

Business

Types of Presentations

Category	Ideal Length	Structure	Style	Questions
Information	Up to 45 minutes	Introduction Sections Conclusion	Formal	At end of each section
Sales	7 minutes	Introduction Problem Solution Questions	Depends on how well you know the client.	At any time
Report presentation (Persuasion)	Up to 30 minutes & questions.	Problem Findings Conclusion Recommendations	Depends on company style	Generally at the end of the presentation
Entertain	Toast 5 minutes After dinner speech 45 minutes.	Introduction Main Body Conclusion	Depends on event, but likely to be light hearted.	Often no questions

Overview of Each Type of Presentations

Information / Educational Presentation

- Duration - This is a longer format of presentation and ideally should be no longer than 45 minutes, which is the maximum concentration span of most educated adults.
- Structure – The introduction should clearly highlight the sections to be covered, the main body should then be split into 5-10 minute chunks of information and finally the conclusion should outline the main points again.
- Style – Generally informative presentations are formal, but humour can be a useful educational tool.
- Questions are generally at the end of each section. In a large audience, some people may prefer to ask questions privately afterwards.

Sales Presentations

- Duration – The average manager has an attention span of just 7 minutes. At this point you have either convinced him of the benefits of your product or not, so it is at this point you should go into a question and answer session.
- Structure
 - Introduce your company and products.
 - Highlight a likely problem. E.g. Price, supply, convenience or quality.
 - Highlight features and how those features solve the problem. (Benefits)
 - Invite questions – At this point if there is interest, you may want to go into further details. (Or a sub-presentation)
- Style – It depends on how well you know the client, but generally formal.
- Questions – The potential customer is king and you must answer questions at any time.

Presenting to a large audience

If you are presenting to a large audience, you may be expected to give a longer presentation and give more details. (Try to find out in advance)

Elevator Pitch

Some companies, particularly investment companies offer people an elevator pitch. This is typically a 2 – 5 minute presentation. (And you are likely to be cut off at exactly the time limit)

Report Presentation (Persuasion)

- Duration – Typically report presentations are about 30 minutes. If you have been allocated a time, try to aim to only use 50% of it on a formal presentation. That way you have plenty of time for questions and debate. (In the unlikely event you finish early, this is likely to please participants)
- Structure
 - Problem (Introduction) - The reason for a report is always some kind of problem or potential problem. Highlight what it is.
 - Findings – The results of your research

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- Conclusion – Summary / recap of the findings. Directly link it to the problem.
- Recommendations / Suggestions / Options - You may not be authorised to make decisions, but you should always present ideas as to how the problem can be solved or at least how to minimise the losses.
- Style – Generally formal, but it does depend on the company culture
- Questions – Most report presentations have questions at the end, but you may wish to invite questions at any time to increase audience involvement. In some board meetings you WILL be asked questions at any time and their purpose is likely to be to test that you have done a thorough analysis of the subject.

Tip: If you don't know how to solve a problem, present it as a brainstorming session and invite the appropriate employees who might know how to deal with it. In which case allow most of the time for discussion.

Entertainment

- Duration – If you are making a toast, keep it down to 5 minutes. If you are the main speaker then you maybe expected to talk for up to 45 minutes.
- Structure – People are not expected to remember so much of your speech, so an interesting introduction, a good story or two for a main body and a witty ending is perfect.
- Style – Adapt to your audience, likely to be light hearted.
- Questions – Not likely to be any questions in a speech purely made for entertainment. (You may be asked questions privately afterwards)

Answer the Following Questions

1. How long is the concentration span of most adults? _____
2. Is a Manager's attention span longer or shorter than this? _____
3. In a Sales presentation what do you call features that solve problems?

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4. In board meetings when can you expect questions? _____
 5. How can you present a report if you don't know what suggestions to make?
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Discuss

In your company, how effective do you think report and sales presentations are?

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Teacher's Notes

1. The Handout can be cut up for use in a tabletop matching exercise.
2. Students can then be given the opportunity to match the information in pairs or groups and then check the answers against the text.

Answers

1. How long is the concentration span of most adults? *45 minutes*
2. Is a Manager's attention span longer or shorter than this?
Shorter – 7 minutes because the sales person is rarely talking on a subject or great interest to the manager.
3. In a Sales presentation what do you call features that solve problems?
Benefits – And the benefits should always lead to profit e.g. Our product saves labour -> increasing productivity / decreasing labour costs -> Increasing your profit
4. In board meetings when can you expect questions?
At any time and often to test your knowledge of the subject
5. How can you present a report if you don't know what suggestions to make?
Present it as a brainstorming session and then have a separate final report presentation.