal brand and differentiate professionals in the same field. For businesses and organizations, offering training to employees to improve their presentation skills can help them better advance company goals. Similarly, job seekers can benefit from better presentation skills as they can help them stand out from other applicants during interviews.

### **3.2 Communication competence in presentations**

“Communicative competence is the ability to communicate in a personally effective and socially appropriate manner” (Trenholm & Jensen, 2011). Communication competency in presentations on the other hand refers to the ability and efficacy of delivering messages to an audience during a presentation. It includes a variety of abilities and characteristics that help presenters communicate clearly, engage their audience, and fulfill their communication objectives. Clarity is a critical component of effective presentation communication. Presenters must communicate their point clearly and concisely, ensuring that the audience understands what is being presented. This entails structuring material rationally, using clear and understandable language, and avoiding technical jargon that may mislead readers. (Career Emirates 10.10.2023.)

Nonverbal communication is equally important for demonstrating communication ability during presentations. Presenters must pay attention to their body language, facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact, since these nonverbal indicators may indicate confidence, sincerity, and passion.

Positive nonverbal communication increases the impact of the message and builds a relationship with the audience. (Morreale et al. 1998, n.p.)

Effective presentations require good verbal communication abilities. To keep the audience engaged, presenters should talk clearly and audibly while maintaining an acceptable tone and tempo. Using rhetorical elements like narrative, comedy, and vivid language may help you communicate more effectively and attract the audience's attention. Visual aids, such as presentations, charts, graphs, and multimedia, can help to support and reinforce essential concepts. However, it is critical to employ visual aids sparingly, ensuring that they supplement rather than overpower the presenter's content. (Priem et al. 2009, p. 260.)

Active listening is another part of communication competency in presentations. Presenters should be attentive to audience comments, questions, and reactions, exhibiting responsiveness and flexibility. Addressing audience questions and concerns encourages participation and interaction, which improves the overall efficacy of the presentation. Confidence and composure are also important components of communication ability. (Morreale et al. n.p.) Presenters should exude confidence with their manner, posture, and delivery, keeping cool and composed even under difficult circumstances.

### **3.3 Techniques for effective presentation**

In this section I will cover techniques for preparing for an effective presentation.

#### **3.3.1 Systematic desensitization**

Systematic desensitization, a therapeutic technique developed by Joseph Wolpe (1958; 1964) often associated with anxiety and phobia treatment, can be adapted, and applied to presentations to alleviate public speaking apprehension. This method involves gradually exposing individuals to the feared stimuli in a systematic and controlled manner, allowing them to build tolerance and reduce anxiety over time.

In the context of presentations, systematic desensitization may involve a step-by-step approach, starting with less intimidating speaking situations and progressively advancing to more challenging ones. (Nash 23.9.2022.) For example, one might begin by practicing in front of a trusted friend or family member, then gradually move on to smaller groups before facing larger audiences. Incremental exposure helps individuals develop confidence, improve their communication skills, and desensitize themselves to the anxiety associated with public speaking. By incorporating systematic desensitization into presentation preparation, speakers can overcome fears, enhance their ability

to engage with audiences, and ultimately deliver more effective and composed presentations. (WebMD s. a.)

### **3.3.2 Presentation mistakes and how to avoid them**

Many people commonly make mistakes in their business presentations. These errors often involve seemingly efficient practices, such as planning the presentation directly with PowerPoint, writing the talk without proper planning, skipping practice sessions, and using boring slides. These habits are misleading; they give the illusion of progress but actually lead you astray, creating more work and reducing the effectiveness of your presentation. (Ball 2.1.2024.)

#### **Making yourself the focus**

Ensure your presentation revolves around your audience rather than yourself or your ideas. Start by addressing their interests and needs to capture their attention and engagement. You know the topic, the audience might not. Give your audience useful information from the start. Make your talk about them, what your information means for them and why they should listen to you.

#### **PowerPoint mistakes**

While presentation slides are extremely useful in supporting your presentation, things can go downhill easily if you aren't smart with them. For example, starting with PowerPoint first, it is like creating a movie without a script. Instead of beginning with slides, focus on creating a powerful talk that can stand on its own. Consider visual aids as supplementary tools and only create them at the end of the presentation process. The better way is to plan your talk first. Only use PowerPoint to create visual aids after deciding what to say. Keeping that in mind, don't get too excited and overcrowd the slides. Mind tools (s. a.) recommends to try to keep each bullet point to no more than three or four words, and limit the number of bullets on each slide to three.

#### **Speaking mistakes**

Speaking too fast can hinder audience comprehension and engagement. Instead use shorter phrases and remember to pause throughout your talk to allow for reflection and understanding. Taking deliberate breaks and not trying to fill the silence makes you sound much more confident. Speaking quietly and mumbling while presenting are also problems to look out for. Remember to speak loudly and clearly.

#### **Body language mistakes**

Body language plays a crucial role in communication, yet many presenters overlook its significance. Presenters commonly make these mistakes unconsciously while being nervous. Being conscious of these mistakes helps you avoid them.

- Being stiff, fidgeting back and forth, or leaning on something
- Crossing arms or putting them behind your back
- “Washing hands” or putting them in your pockets
- Hiding behind your paper, touching your face, or crossing your legs
- Looking at the ceiling. Instead opt for eye contact with the audience.

### **3.3.3 Presentation anxiety and how to deal with it**

Presentation anxiety, commonly known as stage fright or performance anxiety, is a pervasive challenge that many individuals face when required to speak or perform in front of an audience. (Oxford Brookes University s. a.) Whether it’s a public speaking engagement, a business presentation, or a classroom setting, the fear of being judged or scrutinized can evoke intense feelings of nervousness and apprehension. Presentation anxiety may emerge in a variety of ways, influencing both the presenter's performance and the audience's perspective. These feelings might erode the presenter's confidence and self-esteem, resulting in reluctant or insecure conduct throughout the presentation.

Anxiety can manifest in both physiological and cognitive aspects. Physiologically, it may involve symptoms such as trembling body or voice, and tense muscles. Cognitively, it may involve self-doubt and fear of one's anxiety being noticeable to others. Research on anxiety interpretation, particularly in social and performance contexts, emphasizes the significance of not only assessing the intensity of anxiety but also understanding how the individual perceives and evaluates their anxiety. (Jackson B et al. 2017.) In their experiment, they aimed to ascertain if an immunization message given ahead of time may influence the feelings and perceptions of receivers about the speech. In contrast to those who only received information, the hypothesized group would experience reduced anxiety, more facilitative—as opposed to debilitating—interpretations of anxiety, higher levels of pre-task self-efficacy, and a greater proportion of positive rather than negative self-talk. Numerous psychological elements that can have a substantial influence on a person's confidence and performance during public speaking engagements are among the causes of presenting anxiety. (Jackson B et al. 2017.)

Fear of judgment is a common reason. The fear of being badly assessed by the audience, whether it is peers, superiors, or professors, may be quite stressful. (Genard 28.4.2019.) The dread of making errors, seeming inept, or receiving criticism can dramatically increase anxiety during presentations. Lack of confidence is also a significant factor in presenting anxiety (Genard 28.4.2019).

Doubts about one's capacity to communicate effectively, captivate an audience, or deal with unanticipated problems can undermine confidence and increase emotions of worry and self-doubt. This lack of confidence can be a big impediment to presenting an effective presentation. Perfectionism is also linked to presentation anxiety (Genard 28.4.2019). While striving for excellence can be inspiring, the constant pursuit of perfection can increase stress. The worry of falling short of perfection can increase anxiety and prevent spontaneous expression and spontaneity during presentations. The worry of being exposed in public heightens the anxiety. The idea of being the focus of attention and under the observation of others might be intimidating. The spotlight effect, in which people believe they are always being seen and judged, exacerbates feelings of uneasiness and self-consciousness. (Genard 28.4.2019.) People who mentally practice giving a persuasive presentation establish positive relationships with the presentation process, which reduces anxiety. To get over presenting anxiety, it's essential to practice positive self-talk. People may cultivate a positive mindset by using affirmations and positive self-talk, which helps them focus on their strengths and skills instead of giving in to negative thought patterns. (Jackson B et al. 2017.)

### **3.4 Strategies for effective presentation**

In this section I will cover strategies that should be considered when planning an effective presentation.

#### **3.4.1 Know your audience**

For an effective presentation, you should know the demographic profile of your audience. Demographics is the study of the characteristics of a human population. According to the University of Pittsburg (s. a.) these include age, gender, religion, ethnic background, class, sexual orientation, occupation, education, group membership, and countless other categories.

