

The logo for the Calgary Horticultural Society is a black rectangle with the words "CALGARY", "HORTICULTURAL", and "SOCIETY" stacked vertically in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

CALGARY
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

DELIVERY

Module #16

Note: The following information is applicable regardless of the delivery format (ie. in person, online)

DELIVERY

PRESENTATION STYLE

The biggest misstep presenters will make is to read directly off their slides. For the audience, it does not add any value for a presenter to read what is already visible on the screen.

In other cases, the presenter may read directly from a script which may be different from what is shown on the slides. But this is not much better. An audience can always tell if this is what is happening.

Often if a presenter is nervous or less familiar with their subject matter they find it more comfortable to read. But when a speaker reads content, it removes the sense of connection with the audience. Reading directly from slide text or a script dis-engages the speaker from the audience – they stay in their own heads, rather than interacting with their viewers.

Audiences respond best to a conversational approach that may be a different every time the same presentation is delivered. The feeling of spontaneity and engagement is very appealing to an audience and they are much more likely to pay attention, be engaged and to retain the content.

When a speaker is verbalizing something that references the content on screen, but is not identical, it requires an audience to pay close attention so they don't miss anything. They are using more of their senses – reading, as well as truly listening to the speaker. A strong, skilled presenter can be speaking about any topic – even something the audience may not be interested in – and the audience will still be engaged and enjoy the event.

If you have created your slides using the tips from **Module #14** your slides should include content that hits the highlights and main points of your topic. Use your presentation as an opportunity to 'speak to and around' the bullets and images on the screen. Allow for the inclusion of anecdotes and personal stories – these are what makes the presentation unique and engaging. Allow for humour. None of this can be captured in the text of a PowerPoint presentation.

Practise using the bullets as prompts for what you want to talk about. Do your best to maintain eye contact (even online) as much as possible, even when referring to your notes which may be on another screen or off to one side. Do your best to read the body language in the room, or on the screen.

TIMING

Keep a clock or timer close by and visible. Be conscious of the time and where you are in your presentation. It can be very easy to get immersed and unaware of how long you have been talking, so be sure to take a breath, take a drink and check the clock. If you have practised ahead of time you should be confident that you won't run over your allotted time.

BREAKS

Use breaks to give yourself a chance to reflect on your timing and on what you can feel from the audience. This might be a good time to ask a question of the audience, or to answer a couple of questions. Breaks that allow for you and for the audience to quickly stand up, use the washroom, refresh your water etc. are always good idea. You can schedule them in ahead of time (include a slide in your presentation that acts as a reminder) or let them arise naturally. Breaks can be very beneficial to a speaker, allowing you a few moments to regroup before continuing on with the presentation. The number and length of the break(s) will depend on the length of the event.