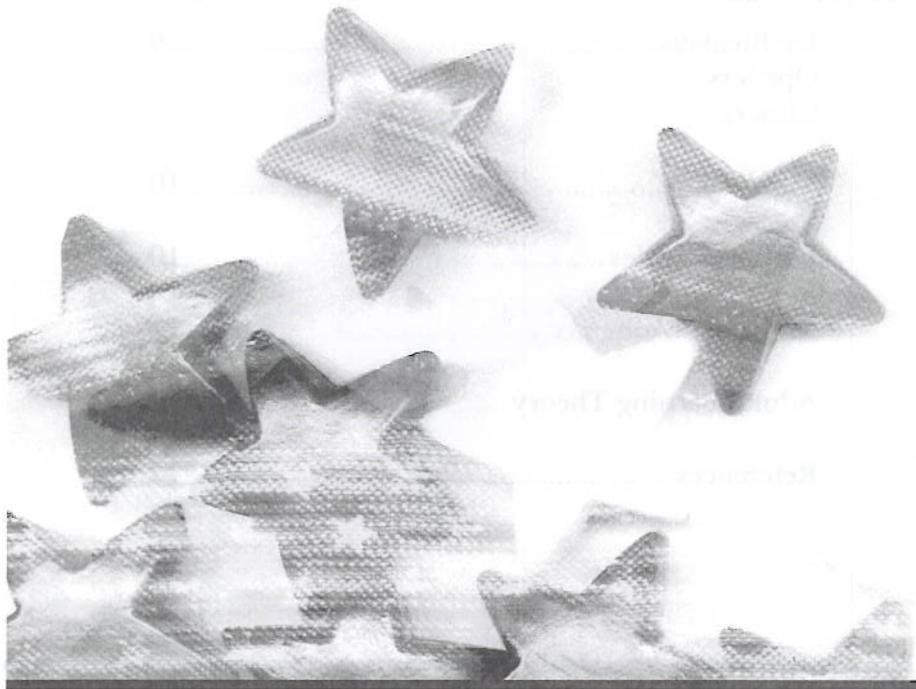


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# Presentation Skills Training

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*Back  
to the Basics*



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## *Presentation Skill Overview*

This training guide is designed to help new and senior staff with the basics of program presentations for the Fleet & Family Support Centers of Hampton Roads. The goal of this guide is to increase the skill level of staff as it relates to presenting programs to an adult audience. The guide will increase the awareness of adult learning theory and also help staff incorporate practical concepts into presentation styles by enhancing their knowledge on using creative training techniques in adult learning.

Being a skillful presenter takes more than preparation and practice. Great presenters also possess certain qualities. Do you have these qualities?

**Self-Control:** Skillful presenters remain in control, regardless of what happens. They don't let internal or external forces ruin their presentation.

**Poise:** Not only is it important for a presenter to know the presentation content, but must also be perceived as someone who knows the subject matter.

**Awareness of people, time and place:** A good presenter will be cognizant not only of the people attending the presentation, but also of the most convenient time and place to give a presentation. A good presenter starts on time and finishes on time.

**Tact:** Tasteless comments or jokes are bound to hurt individuals as well as the presentation. Tactfulness is an important trait for all presenters. If in doubt, remain silent.

**Decisiveness:** Allowing participants to ask questions means that the presenter must be quick on their feet, able to process the question, facilitate group responses and provide an accurate answer.

**Persuasiveness:** A presenter is usually trying to get the audience to act or think a specific way. In order to be successful, you must be persuasive.

**Enthusiasm:** If you cannot show true enthusiasm for the topic you are presenting, then you can not expect the audience to be enthusiastic either.

**Honesty and Directness:** If your presentation deals with a sensitive subject, being honest and direct may be difficult. In the long run, honesty, no matter how painful, will pay off in the end. These two attributes will also affect your credibility.

**Flexibility:** Professional presenters should avoid being too rigid with timing issues. It is important to allow the audience's interaction to occur naturally.

**Confidence and Humility:** No one likes to listen to an arrogant speaker. No matter how knowledgeable you are, you need to make the audience feel comfortable with you and the message you are presenting.

## *Outcomes*

Before presenting a program you should think about what outcomes you want for your students. Determine if your objective is to impart **knowledge**, teach a **skill**, or facilitate a change in behavior or **attitude**. Some programs may have elements of two or three.

