

Essential Elements of a Presentation

The following elements should be included in every presentation:

Introducing Yourself This is your first opportunity to engage and connect with your audience. Get personal and share your own story. Who are you? Why are you there? What will you be doing during your time with them? Likewise, find out about your audience. What are their names? Interests? Backgrounds? In this way, you can all learn what inspiration and curiosity you share.

Inspiration and Involvement Learners get more involved when they move outside preconceptions and open up to new ways of thinking.

- Build your audience's engagement by exploring why your topic is important. Ask leading questions that help the group express what they care about as individuals. Why is this important to you? Have you ever wondered...?
- Connect your topic to your learners' interests, community, school, or current events.
- Connect these interests to your overall presentation goals.

Background Your Audience Needs Each group has their own journey to make in order to learn what you want to teach. The information you present, as well as your presenting style, will depend on the specific group you're addressing.

- If you can, find out about your group in advance: grade-level, science background, etc.
- Use your knowledge of audience and your teaching goals to determine what information or vocabulary the audience needs to learn.
- Introduce important new words and ideas in ways that respect the learners' needs:
 - Use pictures or objects to share ideas
 - Ask learners to define words for you
 - Write definitions for the group as you go

Learning Experiences You're setting the stage for your audience to do its own learning. It's important to let each learner make discoveries in a hands-on way, because this makes the information you're providing their own. The key steps to keep in mind are:

- Provide context for activities with related demonstrations, assisted use of tools, and clear instructions
- Provide materials, tools, and instructions that allow each learner to have a personal, hands-on experience
 - Let learners do their own thinking — in large or small groups or as individuals
 - Help them draw conclusions from what they experience
- Provide ways for learners to document and share their conclusions

Wrap up and Closing Are there things that you would like to say to wrap up the concepts presented and to say good-bye to the students?

- Directions for clean-up of materials, if necessary
- Conduct a "What did you learn?" discussion
- Suggest ways they can find out more on their own.

Support for Follow Through Support your audience! Build their confidence by providing them with appropriate tools, materials, and references that they can use independently. Are you going to be an ongoing contact, or will you be leaving handouts, additional activities, or further references? You want your group to continue their learning after you've gone — come prepared with information about how they can do it on their own.

Community Resources for Science
practical support for great science teaching



1375 Ada St., Berkeley CA 94702
510.654.6433 • www.crs-science.org