Understanding your audience is paramount in delivering an effective presentation that captivates and engages. Knowing your audience allows you to tailor your content to their interests, needs, and preferences. (Stewart s. a.) By addressing topics that matter to them, you increase the likelihood of capturing their attention and keeping them engaged throughout your presentation. Being aware of your audience's demographics, knowledge level, and attitudes allows you to adapt your presentation style, tone, and delivery to suit their expectations. Whether your audience is composed of experts in your field or newcomers, tailoring your approach ensures that everyone can follow along and derive value from your presentation. Presentations that are customized to the audience are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes, whether it's informing, persuading, entertaining, or inspiring.

To truly understand your audience, consider asking yourself these six key questions:

1. Why are you giving this presentation? What is your purpose?
2. Who is your audience? What are their backgrounds, demographics, and characteristics?
3. What is important to them? What are their values, biases, and concerns?
4. What is their familiarity with your topic? How much do they already know?
5. What is their history with you? How do they perceive you as a speaker?
6. What questions are they likely to have? What are their potential areas of interest or confusion?

### **3.4.2 Be the purple cow**

Becoming a “purple cow” in presentations involves embracing the concept popularized by marketing guru Seth Godin, where the goal is to stand out and be remarkable in a sea of ordinary. Godin explains in his 2003 book *Purple Cow: Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable* how a little creativity can turn something ordinary into something extraordinary. It’s not as easy as it seems, though. Being novel, distinctive, and unusual must be incorporated into the company plan. You must be creative and willing to take some chances. Being too cautious will give your rivals the upper hand and an edge. (Godin 2003.)

To achieve this in presentations, one should focus on uniqueness, originality, and delivering content in a way that captivates and resonates with the audience. Being a purple cow means avoiding mediocrity and instead, showcasing distinctive qualities that set you apart. This could involve incorporating unconventional visuals, sharing personal anecdotes, or presenting information in a novel and unexpected manner. The reason for striving to be a purple cow lies in the increasingly competitive landscape of presentations and communication. (Artuffo 27.5.2022.) In a world bombarded with information, blending in with the ordinary can lead to being overlooked. Being a purple cow ensures that your presentation is not just seen but remembered, fostering engagement, making a lasting impact, and ultimately achieving your communication goals effectively.

## **3.5 Structuring an effective presentation**

In this section I will cover topics that need to be taken into account when structuring an effective presentation.

### **3.5.1 Serial-position effect**

The serial position effect is a fascinating phenomenon in cognitive psychology that sheds light on how our memory operates, particularly in relation to the order of information presented to us. According to Mcleod (25.9.2023) the inclination to recall the beginning and final elements in a sequence more vividly than the ones in the middle is known as the serial position effect. It is believed

that this type of cognitive bias results from the way information is processed and remembered. The primacy effect highlights our inclination to remember and assign more significance to items at the beginning of a list. This tendency is thought to stem from the additional time available to rehearse and encode the initial items before moving on to the subsequent ones. Studies indicate that the primacy effect diminishes with longer lists or quicker presentation speeds, indicating the role of rehearsal time in memory retention. (Mcleod 25.9.2023.)

In presentations, the serial position effect manifests itself in how audiences perceive and retain information based on its position within the presentation structure. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial for presenters aiming to maximize the impact and effectiveness of their communication. At the beginning of a presentation, the primacy effect comes into play, influencing audience members to better remember the initial information shared by the presenter. This could include the opening remarks, key objectives, or foundational concepts that set the stage for the rest of the presentation. By strategically placing critical information at the outset, presenters can establish a strong foundation and capture the audience's attention from the start.

In contrast, at the end of the presentation, the recency effect becomes apparent, as audience members tend to recall information delivered in the last portions more efficiently. This might include a summary of major themes, concluding remarks, or calls to action that have a lasting impact on the audience. Using this effect, presenters may emphasize key points and create a lasting impression as the presentation comes to a conclusion. Encourage interactive involvement with the audience by using Q&A sessions, polling, or interactive activities to increase participation and memory retention. Interspersing interactive components throughout the lecture can help to break up boredom, boost participation, and reinforce learning.

### **3.5.2 Time management**

Effective time management is essential for delivering successful presentations. Time runs much faster when trying to deliver a presentation. Before delivering a presentation, it's crucial to establish the allotted "talking time", for example with an outline. A concise synopsis of your presentation's major ideas and supporting details arranged in a logical and cohesive sequence is called an outline. You may better organize your presentation, choose the key points and evidence for them, and allot time for each section with the use of an outline. (Linkedin s. a.) This refers to the duration dedicated to delivering the presentation's content, excluding time for questions and potential interruptions. Developing a timed schedule for the presentation ensures that presenters can monitor their progress and adhere to the allotted time frame effectively. Presenters often underestimate the time required to deliver their material accurately. To avoid exceeding the allotted time, it's essential to time oneself during rehearsals and accurately gauge the duration of each segment and the whole

presentation. You might find your presentation to be too long or too short, knowing the situation makes it possible to adapt and prepare appropriately beforehand.

Effective time management empowers presenters to remain flexible and adaptable during presentations. Unforeseen circumstances, such as technical issues or unexpected questions, may arise, requiring presenters to make quick adjustments while staying within the allocated time frame. By anticipating such scenarios and having contingency plans in place, presenters can navigate challenges confidently and maintain control over the presentation dynamics. (Mitchell s. a.)

### **3.5.3 The rule of three**

The rule of three, a fundamental principle in effective communication and presentation, posits that information presented in sets of three is more memorable, compelling, and resonant with audiences. This concept harnesses the brain's cognitive preference for patterns and simplicity, allowing presenters to craft a structured and impactful message. (Beqiri 17.5.2021.) Whether organizing key points, framing arguments, or delivering memorable anecdotes, the rule of three provides a framework that is both easy for audiences to follow and conducive to enhanced retention. By structuring content into triads, presenters can create a rhythm that captivates attention and reinforces key messages, making their presentations more engaging and influential. This timeless technique has proven its efficacy across various domains, from speeches and storytelling to marketing and educational presentations, highlighting its versatility and enduring relevance in the art of effective communication. (Angraini 5.2016.)

To effectively utilize the rule of three in presentations, speakers can employ a variety of strategies to enhance clarity, engagement, and memorability. First and foremost, structuring the main content into three distinct points or themes provides a coherent and easy-to-follow framework for the audience. This could involve presenting three key benefits, three supporting examples, or three actionable steps. Additionally, grouping information into three aids in simplifying complex concepts and preventing information overload. When incorporating visual aids, such as slides, consider organizing content in sets of three for each slide to maintain a balanced and visually appealing presentation. Repetition of key points in threes, whether through verbal reinforcement or visual emphasis, reinforces the central message. The rule of three can also be applied in storytelling by introducing a setup, a development, and a resolution. By harnessing the power of threes, presenters can create a more compelling and memorable experience for their audience, leading to increased impact and effectiveness in communication.

### 3.5.4 Presentation structures

To effectively deliver a presentation, it's essential to choose a suitable structure that aligns with your objectives and audience expectations (University of Western Australia s. a). In this section, I will explore various presentation structures that can enhance the clarity, engagement, and impact of your message. Each model offers unique advantages and considerations, allowing presenters to tailor their approach based on the specific context and goals of their presentation. By understanding the characteristics of each structure, presenters can make educated decisions to craft presentations that resonate with their audience and achieve desired goals (University of Western Australia s. a).

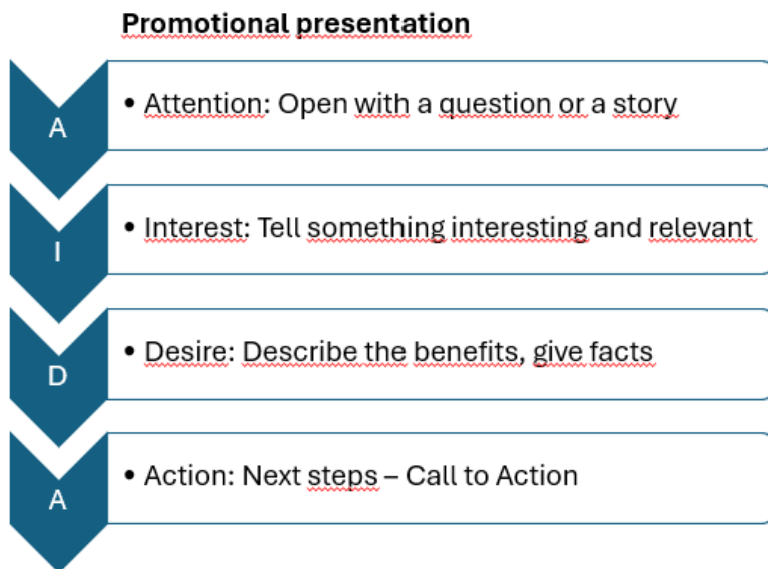


Figure 1 - AIDA model

As shown in the figure 1, the AIDA model is a widely used model in marketing communication. It stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. It guides presenters in designing their message to align with the stages of the audience's journey, from capturing their attention to prompting action. (Slidesgo s. a.)