- **Knowledge:** The Smooth Move workshop is an example of a primarily knowledge-based program. In this workshop you are giving out information and knowledge about how to transition from one duty station to another within the United States.
- **Skill:** The Parenting Teens program is an example of a skill-based program. You teach some knowledge, and discuss keeping a positive attitude, but the class mostly revolves around learning the skills of parenting.
- **Attitude:** Building Effective Anger Management Skills is an example of a program that is geared more toward teaching attitude and behavioral changes in students, in addition to specific skills for making those changes.



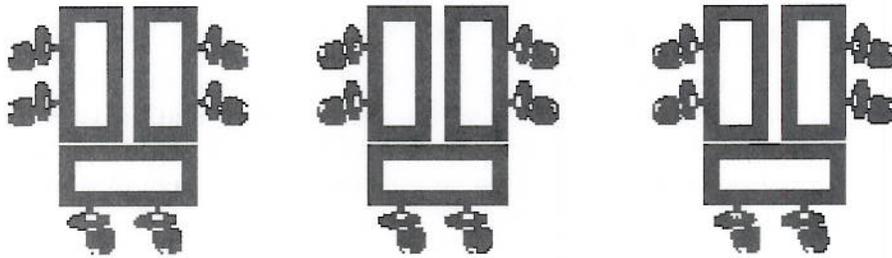
## *Content, Process, and Review: (CPR)*

When preparing to teach a program you should break it up into **Content** pieces, **Process** pieces and **Review** pieces. Define what part of the program should contain important **content** pieces of information. Define what part of the program allows the audience to participate or **process** the information given. And finally define what part of the program should be revisited or **reviewed**.

- **Content:** An example of delivering content would occur while teaching the program “Developing Your Spending Plan” when you give the audience specific information about what a spending plan is and what type of information it contains.
- **Process:** Using the same example as above, once you have given the class the information about what a spending plan is and the type of information that it contains, you then let the audience process that information by participating in an exercise allowing them to start filling out their own spending plan in the classroom.
- **Review:** Once you have given the audience content information and also allowed them to process that information, it is time to review what they have learned. This can be done in many ways: one method is to have an open discussion; another would be to quiz participants; another would be to have participants write down ten things that were important to them while they were listening to you present.

## *Room Set-Up*

If possible, try to visit the location of your program prior to teaching, in order to assess the room configuration. For audiences 10 to 75, it is ideal to have participants sit in small groups of 5 – 10 at tables in a horseshoe-type formation. For larger audiences you may have to group them by rows. Group seating tends to provide a better learning environment than individual seating. Group seating makes it easier to facilitate activities. Below is an example of group seating.



## *Equipment Check & Check Out*

Before presenting a program using audio / video equipment you should check to ensure the equipment is in good working condition. If possible, do a dry run before your program. Make sure you have alternative methods of teaching your programs just in case something happens and the equipment does not work.

If you need audio / video equipment, you can check it out from IT or the Military at your site. There is an Equipment Service Request form located on the Intranet.

## *Speaker Credibility*

Introduce yourself briefly. Include relevant military experience and years working in your specific career field and/or the agency. Disclosing military rank can be seen as a negative characteristic, therefore only include information about rank and work experience when pertinent. Find ways in your presentation to include things about yourself that tie into what you are teaching.

Know your material content but don't read slides to the audience. Make key points and facilitate discussion. If asked a question for which you are not 100% sure of the answer, let the audience know you will research the answer and get back with them. If you can find the answer during a break or the next day, depending on how long the class is, this will make you look very credible, because nobody has all the answers but you should be able to get the answers.

One way to gain credibility is to quote some facts about your subject material that you don't think the audience knows. Better yet, ask the audience questions first to see how knowledgeable they are. Remember, you are not trying to show them up, you are there to help them learn. If the audience gives wrong answers don't destroy their confidence. Simply keep asking the question until someone answers correctly give additional hints to the group as applicable or just provide the answer.



## *Time Management: 90-20-8*

When presenting a program or training course try to break the subject material into no more than 90 minutes blocks. Then take that 90 minutes and turn it into 20-minute chunks of content, process and review pieces. You also want to keep in mind not to lecture more than 8 to 10 minutes at a time. Look at the previous example on page five under content, process and review to assist in planning each 20-minute chunk.

When thinking about the time management of a program, consider **need to know**, **nice to know**, and **where to go** information.

