

5 quick tips for effective presentations:

Prepare - think about the audience, what you want to achieve, and create a rough outline of what you need to include and what visual aids you will use. Presentations vary in formality so try to get a sense of what your tutor expects in advance.

Organise - a presentation, like an essay, needs an introduction/overview, main body with clear sections and a conclusion to reinforce important points. A good presentation needs interesting content. Think about how much information you can adequately cover in the time that you have.

Deliver - use notes, cues and prompts (rather than reading word-for-word from a page) and speak to the audience (not to your page!) Look around the room, make eye-contact with the audience, if you can, and speak slowly and clearly. Think about your posture and voice.

Visual aids and handouts - spend some time working on a complementary and informative way to present your information and highlight the main points. This often includes PowerPoint's: use a large font size, avoid more than six points on a slide and use colour, pictures or graphs to keep your slides interesting. If you are using handouts, avoid large lumps of text; keep these brief and informative too. Be sure to refer to specific slides or sections of the handout in your presentation.

Deal with nerves - A presentation is a performance. To control your nerves, be well-prepared: keep practising and then practice some more! Make a one-to-one appointment to practice in front of a tutor or ask a friend to watch you practice. Make sure that the presentation runs to the right time. Use confident and friendly body language to convey that you are relaxed. Use a clear voice and speak loudly enough. Slow down - it is natural to speed up if you are feeling nervous but breathe and take pauses.