The first stage of the AIDA model is to capture the audience's attention effectively. This involves using compelling openings, attention-grabbing visuals, or provocative statements to pique the audience's interest and draw them into the presentation. (Slidesgo s. a.) Attention-grabbing techniques can include starting with a startling statistic, asking a thought-provoking question, or using multimedia elements such as videos or images to create visual impact. (Linkedin s. a.)

Once you have the audience's attention, the next step is to generate interest in your topic or message. In this stage, you need to provide valuable information, insights, or solutions that resonate with the audience's needs, interests, or pain points. (Slidesgo s. a.) Engage the audience by presenting relevant examples, case studies, or anecdotes that illustrate the benefits or applications of your message. Use storytelling techniques to make your content relatable and engaging. (Shukla 15.12.203.)

In the desire stage, your goal is to stimulate the audience's desire or motivation to act on your message. (Slidesgo s. a.) This involves highlighting the benefits, advantages, or opportunities associated with your proposition and addressing any objections or concerns the audience may have. Use persuasive language, testimonials, social proof, or demonstrations to convince the audience of the value or importance of your message. Appeal to their emotions, aspirations, or desires to create a sense of urgency or excitement. (Linkedin s. a.)

The final stage of the AIDA model is to prompt the audience to take action. This could involve making a purchase, signing up for a service, adopting a new idea or behavior, or simply agreeing with your message. (Shukla 15.12.2023.) Clearly communicate the next steps or call to action you want the audience to take, such as visiting a website, contacting you for more information, sharing the presentation with others, or participating in a discussion or activity. (Shukla 15.12.2023.) Make it easy for the audience to act by providing clear instructions, contact information, or links to relevant resources. Reinforce the benefits or rewards of taking action and create a sense of urgency to motivate immediate response. (Linkedin s. a.)

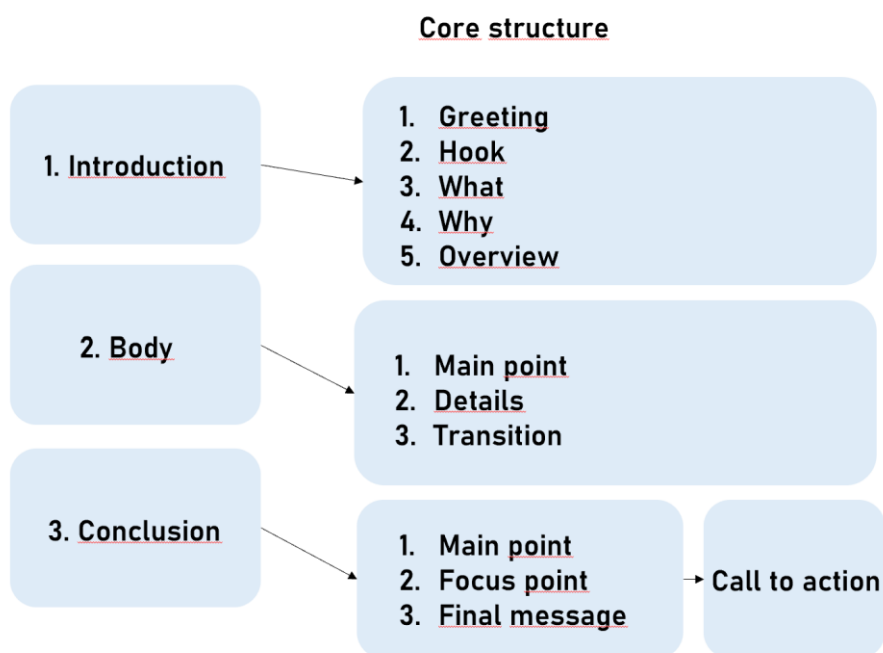


Figure 2 - Core structure also known as 3x3 model

Figure 2 shows the core structure, which in presentations revolves around the principle that people tend to remember lists of three things more easily. This technique, known as the Rule of Three, has been recognized since the time of Aristotle and is still widely used today. (Schwerly s. a.)

Before creating your presentation, identify three key messages that you want your audience to remember. These messages should be the focal points around which your presentation is structured. By limiting your key points to three, you increase the likelihood that your audience will retain and recall them. (Presentation Magazine 20.4.2009.)

The presentation is divided into three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. In the introduction, set the stage for their presentation by introducing the topic and stating its purpose or objective. You may also outline the main points or topics that will be covered to provide the audience with a roadmap of what to expect. (Schwerly s. a.) The body of the presentation comprises three main sections, each dedicated to a specific aspect or subtopic related to the main theme. Delve into each section, providing explanations, examples, evidence, or arguments to support their key points. Visual aids such as slides, charts, graphs, or multimedia may be used to enhance understanding and engagement. Smooth transitions between sections help maintain continuity and guide the audience through the presentation seamlessly. (Bradesko 22.12.2020.) In the conclusion, wrap up the discussion by summarizing the main points or topics covered in the presentation. They highlight key insights or recommendations and may issue a call to action to encourage the audience to take specific steps or further explore the topic. The conclusion often ends with closing remarks intended to leave a lasting impression on the audience. (Presentation Magazine 20.4.2009.)

Throughout your presentation, incorporate lists of three whenever possible. Lists of three are easy for the audience to follow and remember. Politicians, advertisers, and public speakers often use this technique to make their messages more persuasive and memorable. (Presentation Magazine 20.4.2009.) Keep your presentation concise and focused by limiting yourself to three main points. If you have more than three points to convey, consider condensing or prioritizing them. Remember, the audience is likely to remember only three key messages, so it's better to emphasize quality over quantity. (Bradesko 22.12.2020.)

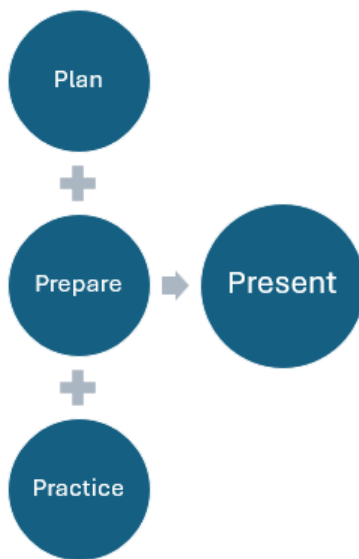


Figure 3 - 4p's model

Figure 3 shows the 4Ps model of effective presentations, which encompasses four essential elements that are crucial for creating and delivering impactful presentations: Plan, Prepare, Practice, and Present. (Bridges 28.3.2023.)

Planning a presentation involves thoughtful consideration of several key dimensions, including objectives, audience, content, organization, visuals, setting, and delivery. By systematically addressing these factors, presenters can identify gaps in their ideas, structure their presentation effectively, engage their audience, and boost their confidence through rehearsal. (Bridges 28.3.2023.)

The preparation phase emphasizes the importance of creating an effective slide structure. Well-designed slides help engage the audience and reinforce key messages. The Consulting Presentation Framework, used by top-tier management consulting firms, employs a structured approach with components such as headlines, body content, and bumpers to ensure clarity and impact. (Bridges 28.3.2023.)

Practicing a presentation is essential for refining delivery and addressing potential challenges. There are two aspects to practicing: rehearsing what is intended to be done and prehearsing, which involves planning for potential contingencies. Even if a presenter has delivered the presentation elsewhere, practicing helps adapt to different settings, audiences, and time lapses between presentations. (Bridges 28.3.2023.)

Effective presentations go beyond good content and slide design; the manner in which information is presented is equally important. Factors such as body language, voice tone, pace, and the use of visuals can significantly influence how the audience perceives the message. Delivering the

presentation with confidence and engaging the audience effectively are key aspects of successful presentation delivery. (Bridges 28.3.2023.)

