Presentation Skills for Interview

Excel Staff Development Program
Careers Day

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Presentation skills for interview

The ability to prepare compelling narratives that can communicate complex ideas to a variety of audience is a sought-after skill. As a result, many recruiters ask job candidates to deliver presentations as part of the selection process.

Interview presentations are often time constrained, testing not only your presentation style, delivery and content but also your ability to tell a compelling story.

How can I deliver effective presentations in an interview?

Plan for the session

1. What are the panel looking for?

2. Presentation structures

3. Crafting an engaging story

4. Open the floor for questions

5. Wrap up and signposting

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What are they looking for?

- Technical knowledge
- Content creativity
- Ability to convey complex concepts
- Accuracy of thinking and ability to construct an argument
- Coherence of ideas
- Clarity of organisation during your presentation
- Delivery style
- Rapport building with an audience
- Time Management
- Ability to follow instructions
- Effectiveness of verbal communication and presentation skills

- Job specific skill, deliver part of a lecture/workshop etc.

What am I being asked to do?

What is the brief?

- *topic, length, time, objective or task*

Who are the audience?

-*number, expertise, interests, genuine or actors?*

Presentation Structures

Demonstration

- Explain why the product is valuable.

- Describe why the product is necessary.

- Explain what problems it can solve for the audience.

- Demonstrate the product to support what you've been saying.

- Make suggestions of other things it can do to make the audience curious.

Presentation Structures

Problem-solution

- Briefly frame the issue.

- Go into the issue in detail showing why it 's such a problem. Use logos and pathos for this – the logical and emotional appeals.

- Provide the solution and explain why this would also help the audience.

- Call to action – something you want the audience to do which is straightforward and pertinent to the solution.

Presentation Structures

You could plan your presentation along the following "A-B-C" lines

- A - Introduction - Bullet point what you're going to tell cover in your presentation
- B - Content - tell them
- C - Summary - tell them what you've told them and the key take away points.

Presentation Structures

SCQA framework

Situation

Complication   Cover in the introductory slide

Question

Answer   Cover in the remaining slides

Engaging openings

1. A question: "How many of you are comfortable giving presentations? How about giving them as part of an interview? Why does it make a difference?"

2. Provocative statement: "More job opportunities are lost on the back of poor preparation than lack of skill or fit."

3. Start with a story: "What is your career story? *Past, present, future.*"

Crafting an engaging story

Choose a clear meaningful title

Reduce the key messages to as few as needed to convey the concepts

Avoid overly complex details or slides

Consider if your current organisation slides are appropriate, a neutral clean theme can be more impactful.

Ask a non-specialists to listen to the talk to avoid assumption of knowledge

Questions

At the end of your presentation, it's often a good idea to ask if the audience have any questions.

- Thank the questioner
- Repeat the question for the rest of the audience (clarify at this point if you are unsure of what you are being asked)
- Answer the question to the group
- Check with the questioner that they are satisfied
- Thank them again

When things go wrong

Technical issues
- Have multiple sources of your presentation .
- Check ahead of time the technical requirements.

Your mind goes blank
- Try not to panic. sip, breathe and try
- Try repeating the last point you made as saying it out loud could spark your memory
- Acknowledge the occurrence and start from the next point or slide

You are asked a question that you don't know how to respond to
- Clarify the question in case you misunderstood
- If you understand the question but are not sure of the answer, then admit that you don't have the full answer, provide what information you do have, and offer to come back to them at a later date with a complete answer.

Easy mistakes to make

- Playing it safe

- Preparing too much material / Going over time

- Speaking with low energy

- Rushing

- Not preparing enough

- Using small scale movements and gestures

- Data centric presentations

- Not practicing enough

Summary

- Stick to the brief, particularly timing and content
- Anticipate your audience: what disciplines/interests in the panel?

