

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR OCC CONFERENCE

- Give yourself adequate lead time. Expect that you will have to make revisions, and allow time enough to make them. An effective oral presentation also takes some rehearsal; allow time for that too.
- Make an appointment. Sign up at the Oral Communication Center, located in K-J 222 or e-mail oralcomm@hamilton.edu. You may also phone the OCC at extension 4401.
- Know what you want to accomplish. If you're still in the planning or preparation stages, come to your conference with a good idea of where you need to go (based on the assignment and your presentation goals). If you want to do a run-through, be prepared to do it.
- Bring to your conference all relevant materials—speaking notes, handouts, etc. If you're using PowerPoint or digital media, be sure those files are accessible from a college networked computer.
- Before your conference, practice explaining key concepts to someone lacking expertise in the subject. It's a good way to find out how well *you* understand the concepts and may help you create verbal strategies that will be useful in your presentation. For abstract or unfamiliar ideas, develop some *concrete examples* and *comparisons* to get your points across.
- If you are creating PowerPoint slides, please follow the basic guidelines given below (always subject to adjustment to meet your professor's expectations):
 - Include all relevant data but eliminate clutter.
 - Make sure the *meaning* of your slides is clear. This means *clearly label* things or *clearly tell* your listeners what they need to know. Don't leave your audience guessing about what the *x* and *y* axes represent or what the units of measurement are or what other symbols or codes mean. Consider the knowledge and background they bring to the presentation.
 - Be clear in your own mind how each slide relates to the one before it and the one after it. Give your listeners clear oral transitions from point to point and from slide to slide. *Unify* the presentation.
 - Don't go overboard with animation and other special effects. Focus on making your slides clear and meaningful. As PowerPoint critic Edward Tufte says, "Making things dance doesn't make them relevant."
- Review tips and guides posted on the Oral Communication Center website, such as "Using PowerPoint Effectively," "Tips on Effective Oral Delivery," and "How to Engage Your Audience and Keep Them with You."