### **3.6 The impact of presentations on career**

Presentation skills are a cornerstone of professional success, with the ability to captivate an audience serving as a crucial asset. Effective communication, both verbal and nonverbal, forms the foundation of compelling presentations. (Fearless 28.2.2024.) Confidence is integral, requiring individuals to overcome fears and insecurities, ultimately enhancing their ability to deliver impactful presentations.

The art of captivating an audience involves storytelling, humour, and engaging rhetoric, creating memorable experiences for listeners. Structuring presentations with clear introductions, main points supported by evidence, and engaging conclusions ensures coherence and effectiveness. (Gavin 25.8.2023.)

The significance of presentation skills in career advancement cannot be overstated. They contribute to an enhanced professional image, increased visibility and recognition, and strengthened leadership capabilities. (Ingage s. a.) Furthermore, presentations offer networking opportunities, facilitating meaningful connections and potential collaborations. Adaptability and versatility are essential in today's dynamic business landscape, where the ability to deliver effective presentations in various settings is invaluable. (Manpowergroup s. a.) Investing in presentation skills not only accelerates career growth but also leaves a lasting impact on professional success and interpersonal relationships.

## 4 Towards a training workshop

To grasp the expectations and preferences for the workshop, I crafted a questionnaire form and distributed to professionals in the consulting field. In the questions I picked they could reflect on their past experiences, wishes for the future and feedback on my initial workshop structure. I asked each participant I wished to participate beforehand if they wished to be a part of my research. The questionnaire was then circulated among the participants using email. I got six responses to my questionnaire in total. The answers varied in length and effort, but it was incredibly interesting going through each one and identifying recurring themes, patterns, and trends.

The target audience for this questionnaire was consultants at a consultancy firm. The selection of these professionals, particularly those who possess extensive knowledge and experience in delivering presentations and preparing workshops, as the target audience for these questions is deliberate and strategic. There are several reasons behind this choice. Firstly, the individuals within this specific group are deeply immersed in the realm of presentations and workshops. Their familiarity with the intricacies and nuances of the environment makes them uniquely positioned to provide insights that are not only relevant but also actionable. Secondly, their expertise and proficiency in delivering presentations and workshops render them valuable sources of feedback. Given their seasoned backgrounds, they can offer nuanced perspectives and constructive criticism that are instrumental in refining the proposed workshop structure, the target outcome of this thesis.

### 4.1 Data gathering results: finding out expectations

In this section I will go through questions and answers pointing out recurring trends and any possible stand outs. Some questions might be joined together if the theme is similar.

*On a scale of 1 to 5, how important do you consider presentation skills in your profession?*

The majority of respondents (5 out of 6) rated presentation skills as extremely important, indicating a consensus among professionals regarding the significance of this skillset in their respective fields. One respondent provided a slightly lower rating of 4, suggesting a nuanced perspective on the importance of presentation skills.

*Have you previously attended any presentation skills workshops or training sessions?*

*How satisfied were you with the content covered in previous presentation skills workshops?*

Participants reported various levels of prior attendance at presentation skills workshops or training sessions. Some had undergone formal training during their academic studies, such as a presentation skills course in university or as part of other university courses that included presentations. Others had attended specific workshops, like a Business presentation course at school or training

sessions provided by the firm, such as "Presenting with Impact". A few participants mentioned ongoing exposure to presentations through their studies or work, while one indicated no previous attendance at such workshops.

Regarding satisfaction with the content covered in previous presentation skills workshops, opinions varied among respondents. Those who had attended university courses or e-learning modules expressed satisfaction, appreciating the concrete content and hands-on learning approach. Participants who attended specific courses or training sessions highlighted the usefulness of the content, particularly appreciating the structured format, practice opportunities, and feedback received from instructors and peers. However, one participant expressed dissatisfaction with previous workshops, while another indicated a lack of satisfaction, possibly due to limited experience with formal training sessions.

*Would you be interested in participating in a presentation skills workshop in the future?*

The majority of respondents expressed a strong interest in participating in a presentation skills workshop in the future. Many stated that there is always room for learning and development in this area, indicating a positive attitude towards further enhancing their presentation skills. Some respondents expressed unequivocal interest, stating "Absolutely" or "Yes, of course." Others showed a willingness to participate, stating "Yes" or "Yes, you always learn and develop." However, there were a few who showed a more cautious interest, stating "Maybe, if it seems good enough."

*What specific skills or areas of improvement do you hope to gain from a presentation skills workshop?*

The respondents articulated various specific skills and areas of improvement they hope to gain from a presentation skills workshop. They desire strategies tailored to different situations, audiences, and topics, suggesting a need for versatility in their presentation style. Many express a desire to present with increased confidence, overcome stage fright, and improve articulation to deliver more impactful presentations. They seek insights into engaging and captivating audiences, including gestures, posture, and methods to attract attention. Some express an interest in becoming better storytellers, learning techniques such as intonation, pauses, and visualizations to create excitement and engagement. They hope for a balance of theory and practical tools, including insights into their strengths and weaknesses as speakers and techniques to address public speaking challenges. Lastly, they are interested in learning different techniques to maintain audience attention and interest throughout their presentations.

*Can you recall a memorable presentation experience (either positive or negative) you've had in your professional life? What made it stand out?*

The respondents shared diverse memorable presentation experiences from their professional lives. One individual recounted covering for a colleague in a workshop without prior preparation, which was initially stressful but ultimately a fun and developmental experience. One mentioned a positive experience during a client meeting within a recruitment process. They highlighted the successful preparation, engaging conversation, and collaborative atmosphere that contributed to a positive outcome. One respondent emphasized the significance of thorough preparation for presentations, including both content and delivery tailored to the audience, based on their experience. Someone else recalled spicing up their thesis presentation to make it more engaging, resulting in a successful and well-received delivery. Lastly, a respondent mentioned a presentation to a client where the partner effectively highlighted important points, leading to a positive response and engagement from the client.

*What challenges do you typically encounter when delivering presentations?*

When delivering presentations, respondents commonly face several challenges. Balancing the amount and complexity of material on slides, preferring simplicity with keywords or visuals while ensuring important information is conveyed effectively. Managing time effectively during presentations, considering the pace of delivery, allowing time for discussion, handling unexpected technical issues, and addressing audience questions. Concerns about forgetting important points or lacking sufficient knowledge to answer questions posed by the audience. Dealing with high-profile audiences, such as CEOs or CFOs, and large groups, which can present challenges in initiating the presentation. Striving to make presentations impactful within limited timeframes, ensuring objectives are achieved efficiently. Managing nerves, especially in new settings, which may disrupt thinking and presentation flow. Strategies like having notes but avoiding reliance on them excessively to maintain engagement. Keeping audience attention high throughout the presentation, which can be particularly challenging in lengthy or complex presentations.

*How do you believe improved presentation skills could benefit you in your career?*

Improved presentation skills are perceived as valuable assets by respondents, offering several potential career benefits. Enhancing credibility and building trust with key stakeholders and clients, leading to deeper client relationships and potentially increasing opportunities for SME and consultancy roles. Recognizing the increasing importance of presentations as one advances in their career, with higher-ranking positions typically requiring more frequent presentations. Ability to present confidently and impactfully, facilitating the conveyance of messages, initiation of new topics, and

engagement of audiences in conversations rather than delivering scripted monologues. Acknowledging the need for ongoing improvement by dedicating sufficient time for preparation, focusing on concise presentations, and practicing presentation techniques such as storytelling. Recognizing the impact of presentation skills on professional perception, influencing how individuals are perceived and their effectiveness in achieving objectives. Ultimately, aiming to become more skilful and professional in all aspects of their career, with improved presentation skills contributing to this overarching goal.

*Can you describe a recent presentation you delivered and how it was received by your audience?*

Respondents shared their recent presentation experiences, offering insight into their professional engagements. One respondent conducted workshops for an international client on implementing new ways of working in manufacturing systems. The collaborative nature of these sessions, focusing on co-creating a target state view, was well-received. Feedback received boosted the presenter's confidence, with the audience engaging in clarifying questions, indicating a high level of interest. Another presenter delivered an investment case presentation covering the attractiveness of the investment, market outlook, and the firm's capabilities. The audience's positive reception provided a confidence boost, with few clarifying questions indicating their interest in the topic. Presentations often revolve around reporting or setting the scene for further discussion, typically in workshop contexts. Reporting presentations tend to be well-received, given the clients' expectations for information provision. However, the respondent finds setting the scene more relevant in fostering engagement and discussions. An expert presentation to an executive audience on a favorite topic stood out for its informal nature, with low expectations and an audience interview afterward. While well-received, it wasn't overly praised, reflecting a balanced response. Lastly, in a recent presentation to a client, the presenter maintained high audience attention throughout, suggesting effective engagement and delivery.

