

# **BUILDING RAPPORT & BODY LANGUAGE IN ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

## **4.1 What is rapport?**

A harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well. So, deliver a presentation that is engaging and inspiring, bearing in mind the 2-way communication between presenter and audience, that is, the presenter sends out messages and the audience sends back feedback.

### **8 top tips on how to build rapport**

Tip 1: Research & learn all you can about your audience.

Understand their technical level of understanding, demographics, and gender so you can customise your presentation so the audience feels you are speaking directly to them.

Tip 2: Engage, Involve & Interact with your audience:

- Ask questions to build instant rapport and a feedback cycle
- Use question tags
- Phrase statements as negative questions

A. Complete with the corresponding question tag:

1. This isn't really so surprising, \_\_\_\_\_
2. But we won't let this stop us, \_\_\_\_\_
3. We certainly can't complain, \_\_\_\_\_
4. We've been here before, \_\_\_\_\_
5. I said it was good news, \_\_\_\_\_
6. You know what's going to happen, \_\_\_\_\_

B. Rephrase the following sentences into negative questions:

1. We should be focusing our attention on our core business.
2. Offshoring – this is something we need to be looking at.
3. We're in danger of losing some of our best customers.

Tip 3: Personalise the Presentation.

- Use WE, OUR, and US where possible: this helps to create a “conversation” and the audience will stay more alert and motivated to listen.
- Give a personal story, share a personal experience
- Try some humour

C. Make the following sentences more personal:

1. Now, I know that this is something that affects each and every one of you.
2. I think you'd all agree that in the long term this is in your best interests.
3. You need to be asking yourselves: what are you trying to achieve?
4. So do you or don't you take up the challenge? The choice is yours.

Tip 4: Appeal to all intelligence types: Visual, auditory, physical/spatial, logical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

D. Relate the following phrases to the corresponding intelligence type:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| A. Picture this...                     | M. I want to share with you...       |
| B. How does this sound?                | N. But let's look at this another    |
| C. Let's take a moment to reflect on   | way.                                 |
| that.                                  | O. What I'd like to do is give you a |
| D. Statistically speaking,....         | feel for...                          |
| E. Do you see what I mean?             | P. I think the figures speak for     |
| F. It strikes me that....              | themselves.                          |
| G. Ask yourself....                    | Q. Personally....                    |
| H. The basic principle is fairly easy  | R. I hear you say....                |
| to grasp.                              | S. Between you and me,...            |
| I. So logically....                    | T. Does that make sense to you?      |
| J. Take a minute to talk to a partner. | U. On balance,...                    |
| K. Now, you're probably saying to      | V. To illustrate what I'm saying...  |
| yourself...                            | W. So far we've barely touched on    |
| L. Unfortunately, there isn't time to  | the question of                      |
| go into depth here.                    |                                      |
| X. Just to give you an overview of...  |                                      |
| Y. Let me fill you in on the           |                                      |
| background of that.                    |                                      |

Tip 5: Speak clearly: Good pronunciation, Enthusiasm, and Volume: it's a good idea to practice at home speaking out loud. You can record yourself and watch it back. Check the pronunciation of difficult words in advance!

Tip 6: Pitch, Pauses, Stresses & Pace: English has a different rhythm to Spanish - so make sure you go up in pitch for questions, and use pauses & stresses to highlight important words in your sentences. In presentations, you can exaggerate this more than in normal conversation.

Tip 7: Avoid ticks

Tip 8: Repetition and Alliteration

E. Change the words in bold for a more suitable one which matches the sound of the previous ones in the sentence:

1. Properly priced, packaged and **advertised**, this product cannot fail.
2. China is not our main market, but it may be a **significant** market in the future.
3. Of course, this is a serious problem to which there's no **easy** solution.
4. In the world of international finance, this **company** remains a formidable force.
5. I know that if we work together as a **group**, we can take on the competition.

