

RESUME EXAMPLE: Skills section

SKILLS SUMMARY

Writing and Communication:

- Degree with an emphasis on clarity and structure in written and oral communication.
- Wrote blog posts, news features, technical documents and marketing copies.
- Former editor-in-chief of the university newspaper.
- Experience writing business and grant proposals, pitch documents and advertising copy.
- Translated documents and interpreted conversations in Spanish, German and English.

Creative and Analytical Thinking

- Analysis of audience, purpose and style of documents.
- Strategic choice of wording, tone, format and source of information.
- Ability to take fact-based materials and make them interesting.

Software and Social Media

- Knowledge of social media, blogging and digital marketing.
- Experience with Google Wave, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, WordPress and Blogspot.
- Managed social media accounts with more than 30.000 followers in total.

UNIT- V

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Presentation skills can be defined as a set of abilities that enable an individual to: interact with the audience; transmit the messages with clarity; engage the audience in the presentation; and interpret and understand the mindsets of the listeners. These skills refine the way you put forward your messages and enhance your persuasive powers.

The present era places great emphasis on good presentation skills. This is because they play an important role in convincing the clients and customers. Internally, management with good presentation skills is better able to communicate the mission and vision of the organization to the employees.

Importance of Presentation Skills

Interaction with others is a routine job of businesses in today's world. The importance of good presentation skills is established on the basis of following points:

- They help an individual in enhancing his own growth opportunities. In addition, it also grooms the personality of the presenter and elevates his levels of confidence.
- In case of striking deals and gaining clients, it is essential for the business professionals to understand the audience. Good presentation skills enable an individual to mold his message according to the traits of the audience. This increases the probability of successful transmission of messages.
- Lastly, business professionals have to arrange seminars and give presentations almost every day. Having good presentation skills not only increases an individual's chances of success, but also enable him to add greatly to the organization.

PREREQUISITES OF EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

1 – Create a clear effective message

A clear message is normally a simple one. You may feel that you have to go into a lot of detail to get your message across but more often than not – “less is more”. Your audience are only able to take in so much during a presentation, so the clearer the message the more powerful it will be. Keep your message clear and simple by using the following guidelines:

- **Have one Key Message only** – this should be the most important point that you want to get across to your audience. Restrict it to one sentence that is easier to remember.
- **Restrict your content to three main points only** – three is the magic number that people tend to remember things in – so if you restrict your presentation to three sections only, your audience will be more likely to remember it.
- **Have a strong opening and ending** – these are the moments when your audiences’ attention is at its highest so take the opportunity to state and re-state your key message at these times.

2 – Deliver your message effectively

Next stage is to consider how you are getting it across effectively to your audience. The ability to express your ideas is as important as the ideas themselves and this is a fundamental requirement of effective presentation delivery.

Although not everyone is naturally expressive, we all have the ability to develop our personal resources to help us enhance those expressive qualities required to help us become more effective presenters.

The way you speak and look has a huge impact on what you say and how you come across to your audience and there are some simple techniques you can adopt to help enhance your overall image. Try to incorporate the following when you next give a presentation:

- **Speak at a slower pace** – we tend to speed up when we are nervous so by consciously slowing down you will end up speaking at the right pace and controlling your nervous tension.
- **Imagine you are telling a story** – by doing this, you will automatically increase the expression in your voice and sound more interesting to your audience.
- **Make eye contact with your audience** – it may feel awkward at first but if you actually look directly at people you will feel as though you are having a conversation with them and this will feel less intimidating

3 – Fully engage with your audience

To deliver an effective presentation, it’s also important that you fully engage with your audience so that you can see things from their point of view and “speak in their language”. It’s therefore important that you have a full understanding of your audience. To help achieve this gather as much information as possible about your audience before you present. There are three main areas where you can gather information about your audience as follows:

- **Audience Make-Up** – this is who will actually attend. Ask yourself, from what departments/organisations they will come from, what level of seniority they will be, what level of expertise will they have about my subject etc
- **Audience Motivation** – this is the attitudes of the audience and how they may react to you. Ask yourself what is their interest in my topic, their attitude towards me, any misconceptions or preconceived ideas they may have etc
- **Audience Environment** – these are the external factors that may influence you and your audience. Ask yourself how many will be in the audience, what will be the length of my presentation, what sort of room/venue will I present in etc

By considering these factors you will be able to plan your presentation to accommodate the attitudes and needs of your audience. This will make it easier for you to ‘buy in’ their trust in you and make it easier for you to engage with them.

