

Thinking Ahead: Session Logistics

Training Preparation Checklists

Before the day of training

- ☐ Create a checklist of things you will want to remember to do or pack for the session
 - Equipment and supplies
 - Plan for setting up the environment
 - Items to place at the participants' seats
 - Names of and contact information for the people who will support the session (for example, the person who has the key to the training room or the producer for an online session)
- ☐ Confirm all arrangements
 - Room or online environment
 - Refreshments (if applicable)
 - Equipment
 - Supplies
- ☐ Confirm that you have or have made available electronically
 - Sufficient number of participant materials
 - Facilitator guides
 - Markers
 - Additional supplies (post-it notes, play-doh, etc.)

The day of training

- ☐ Arrive in the training environment at least one hour before start time
- ☐ Upon arrival, check on everything regarding the training environment
 - Location of restrooms
 - Tools for electronic participation such as polling and chat features
 - Refreshments
 - Support staff
- ☐ Set up the training environment
 - Arrange tables and chairs
 - Review online interaction tools to encourage participation
- ☐ Examine the environment's mechanicals
 - Will the lighting cause any problems? Are the windows facing east or west?
 - Determine where the light switches are located
 - Figure out where the thermostat is and whether you have control over it
 - Establish contingency plans in case a participant cannot hear you or see your visuals

- ❑ Establish successful use of equipment
 - Set up your equipment
 - Test the equipment
 - Run through your Microsoft PowerPoint slides or flipcharts one last time to ensure that they are in order
 - Practice with the actual equipment
 - Do you know how to use the wireless remote?
 - Where is the reverse button?
 - Can you roll the pages on the flipchart smoothly?
 - Is the video cued to the correct place?
 - What is your contingency plan if you need to take on all of the roles in an online environment in case a producer is not available for the session – for example, technical support such as audio assistance or creating break-out rooms?
- ❑ Create a positive environment for participants
 - Arrange the participants' materials within the environment
 - Place the participants' training manuals, pens, agendas, table tents, markers, and anything else each participant needs neatly at each seat
 - Make sure participants know where to access any necessary tools for an online session
 - Place other shared materials they will need for small group activities or exercises in the center of round tables or equally spaced around a U or other linear placement
 - Inform online participants of any tools they will need such as a pen and paper for activities.
- ❑ Organize the space from which you will facilitate your session
 - Ensure your notes are in order, turned to the first page, and placed in a spot that will help you stay organized
 - Make sure visual support and equipment are in order and placed where you want them
 - Fill a glass of water
 - Add a few paper towels for an emergency
 - Make sure tools and supplies are where you want them. For example, markers on the flipchart tray, pencil near your notes, and sticky notes and index cards at the side
 - Ensure proximity to the producer such as in the same room or via remote connection

Planning before a training session can have several benefits, including:

- **Improved Focus:** Planning allows trainers to have a clear idea of what they want to achieve during the training session. This helps them to focus on the key concepts and activities that will help participants achieve the intended learning outcomes.
- **Efficient Use of Time:** When trainers have a plan, they can structure the session to ensure that all the necessary topics are covered within the allocated time frame. This allows for the efficient use of time and avoids unnecessary delays or distractions during the session.
- **Enhanced Learning Experience:** A well-planned training session can provide a more engaging and interactive learning experience for participants. By using a variety of training methods, such as group discussions, activities, and exercises, trainers can create an environment that encourages active participation and promotes learning.
- **Increased Participant Satisfaction:** When participants feel that the training session was well-planned and executed, they are more likely to be satisfied with the learning experience. This can lead to increased motivation and a willingness to apply the new knowledge and skills in their work or personal life.
- **Improved Results:** Effective planning and preparation can result in improved learning outcomes. By focusing on the key objectives and using appropriate training methods, trainers can help participants develop the skills and knowledge they need to achieve their goals. This can ultimately lead to improved performance, productivity, and job satisfaction. Have a check list and review thoroughly and often

Detailed preparation will help prevent nervousness:

- **Prepare Physically**
 - **Breathe.** This is the simplest and possibly most effective relaxation technique. Just before you talk take three deep breaths. They should be full and slow, all the way down, filling the lungs. Concentrate on your breathing. Think of nothing else. Just three good deep breaths are enough.