*What do you believe are the key components of an effective presentation?*

There were several key components of an effective presentation identified by respondents. Before the presentation, knowing the audience's expectations and background is crucial for tailoring the material accordingly. During the presentation, making it interesting, useful, and collaborative helps engage the audience. Putting oneself in the audience's shoes aids in perceiving the effectiveness of the presentation. Preparation is vital for being relaxed and confident during the presentation, which contributes to credibility and audience engagement. Quality materials and understanding the audience's background are essential for effective presentations. Credibility of the presenter also plays a significant role. Ensuring the audience understands the purpose of the presentation and

keeping it concise helps maintain interest and engagement. Highlighting key details in a compelling way is crucial for effective communication.

*How do you prepare for presentations currently, and do you feel this process could be improved?*

Currently, preparations for presentations typically involve activities such as reading materials, understanding the content, rehearsing, anticipating audience questions, and focusing on professional appearance, gestures, and posture. However, respondents feel that this process could be improved. Suggestions for improvement include deepening knowledge in various areas to enhance confidence and credibility in presentations, implementing different techniques to deliver messages more effectively, reducing dependence on notes by enhancing familiarity with the topic, and considering ways to streamline the process given time constraints. Overall, there is recognition of the need for enhancement in presentation preparation methods.

*In your opinion, what would be the ideal format or structure for a presentation skills workshop?*

In the respondents' opinions, the ideal format or structure for a presentation skills workshop incorporates several key components. This includes training on presentation planning, creation, and getting ready for the presentation. Training on behavioral skills such as speaking, tempo, eye contact, hand gestures, and charisma. Providing feedback on presentations to facilitate improvement.

The ideal workshop would typically begin with an interactive activity like a quiz or storytelling to engage participants. It then moves on to key themes such as confidence, impact, credibility, voice, and gestures. Participants practice in advance and present in front of the group, followed by feedback sessions where strengths are highlighted and suggestions for improvement are provided. The format may also include theory sessions, short presentations on absurd topics, longer, more serious presentations, and opportunities for iterative improvement based on feedback. The emphasis is on learning by doing, with practical activities simulating real-life presentation scenarios.

## 4.2 First workshop structure feedback

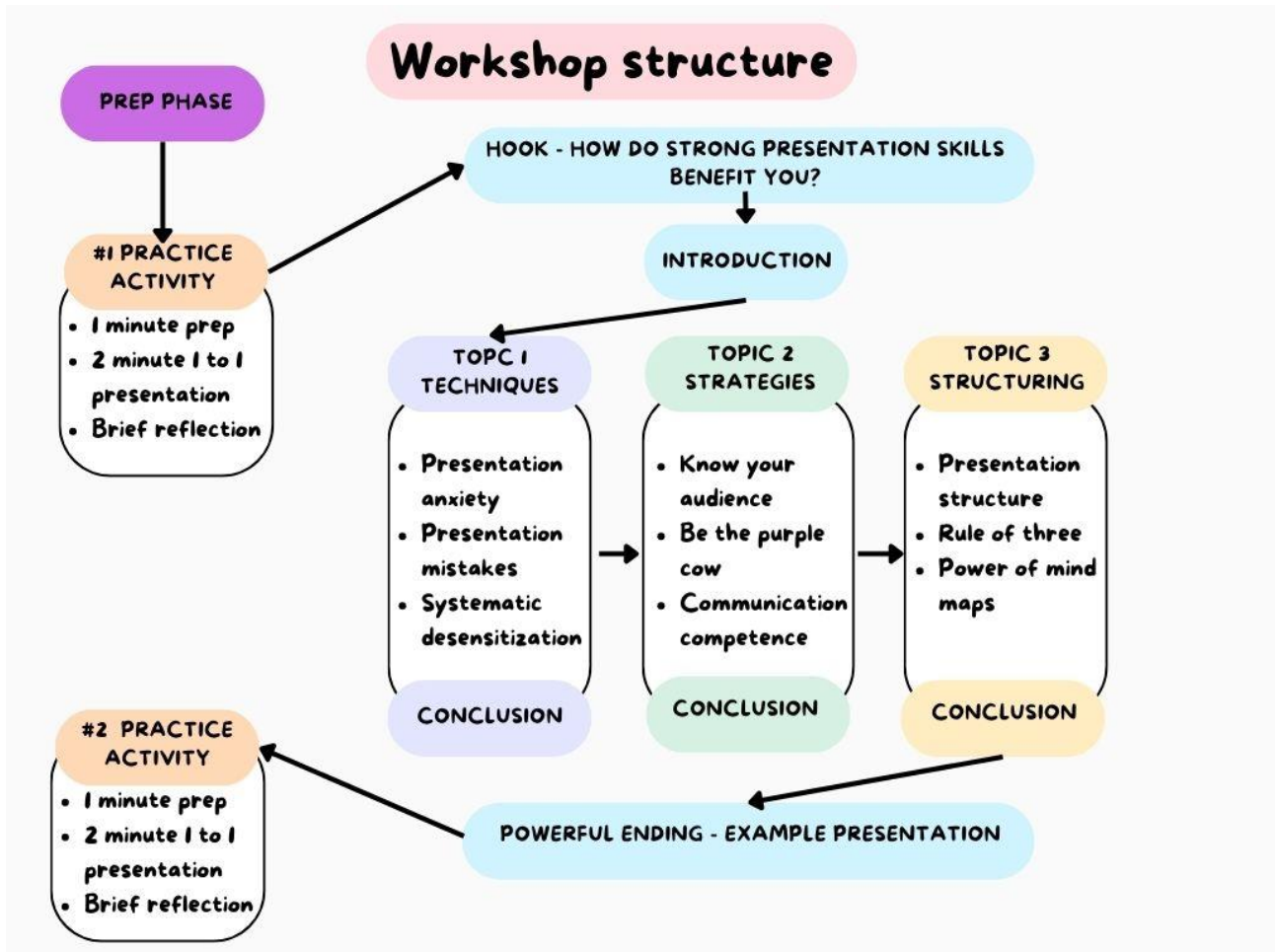


Figure 4 - Workshop structure no.1

Figure 4 shows the first workshop structure I sent for feedback. Next, once again, I will go through questions and answers pointing out recurring trends and any possible stand outs.

*What are your first impressions of the workshop structure?*

The respondents generally view the workshop structure positively, noting its comprehensive coverage of relevant areas and its thoughtful design. They appreciate elements such as the emphasis on a powerful ending and the inclusion of practical exercises. Some suggest adding more space for practical exercises if time allows. One respondent highlights the importance of balancing constructive criticism with positive feedback during one-to-one sessions to address presentation anxiety effectively. Overall, there is consensus that the structure appears well-organized and covers essential aspects effectively.

*What aspects of the workshop structure do you find most effective in facilitating learning and skill development?*

The respondents identify several aspects of the workshop structure that they find effective in facilitating learning and skill development. Starting with techniques and theory before moving to actual activity training, as it allows participants to grasp foundational knowledge before applying it in practice. Practice activities, which offer hands-on experience and opportunities for participants to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in real-life scenarios. The emphasis on structuring (Topic 3), which helps participants clarify their key presentation contents and maintain a coherent discussion flow, aiding in effective communication. Structuring the theoretical topics effectively, beginning with interesting topics and concluding with a demonstration to synthesize the discussed concepts, enhancing understanding and retention of the material. Topic 1, Techniques, which likely covers practical strategies and approaches to improve presentation skills, providing participants with actionable insights and tools for immediate application.

*Are there any areas within the workshop structure that you believe could be further refined or enhanced?*

Areas within the workshop structure that respondents believe could be further refined or enhanced include incorporating examples of successful presentations or TED Talks to provide participants with real-world examples and insights into effective presentation techniques. Clarifying or providing additional explanation for Topic 2: Strategies, as it may be less familiar to some participants compared to other topics. Reorganizing or restructuring the workshop structure to make it easier to follow, potentially by dividing it into clear phases such as Preparation, Main Contents, and Practice, with a more visually appealing layout. Considering swapping the order of theory and practice activities, with more emphasis on practical exercises to provide hands-on experience and reinforce learning. Reevaluating the effectiveness of one-on-one practice sessions, as some participants may find it less relevant compared to practicing under pressure in a group setting. Increasing the amount of actual practice activities within the workshop to provide participants with more opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge and hone their presentation skills.