FORMAT OF PRESENTATION

This is the usual flow of a presentation, which covers all the vital sections and is a good starting point for yours. It allows your audience to easily follow along and sets out a solid structure you can add your content to.

1. Greet the audience and introduce yourself

Before you start delivering your talk, introduce yourself to the audience and clarify who you are and your relevant expertise. This does not need to be long or incredibly detailed, but will help build an immediate relationship between you and the audience. It gives you the chance to briefly clarify your expertise and why you are worth listening to. This will help establish your ethos so the audience will trust you more and think you're credible.

2. Introduction

In the introduction you need to explain the subject and purpose of your presentation whilst gaining the audience's interest and confidence. It's sometimes helpful to think of your introduction as funnel-shaped to help filter down your topic:

1. Introduce your general topic
2. Explain your topic area
3. State the issues/challenges in this area you will be exploring
4. State your presentation's purpose - this is the basis of your presentation so ensure that you provide a statement explaining how the topic will be treated, for example, "I will argue that..." or maybe you will "compare", "analyse", "evaluate", "describe" etc.
5. Provide a statement of what you're hoping the outcome of the presentation will be, for example, "I'm hoping this will be provide you with..."
6. Show a preview of the organisation of your presentation

In this section also explain:

- The length of the talk.
 - Signal whether you want audience interaction - some presenters prefer the audience to ask questions throughout whereas others allocate a specific section for this.
 - If it applies, inform the audience whether to take notes or whether you will be providing handouts.
- The way you structure your introduction can depend on the amount of time you have been given to present: a sales pitch may consist of a quick presentation so you may begin with your conclusion and then provide the evidence. Conversely, a speaker presenting their idea for change in the world would be better suited to start with the evidence and then conclude what this means for the audience. Keep in mind that the main aim of the introduction is to grab the audience's attention and connect with them.

3. The main body of your talk

The main body of your talk needs to meet the promises you made in the introduction. Depending on the nature of your presentation, clearly segment the different topics you will be discussing, and then work your way through them one at a time - it's important for everything to be organised logically for the audience to fully understand. There are many different ways to organise your main points, such as, by priority, theme, chronologically etc.

- Main points should be addressed one by one with supporting evidence and examples.
- Before moving on to the next point you should provide a mini-summary.
- Links should be clearly stated between ideas and you must make it clear when you're moving onto the next point.
- Allow time for people to take relevant notes and stick to the topics you have prepared beforehand rather than straying too far off topic.

When planning your presentation write a list of main points you want to make and ask yourself "What I am telling the audience? What should they understand from this?" refining your answers this way will help you produce clear messages.

4. Conclusion

In presentations the conclusion is frequently underdeveloped and lacks purpose which is a shame as it's the best place to reinforce your messages. Typically, your presentation has a specific goal - that could be to convert a number of the audience members into customers, lead to a certain number of enquiries to make people knowledgeable on specific key points, or to motivate them towards a shared goal.

Regardless of what that goal is, be sure to summarise your main points and their implications. This clarifies the overall purpose of your talk and reinforces your reason for being there.

Follow these steps:

- Signal that it's nearly the end of your presentation, for example, "As we wrap up/as we wind down the talk..."
- Restate the topic and purpose of your presentation - "In this speech I wanted to compare..."
- Summarise the main points, including their implications and conclusions
- Indicate what is next/a call to action/a thought-provoking takeaway
- Move on to the last section

5. Thank the audience and invite questions

Conclude your talk by thanking the audience for their time and invite them to ask any questions they may have. As mentioned earlier, personal circumstances will affect the structure of your presentation.

Many presenters prefer to make the Q&A session the key part of their talk and try to speed through the main body of the presentation. This is totally fine, but it is still best to focus on delivering some sort of initial presentation to set the tone and topics for discussion in the Q&A.

ASSERTIVENESS

Assertiveness is a skill regularly referred to in social and communication skills training.

Being assertive means being able to stand up for your own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being either aggressive, or passively accepting 'wrong'.

Assertive individuals are able to get their point across without upsetting others, or becoming upset themselves.

Although everyone acts in passive and aggressive ways from time to time, such ways of responding often result from a lack of self-confidence and are, therefore, inappropriate ways of interacting with others.

Those who behave assertively always respect the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of other people as well as their own.

