



Training Preparation Sheet

Public speaking is an inevitable part of our careers and yet for many people, it is downright terrifying. Approximately 1 in 4 Americans report a fear of public speaking. Theo Tsiaousides, a neuropsychologist and author, suggests a few reasons for this widespread anxiety. He acknowledges that there is a physiological response to our emotional reaction to public speaking; have you noticed your heart race increasing as people start to trickle into the room? We also tend to view presentations as a reflection of our image and reputation. Sometimes, we just don't feel prepared and confident in our skill set.

This sheet is tailored to support your preparation for a presentation or training. Being prepared and spending time thinking about the audience can ease anxiety. More than the personal stress it alleviates, this sheet can help make sure you are giving a clear, accessible, and relevant talk to your audience. I would recommend gathering as much information ahead of time about the audience and the physical space.

1. Who will be the audience?

Consider size, demographics, whether they chose or were required to attend.

2. In what context are people working with individuals with brain injury?

Consider length of interactions, one interaction or multiple over time, personal vs. professional settings.

3. Where is the training being held? How might the space affect group activities, breakouts, etc?

Consider what technology is needed, if you will distribute hand outs or offer electronic versions.

4. What level of preexisting knowledge is the audience likely to have about the topic (e.g., brain injury)?

5. What problem does the audience want to solve? What are their expectations of me?

- Instead of asking, “what information will I teach?”, ask “what does the audience need to learn?”

6. What are my expectations for the audience?

- What are my objectives? Are they stated at the beginning, middle, and end of the presentation? What is my core message? How do my slides and other topics relate to this message?
- Have I communicated my expectations clearly to the audience? Be sure to tell them if there will be a break or not, if they are free to use the bathroom, get up and stretch, if it's appropriate for them to eat/drink during your presentation, etc. Let them know if they should be taking notes or if you'll send the slides out.

7. What tips, techniques, and actionable items can I offer this audience that they can use outside of this talk? How am I making sure this content is immediately relevant?

8. What is the sequence of the material? Is it presented in a logical, easy-to-follow fashion?

9. What types of learning styles do people have? How am I addressing different learning styles?

10. How accessible is my material to people in the audience with disabilities? Do I have image descriptions? Am I describing what is on the Powerpoint rather than asking people to read the slide? Do I have videos with closed captions on? Am I using a microphone for those who have difficulty hearing?

Note: Always assume there are people with disabilities in your audience, remember accessibility is not a kindness or a favor to be extended to people; it is a right.

Note:

Questions 1-4 are used adapted with permission from the Maryland Department of Health's Regrounding Our Response Master Trainer document, "Preparing for your Presentation."

Resources:

Learning Styles for Adult Learners:

<https://www.pacer.org/publications/fasttraining/Other/teachingadults-whattrainersneedtoknow.pdf>

Making Your Presentation Accessible:

<http://uxpamagazine.org/make-your-presentations-accessible/>

<https://www.diglib.org/dlf-events/2016forum/guide-to-creating-accessible-presentations/>

http://bbi.syr.edu/projects/Demand_Side_Models/docs/accessible_training_checklist.htm

Additional readings:

<https://hbr.org/2013/06/how-to-give-a-killer-presentation>

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/present/presentation-tips.html>