*Are the topics covered in this workshop sufficiently comprehensive for a presentation skills workshop?*

Overall, respondents believe that the topics covered in the workshop are sufficiently comprehensive for a presentation skills workshop. However, some suggested additional considerations. Ensuring the ability to run presentations within agreed timelines and evenly distribute time among sections. Highlighting how to create or increase the credibility of the presenter, particularly relevant

in certain industries. Requesting clear instructions and topics for the practice activities to better understand the practical application of the workshop content. Advocating for group presentation exercises rather than solely one-on-one activities to provide a broader experience.

*Which areas do you think require more depth or detail?*

Respondents generally believe that the topics are covered adequately but suggest more depth or detail in specific areas. Real-life examples, participant presentations, and videos of excellent presenters like TED talks could enhance understanding and application of techniques. More depth and detail are desired in practice activities, emphasizing hands-on experience over theoretical discussions. Giving more attention to the participants' needs and involvement in the workshop could enhance the learning experience. Specifically, respondents suggest delving deeper into the techniques and providing more practical examples to illustrate their application.

*Is there something else you think should be included in the workshop?*

Overall, respondents seem content with the workshop structure and don't suggest additional inclusions. However, some mention the benefits of pre-work to engage participants from the start, while others emphasize the importance of active practice, including presenting, receiving feedback, and improving presentations iteratively.

## 5 Crafting a beneficial training workshop

In this section I will take into account the research and data gathering results and craft and present the final structure for a presentation skills workshop. I will elaborate on each point of the structure. I restructured the workshop structure to make it easier to follow, as some found the previous structure difficult to follow. On the basis of the research and feedback, figures 5 and 6 show the final presentation skill workshop structure.