Assertiveness concerns being able to express feelings, wishes, wants and desires appropriately and is an important personal and interpersonal skill. In all your interactions with other people, whether at home or at work, with employers, customers or colleagues, assertiveness can help you to express yourself in a clear, open and reasonable way, without undermining your own or others' rights.

Assertiveness enables individuals to act in their own best interests, to stand up for themselves without undue anxiety, to express honest feelings comfortably and to express personal rights without denying the rights of others

The Benefits of Being Assertive

One of the main benefits of being assertive is that it can help you to become more self-confident, as you gain a better understanding of who you are and the value that you offer.

Assertiveness provides several other benefits that can help you both in your workplace and in other areas of your life. In general, assertive people:

- **Make great managers.** They get things done by treating people with fairness and respect, and are treated by others the same way in return. This means that they are often well-liked and seen as leaders that people **want** to work with.
- **Negotiate successful "win-win" solutions.** They are able to recognize the value of their opponent's position and can quickly find common ground with him.
- **Are better doers and problem solvers.** They feel empowered to do whatever it takes to find the best solution to the problems that they encounter.
- **Are less anxious and stressed.** They are self-assured and don't feel threatened or victimized when things don't go as planned or as expected.

STRATEGIES OF ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR

Here are some tips to help you learn to be more assertive.

1. **Make the decision to positively assert yourself.** Commit to being assertive rather than passive or aggressive and start practising today.
2. **Aim for open and honest communication.** Remember to respect other people when you are sharing your feelings, wants, needs, beliefs or opinions.
3. **Listen actively.** Try to understand the other person's point of view and don't interrupt when they are explaining it to you.
4. **Agree to disagree.** Remember that having a different point of view doesn't mean you are right and the other person is wrong.
5. **Avoid guilt trips.** Be honest and tell others how you feel or what you want without making accusations or making them feel guilty.
6. **Stay calm.** Breathe normally, look the person in the eye, keep your face relaxed and speak in a normal voice.
7. **Take a problem-solving approach to conflict.** Try to see the other person as your friend not your enemy.
8. **Practise assertiveness.** Talk in an assertive way in front of a mirror or with a friend. Pay attention to your body language as well as to the words you say.
9. **Use 'I'.** Stick with statements that include 'I' in them such as 'I think' or 'I feel'. Don't use aggressive language such as 'you always' or 'you never'.
10. **Be patient.** Being assertive is a skill that needs practice. Remember that you will sometimes do better at it than at other times, but you can always learn from your mistakes.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

"Group" is a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction and who work together to achieve a common set of goals. "Discussion" is the process whereby two or more people exchange information or ideas in a face-to-face situation to achieve a goal. The goal, or end product,

maybe increased knowledge, agreement leading to action, disagreement leading to competition or resolution or perhaps only a clearing of the air or a continuation of the status-quo.

Group Discussions are conducted to evaluate the candidates on certain personality traits. Here are some of the important personality traits and skills that a candidate should possess to perform well in a GD:

- ***Leadership skills and initiative-taking ability***

Taking initiative is indicative of your ability to impart direction to the group and define the key issue(s) along which the discussion has to progress. The three "Cs" which rank you high on this parameter are *clarity* (the main points to be discussed), *content* (the vertical depth in each point) and *confidence*. The "Key Word Approach", wherein you start with defining the dominant words in the topic and then develop subsequent constructs, can help you to initiate effectively. This will also demonstrate your leadership skills.

For example, in a topic like "Should Republic Day celebrations be redefined?", the key words are "Republic" and "redefined". Thus, a good strategy can be giving a backdrop against which this day is celebrated, then graduating to the way it is celebrated and finally talking about ways and means of redefining (if at all). If demonstrated properly, this skill gets you in the visible limelight and reflects your ability to break the ice and evoke a discussion! However, if mishandled (e.g., you may start off on a high note and then abruptly recede into an eerie silence), it puts you in an embarrassing position!

- ***Knowledge***

Knowledge reflects your ability to have an opinion on issues and concerns of contemporary relevance and hence your ability to connect with different aspects of the environment (economic, political, business, social, etc.). It assumes, even more, relevance for a fact-intensive topic like "Indian Economy in the post WTO regime". Here, knowledge becomes a sharp differentiator and helps you to leverage a strong competitive advantage. Unless you have the requisite knowledge of the given topic, your discussion runs the danger of being shallow and superficial. Being well versed in current affairs and issues of concurrent importance can help you to do well along this parameter.