## 4.2 Building Non-Verbal Rapport

- Clothing
- Corporate colours reflected in your visual aides
- Use KEY WORDS from corporate website or mission statement
- BODY LANGUAGE

## 4.3 Body Language in Presentations

In oral presentations, use intentional body language. Research has shown that people can send and receive up to 10,000 non-verbal clues in less than a minute.

“When your body language is out of alignment with your verbal message,  
people believe what the see – not what you say.”

*Carol Kinsey Goman, Kinsey Consulting Services*

## 1. Eye contact and smile

### **Don'ts**

- Read your notes.
- Look at your slides a lot.
- Look over audience's heads.
- Don't stare at 1 person.
- Don't scan too many.

### **DoS**

- Look directly in their eyes
- Look at 1 person long enough to finish a thought, then move to another person.
- 99% eye contact with audience
- Smile, be warm.
- Eyes need to match face.

## 2. Position and walking

### **Don'ts**

- Stand behind lecturn
- Sit at desk
- Turn your back to audience
- Pace / run
- Shuffle

### **DoS**

- Move around
- Walk-Stop-Walk-Stop, make a rhythm
- Plant 1 foot and pivot
- Check for obstacles before you begin

## 3. Postures and Gestures OPEN!

### **Don'ts**

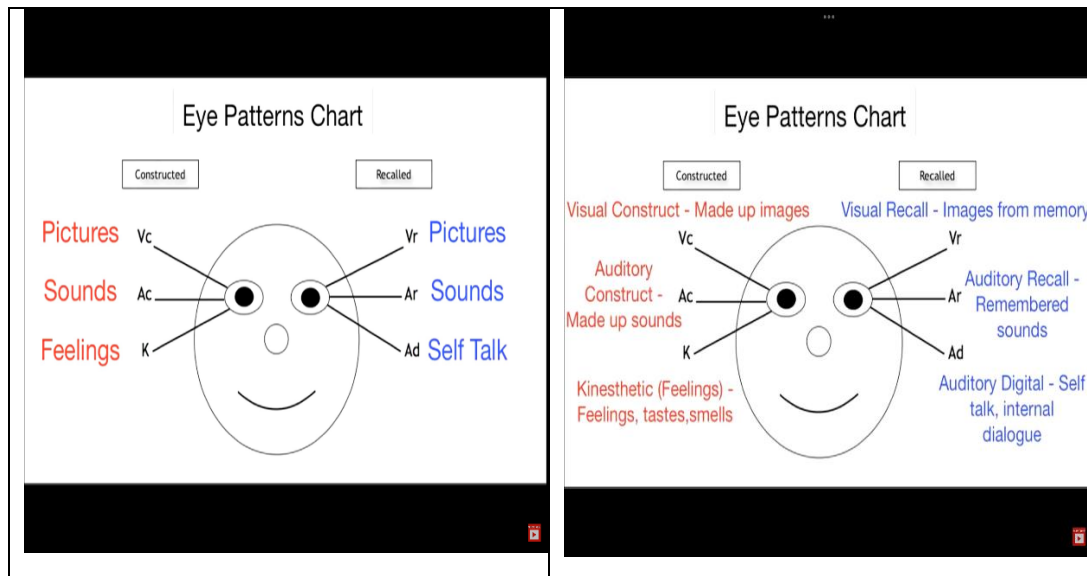
- Sway
- Cross legs or arms
- Put hands in pockets
- Put hands behind back / on hips
- Fiddle / body ticks
- Move arms& hands rapidly / erratically

### **DoS**

- Keep arms open, palms up / out
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Lean slightly forward
- Soft knee
- Loosely clasp fingers at belt level
- Keep gestures small and open

## 4. Pausing & Nodding

5. Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP): when people are remembering facts or telling the truth their eyes go to the left, when they are creating or lying their eyes go to the right.



### TIPs for body language in presentations

- Research international gestures
- Read your audience - seniors prefer more static, young prefer more movement
- Static —————→ Confident & Expressive —————→ Too Dramatic
- Convey qualities: Leadership, charisma, honesty, enthusiasm, confidence and conviction.

Adapted from: Gurak, L. J. *Oral Presentations for Technical Communication*, 2000.