

How to Run a One Day Introduction to Presentation Skills Workshop with 19 people (well, 17 who turned up!) by Sharon Langford

I got organized – as much as I could and this was the plan for the day... which I managed to stick to... just about!!

0930-0935 – Welcome, ground rules and overview (I used an iceberg analogy to show the huge range of things we COULD cover but the reality of what we would be doing... ie the tip of the iceberg.... 'basic introduction, structure, preparation').

0940-1000 – Personal introductions. Working in groups of 3 or 4 people had a few minutes to prepare (who they are, what presentations they'd done and would do, why there were here) then had 90 seconds to introduce their mini-group to the rest of the group.

1000-1015 – Two groups – what makes a good presentation, what makes a bad one..... 5 minutes group discussion then facilitator led session to extract the ideas onto flip chart.

1015-1120 – Shared teaching session..... Briefing, preparation and coffee break (self-managing the time!). Split the group into five (mix of experienced and less experienced – did this using a scale of 0-10 and picking people from each end to make teams). Groups were then allocated topics:

1. Preparation and Planning
2. Structure
3. Visual Aids
4. Delivery Skills and Nerves
5. Handling Questions

(Note: My materials were already prepared with all the content information they would need – I just pointed them to the pages, the visual aids team were also given the 'duff slides' on my laptop to use in a demonstration).

1120-1200 – Delivery of the sessions.... With a bit of feedback on style etc. I did not expect anyone except the group who had 'structure' to specifically design and deliver their session in a perfectly structured way, I just wanted them to get the content out to the rest of the group.... On the whole there were pretty good.

1200-1215 – What questions session (a chance for the group to ask me any outstanding questions). I then summarized what they had delivered using a couple of slides on my laptop.... Also reiterated the 'tell em, tell em, tell em, structure as this was the least well done (unfortunately).

1215-1220 – Briefed the afternoons work... ie in pairs (there was one threesome) and choose topic of your choice to design and deliver a 5 minute presentation following the input they'd had. (I suggested they paired up experienced/less experienced)

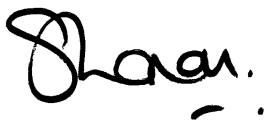
1400-1600 – Presentations – each pair did their bit, were asked for their feedback... I asked for comments from the group and then filled in gaps (difficult to give really strong feedback to people as it was a) so short b) sometimes one in the pair did more than the other.

1600-1630– Review, shared learning and close. Asked them to work in pairs (different partner) and discuss what their key learning was. Got this on post its which were then clustered on flip chart. Didn't have client feedback forms so just did quick one personal action and one thing they'd enjoyed. Managed to finish on the dot of 1630!!

Notes:

I'm not generally good at sticking to times so this really challenged me to stay focused. I had to constantly remind myself that it was not possible to give quality and detailed feedback to everyone.

I did feel concerned before (and during) the event that people would be disappointed – the hot feedback from the group was excellent and when I spoke to the client the next day she said that she'd received great reports..... nice to hear, however, I'm concerned now that I'll have to do it again!! I just worry that although it worked for this group (and in the run up to Christmas) it might not work with a different group. Managing expectations is key.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon." with a small dash and a period below the name.

Sharon Langford
December 2007