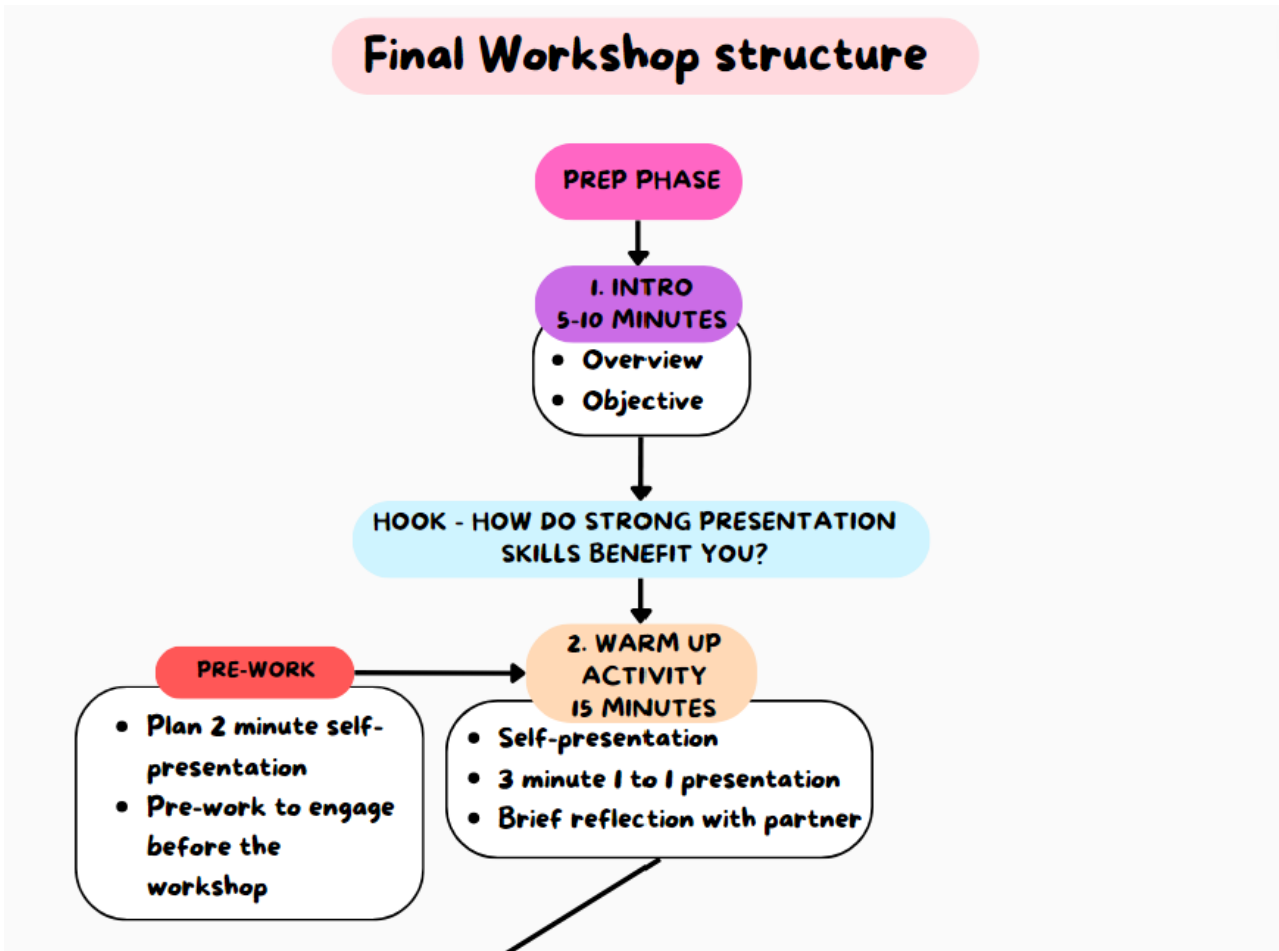


Figure 5 - Final workshop structure p.1

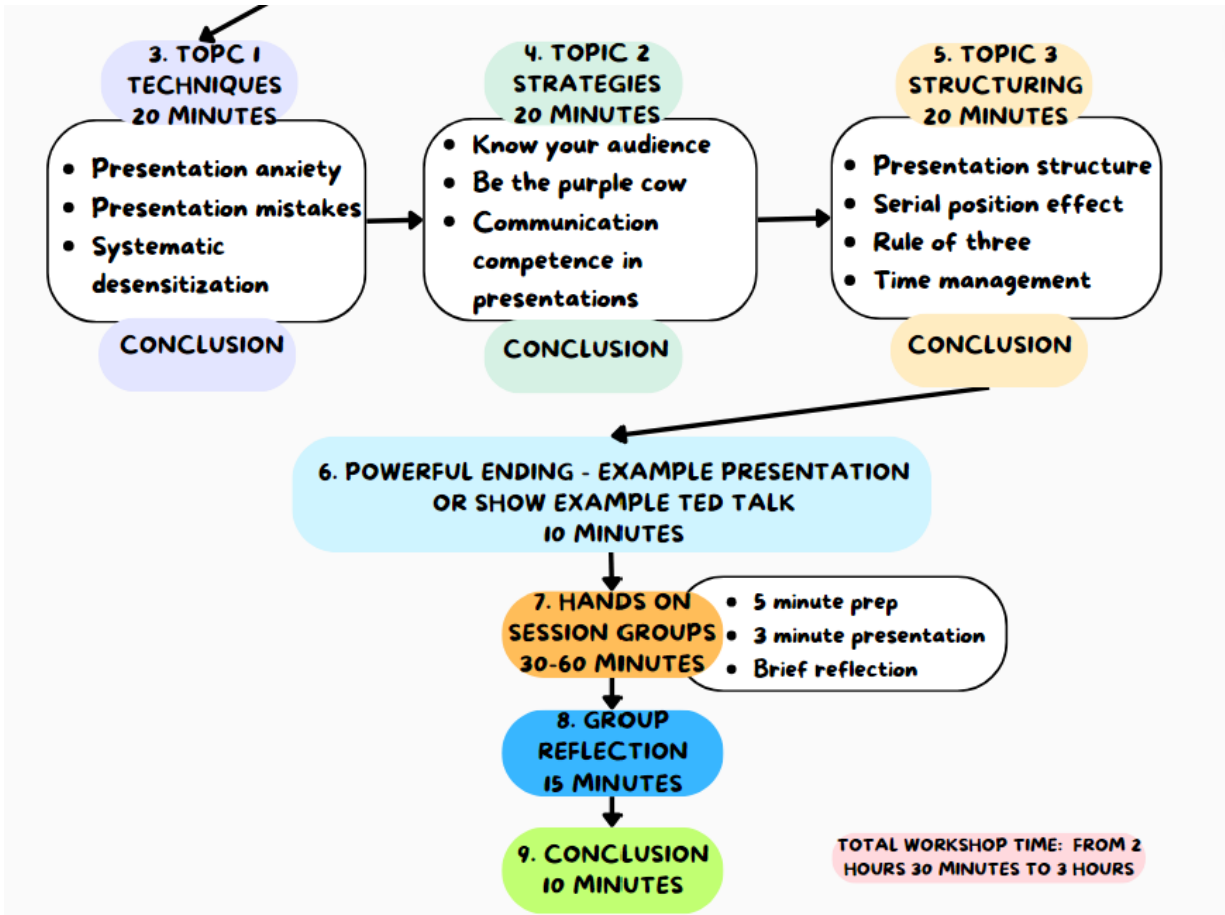


Figure 6 - Final presentation p.2

In crafting the final workshop structure for a presentation skills workshop, several factors were considered, including feedback from professionals, research data, and best practices in adult learning and skill development. The aim was to design a comprehensive and effective workshop that addresses the diverse needs and expectations of participants, fosters skill development, and enhances learning outcomes. In the data gathering some were wondering how much time this workshop would take, so I have calculated and added the approximate time for each section and for the total workshop.

### Prep phase

Prior to the start of the workshop, there are some key elements aimed at preparing both the environment and the participants for optimal participation and interaction. Careful consideration is given to the seating arrangement. Seating the audience close together promotes a sense of unity and camaraderie among participants, which encourages interaction and collaboration, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Providing the participants with papers to plan their workshop presentations on. The papers serve as valuable tools for participants to write down ideas, organize their thoughts, and outline their presentations effectively.

Each participant is given a nametag to place on the table throughout the workshop. By addressing participants by their names, presenters can create a more inclusive and personalized learning environment. Moreover, nametags contribute to a sense of belonging among participants, making one to one and group presentations feel closer.

### **Introduction – 5-10 minutes**

The introduction serves as a brief overview of the workshop objectives and agenda, setting the context for the importance of presentation skills in professional development. It highlights the benefits of strong presentation skills and aims to motivate participants by emphasizing the relevance of the workshop to their career success. The introduction is finished with a strong hook, a question: “How do strong presentation skills benefit you? You will find out the answer during this workshop.” to wake up the interest of the audience.

### **Icebreaker / Warm up Activity – 15 minutes**

The warm up activity is designed to engage participants from the outset and create a positive atmosphere. By engaging in a lighter, one to one self-presentation exercise and reflecting with a partner, participants can become more comfortable with the workshop environment and begin to focus on their own presentation skills. I added a pre-work task to the structure, as some pointed out in the data gathering that a pre-work task would be useful to engage the participants before the workshop. The pre-work task would be designing a three-minute self-presentation to present in this warm up activity.

### **Key Components of Effective Presentations – 20 minutes per topic or 60 minutes in total**

#### **Topic 1: Techniques**

This topic covers essential presentation techniques, such as managing presentation anxiety, avoiding common presentation mistakes, and utilizing systematic desensitization techniques to overcome fears. It provides participants with practical strategies for improving their delivery and increasing their confidence as presenters. Topic 1 in the first structure didn't receive much constructive feedback, on the contrary, many professionals pointed out that they would like to learn how to tackle issues and nerves with public speaking.

## **Topic 2: Strategies**

Building on the foundational techniques introduced in Topic 1, Topic 2 delves into strategic aspects of presentations. It emphasizes the importance of audience analysis, being distinctive (the "purple cow" concept) and enhancing communication competence to effectively engage audiences and convey messages. In the data research, many professionals wished to learn how to be more competent in communication and keep the attention of the audience. Some also pointed out that "knowing your audience" is an important topic in the business world and is good to learn.

## **Topic 3: Structuring**

Topic 3 focuses on presentation structuring, including organizing content, leveraging the serial position effect and the rule of three, and managing time effectively. By understanding the principles of effective structuring, participants can create more engaging and memorable presentations. In data research, multiple professionals were concerned about managing time effectively during presentations, so this topic was added. I also added serial position effect to one of the topics, as I consider it to be important aspect to consider in presentation structuring.

## **Powerful Ending – 10 minutes**

The inclusion of a powerful ending segment provides participants with inspiration and exemplars of effective presentations. For example, the presenter showcasing their own successful three-minute self-presentation following the rules and examples in the covered topics. Some professionals considered this point to be the most important, showing an example presentation or possibly showing some successful TED talks shows great example and is very motivating. Participants can observe firsthand how impactful presentations are crafted and delivered, motivating them to apply similar strategies in their own presentations.

## **Hands-on Session Groups – 30-60 minutes**

The hands-on session allows participants to practice presentation skills in a supportive environment. By participating in group presentations and receiving feedback, participants can apply theoretical concepts learned earlier in the workshop and gain practical experience in delivering presentations. The first workshop structure lacked group presentations, which some of the professionals noted. Some also wished for more presentation training. Groups should be around 3 to 5 people per group depending on the number of participants. The topic for this presentation should be something easy and quick to come up with, as the preparation time would be only 5 minutes. Example topics could be upcoming or past vacation, hobbies, unique facts about yourself or something relevant to the whole group depending on the audience demographic. Participants would

present to the small group, after which the group can quickly give feedback to the presenter. One session should take around 30 minutes. If the time allows, the session can be repeated in different groups to further enhance the learning process.

### **Reflection – 15 minutes**

Discussion with the whole group on learnings and insights from practice sessions. The group reflection session encourages participants to reflect on their learning experiences and insights gained from the hands-on session. By sharing feedback and constructive criticism, participants can deepen their understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement as presenters.

### **Conclusion – 10 minutes**

Summary of key takeaways and next steps for continued improvement. Summarize key takeaways from the workshop and provide guidance on continued learning and development. Recap the main topics covered in the workshop and highlight the importance of ongoing practice and refinement of presentation skills. Offer resources and suggestions for further learning, such as books, online courses, or additional workshops. Total estimated time of the workshop would be approximately 2 hours 30 minutes to 3 hours.

The final workshop structure integrates the professional's feedback as well as research findings to ensure that it meets the requirements and expectations of all participants. The structure shows a strategy that combines theoretical knowledge with practical practice to encourage maximal presenting skill development.

## **6 Conclusion and Evaluation**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

This thesis has delved into the significance of presentation skills in today's academic and professional environments, aiming to provide insights into effective strategies for enhancing these skills through workshops. Through the process of conducting research and developing a workshop structure, several key findings have emerged, shedding light on the importance of effective communication in various contexts.

The research findings indicate a strong consensus among professionals regarding the critical role of presentation skills in their respective fields. With the majority of respondents emphasizing the importance of these skills, it becomes evident that mastering presentation abilities is essential for success in today's competitive landscape.

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this research. The workshop structure proposed here is not exhaustive, and there may be additional topics or delivery methods that could enhance the effectiveness of presentation skills workshops. Future research could explore these areas to further refine and improve workshop outcomes.

This thesis contributes to the body of knowledge surrounding presentation skills training by providing a structured approach informed by empirical research. By equipping individuals with the necessary tools and strategies to excel in presentations, this research aims to empower students and professionals alike to communicate effectively and achieve their goals in academic and professional settings.

### **6.2 Personal learning and development**

I found that the most challenging part of this process was finding time and motivation at the same time. Throughout this process I finished one internship at one company, started another internship at my current company and continued into a permanent position there. I was very focused on and learning in the new position and often found myself lacking motivation after work, resulting in this process taking slightly longer than I initially hoped for. Luckily, I had a supportive thesis supervisor who encouraged me and cheered me on.

The thesis process has helped me grow significantly as a person. For example, on a professional level, I've learned more about scientific writing; on a personal level, I've learned to be more persistent while also being more forgiving of myself. By doing a final scrunch within the last two months of the deadline I found that I work best when doing longer study sessions at a time rather than

working for an hour or two each day. I feel that this process has provided me with helpful guidance for my future and professional development. I also considered creating this thesis a great exercise because I had no prior experience with scientific writing. In terms of professional development, this process has given me confidence. This is my last project before graduation. I feel that this is a good end to my studies at Haaga-Helia, as this has been the most challenging phase of my degree. Graduating from school after this process feels like a well-deserved reward.

