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Preparation Steps For A Successful Group Presentation

1. *Take Inventory*
2. *Research and Gather Information*
3. *Organize Your Information*
4. *Focus the Group's Efforts*
5. *Name Your Project*
6. *Create a Story Line*
7. *Produce Visual Aides*
8. *Put it all Together/Rehearse*
9. *Self-Evaluate*
10. *Present*

Be well prepared before you give a presentation. Know what you are going to say and deliver that message in the most effective way possible.

The Process

1. Take Inventory

Choose groups and organize a time to meet. At the first meeting, designate one person to take and distribute notes.

- What is your task? _____
- How long do you have to put it all together? _____
- Who is your audience and what do they want? _____
- What do you already know about your subject? _____
- Brainstorm a list of questions you have about the subject. _____
- What information will you need to find? _____
- Divide the questions for research among the group. Many questions will naturally go together.
- Will you need to find information that will inform, persuade, or both? _____

2. Research and Gather Information

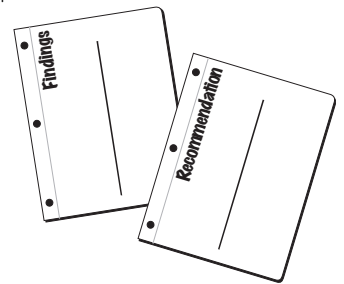
Now that you understand your task, know what information needs to be gathered, and what your group expects of you—it's time to find the information.

- Know what the best information sources for what you need.
 - Ex: if you're looking for information about something in your community, try to find a primary source to interview. If you need information about events that have recently been in the news, look to periodicals (newspapers/magazines) for the most current information. For background and historical evidence, look to books, encyclopedias, and records.
- Note: The Internet is a great resource for information, but make sure the Web site is credible. For the most part, anybody can put anything on a Web site.
- Document all your sources.
- Take notes. Make sure that you write your content in your own words—this way it will sound natural when you present it.

3. Organize Your Information

At the second meeting use a blackboard or large piece of paper to record and help organize everyone's ideas.

- Discuss what everybody found. How does all of the information fit together or overlap? What doesn't fit?
- What are the big ideas that everyone agrees you must cover?
- Narrow the big ideas down to 3-5—more than that will be too much for your audience to digest. Label these as your **findings**.
- What have you discovered? What do you conclude from your findings? What is it that you recommend because of the information you have gathered? Label this as your group's **recommendation**.



4. Focus the Group's Efforts

This step makes sure everyone understands where you are now and what steps need to be taken. Everyone should agree on what to do. Have one person record the **focus** responses. All responses should be statements not questions.

- Identify the Problem _____
What did you set out to accomplish? _____
- Approach _____
How did you attack the problem? _____
- Findings _____
What did you find out? _____
- Recommendation(s) _____
What do you conclude? _____



Check Point: Your focus should reflect each group member's ideas in some way. If you didn't all agree, work to form a consensus. Next, turn in your focus statements for your teacher to review.

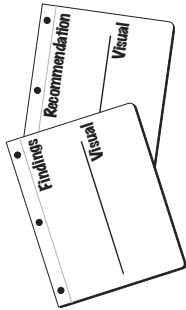
5. Name Your project

Be concise and direct, not long winded. For the presentation, make sure your audience knows your title. Don't assume they will figure it out.

6. Create a Story Line

*Use your **findings** for your main points and decide the best and most effective way to present your findings.*

- Figure out the most logical order to present your findings. Think of telling a story with words, pictures, and actions.
- Prepare your speech as if you are trying to solve a problem and offering a solution for people.
- Brainstorm visuals that illustrate each of your big ideas. Think about costumes, objects, metaphors, pictures, people, charts, and graphs—anything that will get your point across.
Remember: this is brainstorming—get crazy—creative with the ideas and don't disregard anybody's suggestion—later you can figure out what is practical.
- Connect a visual to each of your **findings** and figure out the best way to display that visual.
Ex: will it be a slide, poster, part of a PowerPoint (or other presentation software), overhead, something somebody wears or displays, etc.
- Now take your **recommendation(s)** and follow the same procedure. Discuss with your group the most effective way to present them.



7. Produce Visual Aides

Decide the medium of delivery—what is going to work best for your information. Facts and figures lend themselves well to overheads or PowerPoint presentations. Skits are a great way to illustrate a point, problem, or situation (pre-tape the skit to ensure the best possible delivery). Look also at the talents that lie within your group—do you have a talented artist, a computer whiz, a born actress, or a broadcaster/announcer-type?

- One key message per image
Ex: chart that shows oil production since 1975
- Create effective charts and graphs.
- Label information on all charts and graphs.
- Use color, for important information. Too much color can overwhelm your audience so be careful.
- Use large fonts and few words.
- Use bullet points.
- Check spelling and punctuation.

8. Put it all Together

This is the time to make your presentation shine. The more prepared you are, the more confident you will appear.

- Write down what you want to say. It's best not to read straight from a script so break it down. Write short paragraphs on index cards (called prompt cards).
- Introduce yourself.
- Give an introduction. Tell the audience about your topic and what you will be presenting.
- In the body of the presentation give your main points.
- After you give your main points transition into your recommendations.
Ex: because of these points, we believe...

Practice, Practice, Practice

Rehearsal of the presentation is almost as important as the actual presentation

- Figure out natural transitions from one topic to another.
- Get used to handling the visual aides and any equipment necessary to display them.
- Adjust your text so that the words coming out of your mouth feel like your words and not a book's. Make sure what you have to say is as clear and concise as you can make it.
- If possible, rehearse in the room in which you will present. Check to make sure you are within the time requirements.
- Are you speaking to your audience? Make that connection. Speak with enthusiasm and put some energy into your talk.

9. Evaluate

Throughout the rehearsal, watch and listen to each other and evaluate what is being said and how it is being said.

- Give and take constructive criticism (the Assessment Framework is a great tool for this). Give your presentation in front of some type of audience (friend, teacher or parent) who will give you honest, constructive feedback, to help you smooth out the rough spots. You can also videotape a practice session and review it as a group.
- Do the words sound natural coming out of that person's mouth? What would help? _____
- Has everything been thoroughly covered? What can be added or removed? _____
- How can you help someone feel more comfortable? _____
- Do any questions remain in your mind? What are they? _____
- Do the visual aides work? _____
- Will the audience "get it?" What improvements can be made? _____
- Adjust visual aides and your delivery accordingly.

10. Present

Whether you are pre-taping your presentation or giving it live, the best advice is, if you mess up, DON'T PANIC. No one knows what you are going to say so stay calm and recollect your thoughts. Remember, everyone is in the same boat.

DON'T

- Mumble
- Fidget
- Look only at one person

DO

- Speak clearly
- Move naturally
- Look around the room
- Relax

Tips for ICN Presentations

DON'T

- Wear clothes that have small pattern i.e. dots, checks, and herringbone, are reflective (satin), or have high contrast (black and white).
- Wear long dangling earrings or clanging key chains. They can be distracting.
- Interrupt other students when they are talking.
- Ignore questions from other students.
- Turn the lights off for visual aides.

DO

- Be calm.
- Look directly into the camera often.
- Stand tall.
- Use well-prepared visual materials, avoid one person talking for long stretches of time. This is called "the talking head."
- Practice your presentation in the ICN room with the equipment
- Check the zoom feature on overhead cameras by zooming in as close a possible and then backing out
- Have fun with your presentation and the medium for delivery

GOOD LUCK!