Communication and documentation:

Oral communication

Presentations

Types of Oral Communication

- Prepared speeches - planned prior to the event, tends to be highly structured (or should be!)
- Impromptu speeches - generally unexpected and unprepared, tends to be unstructured
- Briefings - short summary of the details for an operation/plan

Styles of Oral Communication

- Informative
- Persuasive
- Entertaining
- Educative

Planning a Presentation

- Define the purpose of your presentation
- Anticipate audience reception
- Context and setting
- Determine your main points
- Research
- Structure your material

Preparing the Presentation

- Write - introduction, body and conclusion
- Rewrite for aural reception - i.e., words that are easy to say and to hear
- Practice (and practice ... and again!)
- Determine appropriate audio/visual aids

Presenting your oral communication

- Using notes
- Audio/visual aids
- Non-verbal communication
- Use of voice
- Anxiety/stage fright
Use a presentation for
- reporting an important event or milestone in the project
- sharing knowledge about some aspect of the system with your peers
- responding to a request for information (e.g., CEO)
- gaining immediate feedback on a proposal about the project
- requesting approval for some aspect of the project
- influencing an outcome about the project (e.g., Users)
- demonstrating operational features

Presentation characteristics
- person to person communication
- high credibility
- single purpose
- relatively short duration
- a once-only event
- no permanent record

Presentation fundamentals
- understand what your audience needs
- address your presentation to those needs only
- know your material
- be well organised
- speak up and keep eye contact
- use only appropriate visual aids

Presentation fundamentals
- avoid appearing nervous
- preparation and organisation are essential
- rehearse out loud and in the venue
- always test equipment at the venue
- believe that the audience wants to hear you

The venue is important
- neutral ground, comfortable setting
- no distractions
  - divert the phone
  - know the layout
- where are the electricity points?
- can you and the screen be seen?
- can you move about without tripping over cords?
- enough seats and table space?

Informative presentation
- the audience are your peers
- internal to the project
- entitled to the knowledge you have
- most often technical in content
- fact based
- presume enquiry / response
  - address the audience needs
  - clear understanding is the aim
Persuasive presentation
- audience is peers and stakeholders (customers if you work in sales)
- creating a mood rather than detailing facts
- advocates change
- you must identify the audience's "hot buttons"
  - i.e. identify their needs
- you must be credible to succeed
- know your topic

Demonstration
- the highest credibility presentation
  - therefore potentially the most risky
  - always intended to persuade, to prove a point
  - never deviate from your prepared show
  - never let the audience get the keyboard
  - always have backups
  - always test on site beforehand - Murphy's Law prevails here

Questions
- expect them
- during or after the presentation - your choice
- equally as important to your credibility as the presentation content
- don't patronise the questioner
- don't evade the answer
  - if you don't know, undertake to find out

Oral style
- presentations are NOT spoken reports
  - personal pronouns
  - simple, short sentences
  - repetition of words, sentences, ideas
  - familiar words that don't need a dictionary

Support for the words
- printed handouts
- static display graphics
- overhead slides
- 35mm slides
- presentation display software (PowerPoint)
- video, film, audio
- artefact demonstration

References