## Sources

Angraini Yuli 5.2016. Rules of Three Analysis in Persuasive Public Speaking Presentation. URL: <https://www.journal.unrika.ac.id/index.php/jurnalanglo-saxon/article/view/542/408>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Ball Benjamin associates 2.1.2024. The 10 Most Common Presentation Mistakes and How to Avoid Them. URL: <https://benjaminball.com/blog/the-10-most-common-presentation-mistakes/>. Accessed 14.5.2024.

Beqiri Gini 17.5.2021. How to use the 'Rule of Three' to create engaging speeches. URL: <https://virtualspeech.com/blog/rule-of-three-speech>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Bhandari Pritha, 19.6.2020. What is Qualitative Research? Methods & Examples. URL: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-research/>. Accessed 15.5.2024.

Bradesko Marjan 22.12.2020. 3 x 3 Rules for Great Presentations. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/3-x-rules-great-presentations-marjan-bradesko/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Bridges Mark 28.3.2023. 4 Ps of Effective Presentations. URL: <https://flevy.com/blog/4-ps-of-effective-presentations/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Career Emirates 10.10.2023. Why Communication Skills, especially Presentation Skills, are Vital for Career Growth. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-communication-skills-especially-presentation-vital/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Carlucci Roberta 9.10.2023. Elevating Your Career: The Power of First Impressions and Professional Image. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/elevating-your-career-power-first-impressions-image-roberta-carlucci/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Cooks-Campbell Allaya 25.4.2021. The self presentation theory and how to present your best self. URL: <https://www.betterup.com/blog/the-self-presentation-theory-and-how-to-present-your-best-self>. Accessed: 12.5.2024.

Davey Brian DDS 12.12.2023. How First Impressions Impact Career Success. URL: <https://drdavey.com/how-first-impressions-impact-career-success/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

- Farpi Amanda Blessing 18.2.2020. 10 impressive reasons why you need to learn to self-promote. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-impressive-reasons-why-you-need-learn-self-promote-ble-sing-farpi/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Fearless 28.2.2024. How Presentation Skills Boost Your Professional Journey. URL: <https://www.fearless.online/blog/how-presentation-skills-boost-your-professional-journey>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Genard Gary 28.4.2019. 10 Causes of Speech Anxiety that Create Fear of Public Speaking. URL: <https://www.genardmethod.com/blog/bid/169656/top-10-causes-of-speech-anxiety-that-create-fear-of-public-speaking>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Goffman Erving 1956. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Doubleday. Scotland.
- Ingage s. a. Are Presentation Skills Important for Career Success? URL: <https://www.ingage.io/post/are-presentation-skills-important-for-career-success>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Indeed 15.12.2022. What Is Self-Presentation and How Do You Improve It? URL: <https://ca.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/self-presentation>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Jackson B, Compton J, Thornton AL, Dimmock JA, 2017. Re-Thinking anxiety: Using Inoculation Messages To Reduce and Reinterpret Public Speaking Fears.
- Javelina s. a. URL: <https://javelina.co/self-promotion-four-letter-word/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Joki Kimberly 2.6.2022. What Is the Importance of Self-Promotion? URL: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/self-promotion/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Linkedin s. a. How do you create interest and curiosity for your main points using AIDA? URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-do-you-create-interest-curiosity-your-main-points>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Linkedin s. a. What are effective time management tools for presentations? URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/1/what-effective-time-management-tools-presentations>. Accessed 12.5.2024.
- Marwick, A. E., and D. Boyd. I Tweet Honestly, I Tweet Passionately: Twitter Users, Context Collapse, and the Imagined Audience. *New Media & Society* 13.1 (2011).
- Manpowergroup s. a. Why Presentation Skills Can Boost Your Career? URL: <https://www.manpowergroup.co.in/blog/why-presentation-skills-can-boost-your-career.html>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Mcleod Saul 25.9.2023. Serial Position Effect (Glanzer & Cunitz, 1966). URL: <https://www.simp-lypsychology.org/primacy-recency.html>. Accessed 16.5.2024.

Morreale, S., Rebecca B. Rubin, and Elizabeth Jones. Speaking and Listening Competencies for College Students (Washington 1998).

Mind tools s. a. 10 common Presentation mistakes. URL: <https://www.mindtools.com/avmnivr/10-common-presentation-mistakes>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Mitchell Olivia s. a. How to keep to time during your presentation. URL: <https://speakingaboutpresenting.com/delivery/keep-to-time-presentation/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Nash Jo 23.9.2022. Systematic Desensitization Steps: 13 Techniques & Worksheets. URL: <https://positivepsychology.com/systematic-desensitization/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Naqvi Zehra 28.2.2016. Difference between strategy, technique, method. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/difference-between-strategy-technique-method-zehra-naqvi/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Oxford Brookes University s. a. Presentation anxiety. URL: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/support/self-help/guides/presentation-anxiety>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Oxford Dictionaries 26.9.2016. Presentation. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20160926083711/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/presentation> . Accessed 12.5.2024.

Personalbrand s. a. Definition of a Personal Brand vs. Personal Branding. URL: <https://personalbrand.com/definition/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Porter Michael E. s. a. What Is Strategy? URL: <https://hbr.org/1996/11/what-is-strategy> accessed 29.12.2023. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Presentation Magazine 20.4.2009. Presentation Skills 3: The Rule of Three. URL: <https://www.presentationmagazine.com/presentation-skills-3-the-rule-of-three-7283.htm>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Prezent s. a. 10 Effective presentation techniques to give a good presentation. URL: <https://www.prezent.ai/zenpedia/presentation-techniques>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Ranstad 16.3.2022. Why self-promotion is good for your career. URL: <https://www.randstad.ca/job-seeker/career-resources/career-development/why-self-promotion-is-good-for-your-career/>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Schwerly Scott s. a. The Rule of Three for Presentations. URL: <https://ethos3.com/the-rule-of-three-for-presentations/> Accessed 12.5.2024.

Shukla Ravindra Prakash 15.12.2013. AIDA Model. URL: <https://www.slideshare.net/RAVIN-DRA0707/aida-presentation-29221598> Accessed 12.5.2024.

Skillsyouneed s. a. What is a Presentation? URL: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/present/what-is-a-presentation.html>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Slidesgo s. a. AIDA Model for Sales Infographics. URL: <https://slidesgo.com/theme/aida-model-for-sales-infographics>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Stewart John Parker s. a. THE #1 RULE OF PRESENTATIONS: KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. URL: <https://blog.stewartleadership.com/know-your-audience>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Trenholm S., Jensen A. 2011. Interpersonal Communication, seventh edition.

University of Western Australia s. a. STRUCTURE YOUR PRESENTATION. URL: <https://www.uwa.edu.au/students/-/media/Project/UWA/UWA/Students/Docs/STUDYSmarter/P3-Structure-your-Presentation-SG.pdf>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

Washington, DC: National Communication Association, 1998.

WebMD Editorial Contributors s. a. What to Know About Systematic Desensitization. URL: <https://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/what-to-know-systematic-desensitization-therapy>. Accessed 12.5.2024.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire questions

#### Data gathering questions

- On a scale of 1 to 5, how important do you consider presentation skills in your profession?
- Have you previously attended any presentation skills workshops or training sessions?
- How satisfied were you with the content covered in previous presentation skills workshops?
- Would you be interested in participating in a presentation skills workshop in the future?
- What specific skills or areas of improvement do you hope to gain from a presentation skills workshop?
- Can you recall a memorable presentation experience (either positive or negative) you've had in your professional life? What made it stand out?
- What challenges do you typically encounter when delivering presentations?
- How do you believe improved presentation skills could benefit you in your career?
- Can you describe a recent presentation you delivered and how it was received by your audience?
- What do you believe are the key components of an effective presentation?
- How do you prepare for presentations currently, and do you feel this process could be improved?
- In your opinion, what would be the ideal format or structure for a presentation skills workshop?

#### Workshop structure feedback questions

- What are your first impressions of the workshop structure?
- What aspects of the workshop structure do you find most effective in facilitating learning and skill development?
- Are there any areas within the workshop structure that you believe could be further refined or enhanced?
- Are the topics covered in this workshop sufficiently comprehensive for a presentation skills workshop?
- Which areas do you think require more depth or detail?
- Is there something else you think should be included in the workshop?