- ***Group Dynamics:***

This basically demonstrates the skill to strike a balance between individual excellence and group performance. A person scoring high on this parameter will be more probable to work in groups and hence contribute effectively to organizations. It also reflects your team skills, listening skills and willingness to accept diverse viewpoints.

- ***Logical Ability/Analytical Skills***

This indicates your ability to effectively flowchart your thought process and analyze the topic in a comprehensive manner. It reflects your ability to construct logical arguments and structure the discussion in a streamlined manner, avoiding random forays.

The skills that are usually assessed in a Group Discussion are:

- Communication Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Motivational Skills
- Team Building Skills
- Tolerance
- Clarity over Ambiguity
- Divergent Thinking
- Listening skills
- Presentation Skills
- Analytical / Logical skills

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWS

Here are four critical essential skills to help you excel in interviews and land your dream job:

#1 COMMUNICATE A CLEAR AND STRONG PERSONAL BRAND

Before you attend an interview, you should already have created a strong personal brand and professional brand messaging. Your professional value statement should answer essential questions, including:

- Who are you?
- What do you offer?
- What makes you unique?

Be sure you have complete clarity on the answers to these questions before you write your resume, and definitely before you accept an interview. The answers to these questions will be essential to developing your unique brand messaging. The professional value proposition you develop by answering these questions will convey to an interviewer what you bring to the table, whether you will fit in at their organization, and if you are the right person to do the job - or not.

#2 TELL A COMPELLING STORY

Information about you is everywhere today – people will read your resume, read your LinkedIn profile, check out your Facebook, and look at your Twitter feed. The interview is your opportunity to tie everything together and tell a cohesive and compelling story about yourself, your brand and, most importantly, promote the impact you will have on the organization - should they hire you.

Through your interview answers, paint a very clear and compelling picture of why you are the absolute best candidate for the job. Through your story, potential employers should be able envision the contributions you will have made to the organization six months from now. Tell a story that ends with you hitting it out of the park and making a positive impact. Creating vignettes that tell a story of your accomplishments and your career trajectory that are tied into the needs of the employer is considerably more compelling to the interviewer than listening to a disjointed list of past job responsibilities and a description of your skills.

#3 IDENTIFY MEASURABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Everyone has accomplishments. Whether you're an entry level intern, or a CEO of a Fortune 500 company, you have accomplishments from your career that will help you position yourself for future roles. The key to selling yourself during an interview is to identify your unique accomplishments and incorporate them into your brand and your stories.

As you make a list of your accomplishments, be sure they are measurable. Whenever possible, include a statistic to put your accomplishment in perspective. Perhaps you provided customer service to more than 120 customers per week and achieved a 75% resolution rate. Whatever your contributions were, quantifying them will legitimize your accomplishments and will sound more compelling than simply stating that you provided customer service and resolved issues. If you're having trouble identifying your accomplishments and making them tangible with data, look at past performance reviews or ask your colleagues. You might even have a family member who might remember notable moments you have shared. Sharing measurable accomplishments are critically important to successfully interviewing and landing your next job.

#4 EXUDE A POSITIVE AND ENGAGING ATTITUDE

Enough cannot be said about the importance of your attitude and enthusiasm when interviewing. Most people who lack these two key traits don't realize how they are coming across to the interviewer. Even

if you feel confident in your interviewing skills, it's always a good idea to do some practice interviewing with someone you trust.

Since there's no quicker way to kill an interview than to come across disinterested, bored, or unengaged; having an opportunity to practice and get feedback will help you overcome the little nuances of your interview persona that you may not be aware of, yet. For some people who aren't used to exuding enthusiasm, you may have to push yourself out of your comfort zone to make sure you appear as excited about your profession, the opportunity, and pretty much everything you are discussing during an interview as you feel.

Once you're in an interview, be aware of your energy level and body language. In some cases, it's easy to seem eager and interested at the beginning of the interview process, but by the time you've met the fourth person on the team and 3 hours have lapsed, your energy may be drained. Don't be afraid to ask for breaks and take some time in the bathroom to refresh and breathe. Then, walk back in with renewed energy and verve!

Other tips for making the most out of your interview experience include:

- Treat the interview like a meeting – ask questions as well as answer them
- Be an active listener
- Watch your body language
- Make eye contact
- Arrive early
- Practice at home