They add oxygen to your system, distract your attention from fear and help clear your mind.

- Progressive relaxation. Tense and relax your body, part by part. For example, first tense the toes and then relax them. Then give tension to your feet and then relax, then the ankles and so on.
 - Walk. Notice that athletes will walk and stretch prior to performances. This warms not only the muscles but the psyche. Walking vigorously just prior to your presentation burns adrenaline, gets oxygen into the body and relaxes the large muscles.
 - Uncross your legs. If you are sitting on a platform waiting to speak, crossed legs can sometimes shut off the blood circulation causing great embarrassment when you stand discovering that you only have one leg working. Uncrossed legs also keep blood flow to both sides of the body and freely to the brain.
 - Dangle arms. Again, when waiting for your turn at the podium, let your shoulders droop, dangle your arms, and imagine that you feel a heavy overcoat on your shoulders. Most people experience stress and tension in their neck and shoulders. Feeling the overcoat reminds you to relax.
 - Twist wrists. Again from either a standing or a seated position, twist your wrists and shake your fingers out.
 - Wiggle your jaw. Exercise your eyebrows. Flare your nostrils. Experiment with the elasticity of your face. Comedian Billy Crystal is said to exercise like this for as much as 30 minutes prior to giving a performance. Of course, if someone sees you in the corner making funny faces just before you go on, you may lose a bit of credibility!
 - Center yourself physically. Stand. Allow both arms to drop naturally to your sides. Have your feet spread so that they are appropriately balanced beneath you. Allow your spine to lengthen and mentally reach toward your hair and pull a strand of it up so that your neck is elongated and your spine comfortably stretched. Now, from this position imagine that you are pushing both feet into the floor, then release. Your body will let you know when you have that centered feeling from which your presentation can take place.
- Prepare Mentally
 - Over prepare. All butterfly prevention starts with planning. Be very clear and particular about your opening. If you are feeling some extra nervousness, memorize the first seven minutes so that you can deliver

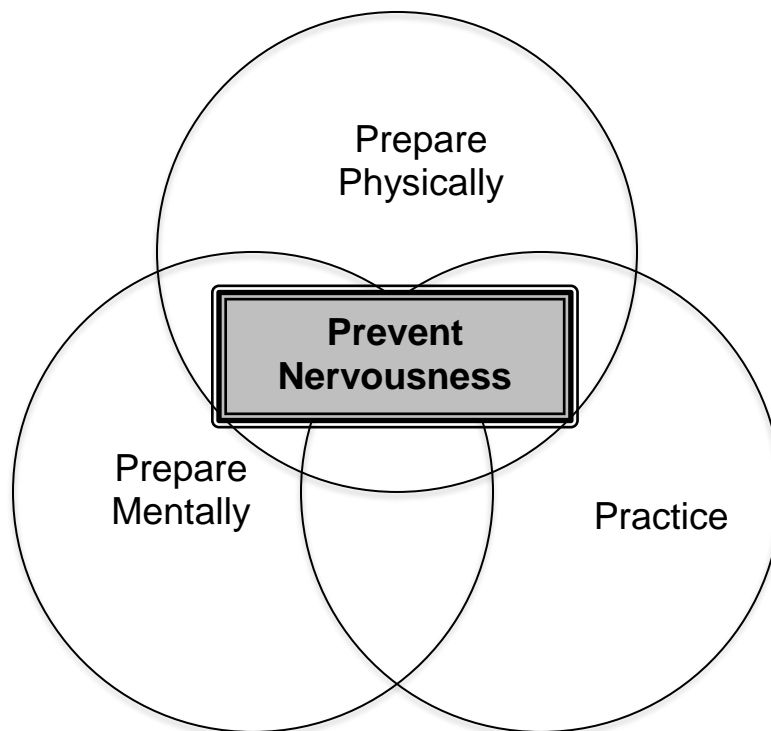
these lines even if your mental space closes down. Plan to stand still during the opening so people can ‘measure you.’