- **Need to Know** items meet your program objectives.
- **Nice to Know** items provide additional information about a subject. If you get to the information fine, if not it's OK.
- **Where to Go** refers to resources and references that help the participants get more information about the subject matter themselves.



## *Ice Breakers/Openers*

**Ice Breakers** serve as vehicles for getting participants to introduce themselves or for putting trainees into the right frame of mind for the upcoming training session. These activities should vary depending on group size, subject, audience demographics, and how well participants know each other already. **Ice Breakers** and **Openers** should do the following:

- Break preoccupation
- Facilitate networking
- Be relevant to the content
- Maintain or enhance self-esteem
- Be fun for the trainer & the students
- Stimulate curiosity

### Example: Ice Breakers / Openers

Have students write their name on the front of a tent card and then have them write down 3 things they want to learn today on the back of the tent card. Give students a couple of minutes to write the items down, and then have them get up and introduce themselves to as many people as they can in the next 5 to 10 minutes and discuss the items they want to learn with each other.

**Closers:** Any good presentation should have a strong beginning, a good middle section and a strong closing. Simply asking if there are any questions at the end of a program is not a good ending to a presentation. Good closings should be composed of a combination of the acronym ACT.

- Action Planning
- Celebration
- Ties Training all Together

### Example: Closer

At the end of a program have students work together in groups and come up with the top ten major points discussed in the training. Give students a couple of minutes to discuss and write down the major points. Then in some kind of random order have each group announce their top ten major points without repeating any other groups list. Dice can be used for this type of random choice. This closer becomes very challenging for the last couple of groups.

## *Movement*

**Movement** is important when training. Most students don't want to sit and listen to a speaker hour after hour. Remember the model 90-20-8. Take no more than 90 minutes of subject matter and break it into 20 minutes of content pieces without lecturing more than 8 to 10 minutes at a time. Remembering this model will help you break up your training and create ways to motivate your students. An example would be to have the class break up into groups and work on listing different discussion points of the class.

## *Different Styles*

Being an effective presenter sometimes means you have to change styles. Try not to always train in the same manner each time. Be flexible with yourself and your audience. Sometimes you may have to change your style or approach in the middle of a presentation. If your audience is not receptive to what you are doing, attempt to change styles or teach in a different method.

## *Know Your Audience*

**A**udience — Who are the members?  
How many will be at the event?

**U**nderstanding — What is their knowledge of the topic  
you will be addressing?

**D**emographics — What is their age, sex,  
educational background, etc.?

**I**nterest — Why will they be at this event?  
Who asked them to be there?

**E**nvironment — Where will you stand when you speak? Will  
everyone be able to see me?

**N**eeds — What are the listeners needs? What are your needs as  
a speaker? What are the needs of the person who hired you?

**C**ustomization — How can I custom-fit my message to this audience?  
Expectations — What do listeners expect to learn from me?

## *Adult Learning Theory*

Adults seek out learning experiences in order to cope with specific events in their lives. Information must be relevant and applicable to their work / life / situation.

Adults have a foundation of life experiences and knowledge and need to connect new learning to this knowledge / experience base.

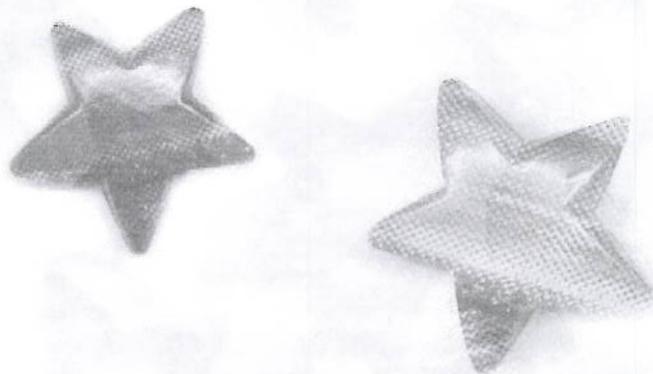
Adults are goal-oriented and usually know what they want to obtain. They are practical and may not be interested in knowledge for its own sake.

Adults are autonomous and self-directed and need to be involved as active participants in the learning process.

Adult learners need to be shown respect and have their life experiences honored. Presenters must acknowledge the wealth of experiences that adult participants bring to the classroom.

Adults need feedback from instructors, as well as opportunities to provide student feedback that should be used to make changes to enhance the program.

Adult learners need an environment where they feel safe and supported. They need an environment that fosters intellectual freedom and encourages creativity.



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