



**AACRAO 2012 Annual Meeting  
Philadelphia  
April 1-4, 2012**

**Guidelines for Professional Presentations**

**ORGANIZATION**

- **INTRODUCTION** – Your introduction should tell your audience exactly what you have to offer, provide a road map of what you are going to cover, and state your purpose clearly. In general, the introduction should not exceed about one-tenth the length of your presentation.
- **BODY** – The body contains the material supportive of your purpose. It should avoid superficial or obscure treatment of the information you are trying to convey. It should develop logically, emphasize the main points, and keep auxiliary or background information in proper perspective.
- **SUMMARY** – Studies have shown that an audience pays closest attention at two points in a presentation: during the introduction and summation. A good summary is a brief reiteration of the purpose of your presentation and a vivid restatement of your main points. It should include only the critical points you want the audience to remember.

**VISUAL AIDS**

- **AS A TOOL** – Visual aids are very effective communication tools and are essential in virtually every presentation. Experience and research have shown that 87.9% of what we learn is learned visually. Therefore, you will greatly increase the probability of audience retention if visual aids are used wisely. **Use of PowerPoint or other presentation graphics programs are strongly encouraged.**
- **CONTENT OF VISUAL AIDS** – Effective visual aids should: be relevant to the subject of your presentation; clarify, reinforce, or highlight an idea; supplement, reinforce, and aid spoken material, not take its place, detract from it, or overwhelm it; and be sturdy and portable. The content should be kept simple, avoid complex graphs or tables. It should be easy-to-read from anywhere in the room. **Four or five lines with no more than six words per line are average for a good visual aid; eight lines should be considered a maximum.** Your audience should be able to absorb the content within two minutes; fifteen to twenty seconds of that time will be spent just focusing the audience's attention.

**PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS**

- Check the room facility and setup in advance. Allow ample time to ensure that any computer or electronic equipment is in working order.
- Coordinate your presentation with anyone who is going to operate any equipment for you. Handouts should be in order and in a convenient location for distribution. Inform the Expert representative or an AACRAO Staff person if any equipment is missing.
- Rehearse your presentation aloud with or without an audience to help insure your smoothness of delivery, facility with visual aids, timing, and confidence. A speakers' ready room (see *Meeting Program* for location) complete with AV equipment is available.

## PRESENTATION TECHNIQUES

- **Delivery Style** – Reading is an unacceptable method for presenting your material. Limit your notes or items on overhead slides to key phrases that automatically bring to mind several sentences or an entire paragraph of your presentation. Use vivid examples, stories, and humor. Audiences expect to be entertained as well as informed. Consider involvement techniques, e.g., questions, exercises, openness to comments, games, etc.
- **Use of the Podium** – A podium is provided for your use. Standing behind it is more formal, moving away establishes a friendlier, closer relationship with the audience. Make sure to carry the microphone when moving away from the podium.
- **Length of delivery** – Your facilitator will tell you how long you have for presentation. Allow 15-30 minutes for questions and/or discussion. The AACRAO Annual Meeting has been tightly scheduled for events, rooms and equipment. Please do not exceed allotted session time.
- **Eye Contact** – Good eye contact is essential to holding an audience's attention. Include all segments of the audience by looking directly at individuals without lingering too long on any one person.
- **Voice** – a good speaking voice is natural and reflects the speaker's personality and sincerity; has vitality; portrays various shades of meaning; is easily heard; and varies in speed, volume, intensity and pitch.

## HANDOUTS & AACRAO WEB

Handouts (prepared and paid for by the presenter) will help the audience understand and remember the fine points of your presentation. Bring enough handouts for the maximum audience size. Estimated attendance can be found at <http://www2.aacrao.org/MeetingPublic/searchSession/meetingId/387740000000E/> for your session.

Submit your handouts to the AACRAO website by using a link which has been customized for each presenter and session by the priority deadline of March 15, 2012. This will help avoid disappointment by attendees should you run out of handouts.

## QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIODS

Repeat the question to make certain the audience has heard and understands. Multi-part questions: identify each part as you begin your response. In the event of an antagonistic audience member, address the issue if you feel comfortable doing so, if not suggest that the issue be discussed further after the session.