- Have a clear structure
  - Begin with a simple outline of what your research is asking and why it matters (elevator pitch)
  - "Today I will focus on three areas, first... second... and finally...."
  - Use your hands helpfully
  - Practice well beforehand

- Speak clearly and engage **everyone** in the audience
  - Consider taking a highly visual 1-page handout (or models) for non-specialists in your audience
- Plan audio-visuals in advance; check videos work on the day
- Thank the audience
- Invite questions

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Contact us

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Information for Undergraduates and Postgraduates
Resources and opportunities to help you at the start of your career.
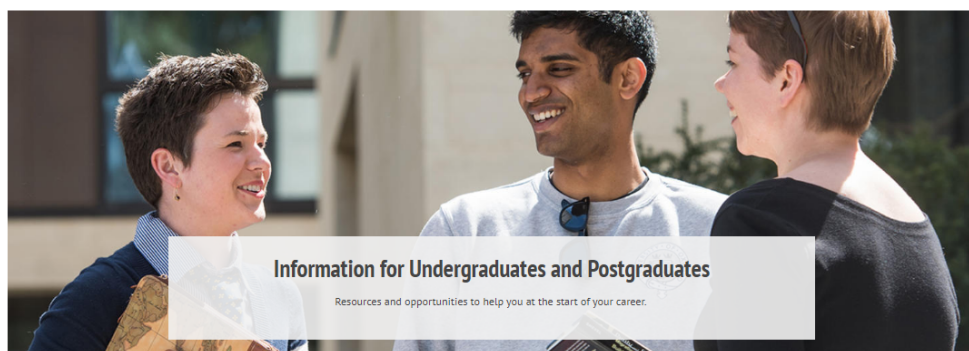
Alongside your study, you will likely explore your career options, including further study. Our career resources are for everyone considering what to do at the end of their current course and looking for career-enhancing activities to explore while at Oxford. We are here to support you regardless of how well developed (or not) your career plans are. Use our resources to help you develop and explore ideas, to sharpen career objectives and add polish to applications.

Without considering your destination it is difficult to establish a purposeful direction of travel. Consider the following questions about your possible next steps and mark where you are in the career-planning process. How clear are your ideas? How well do you understand your core interests and motivations? And, do you have sufficient understanding and experience to make a sound decision?

Jonathan Black

Abby Evans

Niamh Walsh

Callum Buchanan

Chris Jeffs

Claire Chesworth

Damilola Odimayo

Hugh Nicholson-Lailey

Josephine Allen

Julia Sadler

Juliet Tomlinson

Mike Moss

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🏠 > Developing myself

Developing myself

Development in my current role, for my next role, DIY personal development and information for new employees

Careers Club Launching 20th March

this series will include monthly online and face to face sessions to further 'Inspire and Equip Professional Services Staff to Develop their Careers' plus a new area of the POD website dedicated to career development. We expect to support some 600 staff through these sessions per year.
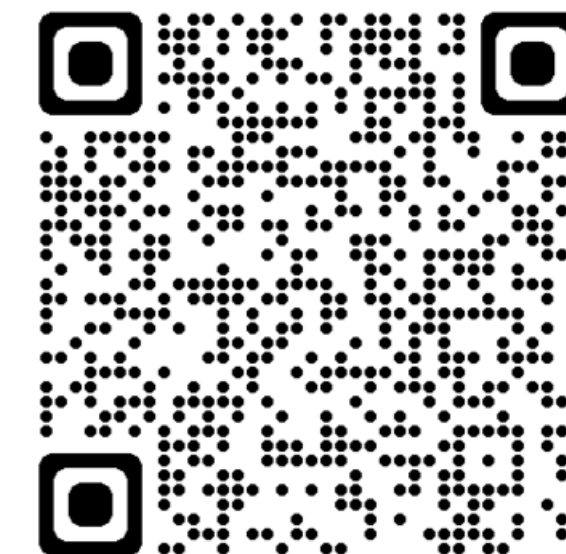
[Register for the launch](#)

Fixed Term Research Staff

Dr Susan Black

Dr Anne Wolfes

1:1 Careers Appointments

We offer:

- Free 20/30 min confidential sessions online (in-person on request)

- Have appointments at a variety of times and days in the working week

- Book up to 1 appointment per week

- *80% researchers have 2 or more appointments*

- Discuss any aspect of your career

Supported career exploration, networking, job applications, feedback on CVs, cover letters, etc.

Mock interviews, negotiating a job offer, identifying transferable skills, strategies for academic career progression, strategies for career development, signposting for development opportunities

Anything else that's career-related!

CAREERS BEYOND ACADEMIA
Options and Pathways for Researchers

18-21 March 2024

Online and in Oxford