- Written notes. Write what you plan to say. Rewrite it and simplify it. Some may want to mind map it. Rewrite it again. Continue to write it, organize it, list it until it finally is in very clear form so that each idea that you have written automatically triggers in your mind a complex of ideas that you wish to present on that section.
- Mentally rehearse. Our guess is that rich mental rehearsal along with the first two mental techniques will alleviate eighty percent of most peoples’ nervousness. Much has been written on the topic of mental rehearsal. We are learning how rich envisioning – seeing pictures, hearing internal sounds, accessing feelings – causes the nerves, muscles and the entire body to behave as if it has experienced in actual practice. The keys to good mental imagery are: (1) create rich (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) internal models; (2) make adjustments until they feel right; and (3) make the models from your perspective as well as the audience’s perspective.
 - Example: Imagine yourself preparing to present a topic to a group in the near future. Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths. See yourself in the room. Notice the way your body is organized in space. If you are standing, notice your posture. Notice where your feet are on the floor in relationship to the shoulders above them. Notice the attitude of your hands and the expression on your face. From an audience’s perspective, what would they see on your face? Where would your eyebrows be? Raised? Lowered? What degree of animation? What would they hear? Notice the pitch and the rhythm of your voice. Notice the patterns of your speech. Notice the amount of floor space that you are using, your gestures, your walk, how you handle the PPT. Now step into your own body in that picture and sense what it feels like. Make any adjustments that you might need in order to have the feeling correct. Keep watching the audience and your own performance and continue making the adjustments until they are just the way you want them.
- Reconnaissance. Visit and examine the room itself. Convert the unknown into the known. Make sure logistics are arranged to your liking and see the space you’ll be working in from the audience’s perspective.

- Take the long view. Fear exaggerates any imagined threat. Ask yourself the question, “How important will this presentation be to me 10 years from now?”
- Paradoxical intervention. If you discover that no matter what you do, you are still having extreme cases of nervousness, you might try using paradoxical intervention and tell yourself not to relax. In this approach you prescribe to yourself exactly what you are trying to avoid. Try to get as nervous as possible. Imagine the audience being hostile, throwing things at you, saying rude things to you. Most times the harder you try to get tense, the more you will be tickled instead and not be scared. This is a last resort approach and it helps some people to relax despite themselves. (Turk).
- Mantra or prayer. Mantra or prayer is another useful device for locating the inner calm within us. Many people have discovered that prayer or meditation can be a powerful practical source of strength at tense moments in their everyday lives. Some presenters find that meditation or prayer the evening before a presentation is calming and centering, particularly as it is focused on serving the audience, not serving oneself.
- Practice
 - Memorize the first couple of paragraphs - nervousness usually goes away after a few minutes
 - Practice in front of a mirror
 - Use a recording device to assess speed, clarity and articulation
 - Practice exercises with colleagues and request feedback
 - Practice using visuals
 - Practice out loud
 - Present some material to your spouse, significant other, and/or dog
 - Practice in front of other groups – in plays, Toastmaster, etc.

Preparing to Prevent Nervousness

Get butterflies? Feel nervous? Have a touch of anxiety before a training session? You're not alone. Many adults think that speaking in front of groups is a frightening experience. You don't want to eliminate the nervousness completely, because it gives you a winning edge. You do want to manage nervousness – get those butterflies to fly in formation! Try these suggestions to help prevent nervousness.



Prevent Nervousness

Prepare Physically	Prepare Mentally	Practice
Rest Well	Send positive messages to yourself	Memorize the first couple of paragraphs - nervousness usually goes away after a few minutes
Use relaxations techniques or exercises head rolls, shoulder rolls, tighten muscles	Accept a reasonable level of nervousness	Practice in front of a mirror
Yawn deeply	Remember that participants want you to succeed	Use a recording device to assess speed, clarity and articulation
Breathe deeply	Think of your session as an extended conversation	Practice exercises with colleagues and request feedback
Arrive early	Try appropriate humor early	Practice using visuals
Mingle with participants upon their arrival and learn something about each	Visualize yourself being successful	Practice out loud
Avoid 'new' suit, haircut, or shoes. Wear something comfortable.	Get participants involved early in the session	Present some material to your spouse, significant other, and/or dog
Use a crutch such as visuals	Keep the session in perspective	Practice in front of other groups -- in plays, Toastmaster meetings, etc.
Use up excess energy by speaking to farthest person		

How do you prepare to deal with nervousness?

What is your favorite way to practice?

Turn to a partner and share your ideas...

NOTES for Module 4