AGCJ 404: Communicating Agricultural Information to the Public

Week #13: Oral Presentations

Situation

- You have been asked to present the topic of your technical report at a meeting (e.g., turfgrass association, poultry producers, cotton farmers).

Objectives

- Make an illustrated oral presentation to a specified audience following principles discussed in class.
- Describe effective ways to introduce an oral presentation.

Determining the Purpose

- What do I want the audience to know when I’ve finished this presentation?
- What do I want the audience to believe when I’ve finished this presentation?
- What do I want the audience to do when I’ve finished with this presentation?

Analyzing the Audience

- What is my audience’s level of knowledge about and experience with my topic before hearing my presentation?
- What is the general education level of my audience?
- What type of information will it take to move my audience to act on what I’m presenting?

What to Include

- Know exactly what information to include to achieve your purpose and meet the needs of your audience.
- Ask:
  - Based on what I know about the members of my audience what do I need to include to meet their needs?
  - Make a list of this information
Structuring the Presentation

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
  - It is often best to write the introduction last because you will be able to write a better introduction after writing the body. You will know what you are introducing.

Developing the Body

- List major points in an appropriate manner
- Same methods of development as in the report
- Follow the outline already constructed
- Best to use five or fewer main points

Developing the Introduction

- Capture audience’s attention and motivate them to listen in your “opening” statements
- Establish the credibility of the speaker
- State the purpose (optional)
- State the method of development (optional)
- Lead into the body of the presentation

Developing the “Opening”

- A rhetorical question
  - What would you do if you were president for a day?
  - Would you help prevent the number one killer of school children if you had the chance? You can do something about tractor accidents.

Developing the “Opening”

- A dramatic or entertaining story
  - Susie was an average teenager. She had good grades in school. Her parents came to school functions. She was well liked by her classmates. She died last year, not from a car accident or cancer, she died from starving herself to death. She had an eating disorder.

Developing the “Opening”

- Relate a personal experience
  - I went out to the barn one morning and found four lambs sick and two already dead. There was no visible cause for their death but an autopsy revealed copper toxicity.
  - Last week while hiking in Big Bend Park I saw three Red-Headed Woodpecker nests. This is unusual because they are not native to our state.
Developing the “Opening”

- An appropriate quotation
  - Walt Disney once said, “If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember this whole thing started with a mouse.”
  - This new innovation started with a cracked bat at a baseball game.

- A historical event
  - 100 years ago Thomas Edison introduced the gramophone. It was one simple device. Today we have a choice of more than 10 types of CD players and more are on the way.
  - Historically, farmers have worked to conserve the land. They have supported several landmark pieces of legislation which set the standard for soil conservation.

- A reference to a current news story
  - In the news of a recent plane crash we heard about the importance of the crash indicator beacon in finding the pilot and passengers alive. General Motors is processing similar devices for automobiles to send a beacon if an accident occurs. This would provide an additional measure of safety for those traveling alone on less-traveled roads.

- A joke or humorous story
  - When Bill Gates heard a rumor that the world was going to end next week, he said “That’s great!” “What do you mean that’s great?” asked his friend. Gates replied, “That’s means we don’t have to upgrade Windows XP.” Computer technology is advancing so rapidly--
  - NOTE: If you can’t tell a joke to your friends and make them laugh, don’t try one in front of an audience.

Developing the “Opening”

Capture the audience’s attention by using one of the following opening statements

- An attention getting statement
  - Three million chickens are processed in Texas every day.
  - The U.S. economy lost 27 billion dollars in productivity to clinical depression in 1996.

Developing the Closing

- Be strong and persuasive
- Reinforce the main points
- Ask the audience to fulfill the purpose of the presentation
- Never introduce new content
Transitions

- Just as the outline is a road map for the writer or speaker, transition is a road map for the reader or listener.
- Without the guideposts of transition, an audience can lose their way.

Transitional Expressions

- Results
  - Therefore, as a result, consequently, thus, hence
- Example
  - For example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration
- Comparison
  - Similarly, likewise
- Contrast
  - But, yet, still, however, nevertheless, on the other hand

Transitional Expressions

- Addition
  - Moreover, furthermore, also too, besides, in addition
- Time
  - Now, later, meanwhile, since then, after that before that time
- Sequence
  - First, second, third, then, next, finally

Transitions between Sentences

- Repeat key words or ideas from the preceding sentences using
  - Pronouns that refer to antecedents in previous sentences
  - Parallel structure by repeating the pattern of phrases of clauses
    - That's what right with American agriculture
  - Enumeration
    - The recommendation rests upon three conditions. First...Second...Third...

Applying Solutions

- Review the textbook and the class Web site for guidelines, assignments, and “things to remember.”
- Develop the introduction for your illustrated oral presentation. Send it to your lab instructor via email so they will know how your plan to introduce your presentation

Application and Evaluation

- Develop electronic visuals to accompany your presentation
- Oral Presentations
- Final Exam