CHAPTER 13

Presentations and Meetings

13.1 Oral Presentations

13.2 Visual Aids in Presentations

13.3 Effective Meetings
Salu’s Presentations and Meetings

Salu Alufopho has worked for Computer Systems, Inc., for about four years. Last month he received his third promotion. Now he is working at the first level of management and has found his new duties quite challenging. Oral communication skills play an important role in his new position.

Salu meets often with project managers. After receiving the status of the projects for which he is responsible, Salu meets with his supervisors and briefs them on each project. Occasionally he is part of a team that presents a proposal to a prospective client.

Although he had a speech class at his business college, Salu does not feel prepared for all the presentations he has to give. He has noticed that Ms. Lynn, one of his supervisors, is impressive during her presentations. She maintains interest by using quotations, anecdotes, questions, humor, and statistics.

Salu also has questions about briefings. He knows little about this type of oral presentation and had never seen one before his promotion to management. He also wonders what he could do to plan and organize formal presentations better.

Salu has attended many meetings, but he has received no training on how to organize meetings or make them effective. As Salu analyzes the meetings he has attended, he knows that some were more successful than others. He wonders what a leader does to help ensure the success of a meeting.

Questions

1. How can Salu find answers to his questions about meetings and presentations?
2. What do you think makes a meeting successful?
3. How do you think a briefing would differ from other types of presentations?
Short Oral Presentations

Oral communication is a common business activity. The types of oral presentations you give will depend on your job position. If you supervise others, you may conduct training programs. If you work in a Human Resources Department, you may conduct new employee orientation programs. If you become a high-level executive, you may make presentations to the board of directors, stockholders, media, and civic organizations.

Most oral presentations are simple, straightforward, and short—15 minutes or less. Typical short speeches are introductions and briefings. They should begin with an opening that creates interest and prepares the audience for what will follow. Then they should provide details in the body and summarize the main points in the closing—if needed.

Introducing Speakers

When planning an introduction of a speaker, determine if you should follow a specific format. Many organizations provide guidelines for introductions to keep them short and uniform. If no formal guidelines exist, consider adapting the suggestions discussed in the following paragraphs.

Obtain Information about Speakers

Often, you will be given a resume or other information about the speaker. If possible, find out what the speaker would like you to mention. Your purpose is to prepare the audience to accept the speaker and the speech. Too much information causes restlessness in the audience.

Introduce Speakers and their Presentations

When introducing a speaker, mention information about the speaker along with the speaker’s name. State the title of the presentation and tell what the speech is about if that is not obvious from the title. Provide information that the audience can relate to and that will create interest in the speech. When giving an overview, do not give too many details that will take away from the speech.
**Briefings**

A **briefing** is a short presentation given to bring people up to date on business activities, projects, programs, or procedures. Briefings are usually given at a meeting or a conference. Because briefings are short, highlight key points and provide a few details to support each point. You could use a visual aid that lists the key points.

**Key Point**

The purpose of a briefing is to give current information on activities, projects, programs, or procedures.

1. **What is your purpose when introducing a person who will make a speech?**
2. **What is the purpose of a briefing? Where is a briefing usually given?**

Check your answers in Appendix C.

**Formal Oral Presentations**

Preparing formal oral presentations is challenging. A formal speech may last from 20 minutes to more than an hour. It may require that you do research to find the content you need to present. You may need to prepare visual aids to help the audience understand the points you wish to make. You should think about questions the audience members may have and how you will answer them.
Planning the Presentation

Planning an oral presentation is like planning a written report. Oral presentations have an introduction, a body, and a closing. They may include visual aids such as tables, charts, graphs, and photos. The following steps are involved in preparing for a formal presentation.

1. Determine the objective of your speech.
2. Analyze the audience.
3. Determine the time available for the speech.
4. Gather information for the speech.
5. Determine the appropriate mode of delivery.

Determine the Objective

What do you want to communicate to an audience? Answering this question will help you determine the objective or purpose of your presentation. Generally, the objective for a work-related speech will be to persuade or inform. The objective for other speeches may be to entertain. Write a sentence that states the objective clearly, as shown in the following examples.

- The objective is to teach marketing managers about new products and sales goals.
- The objective is to persuade a customer to place an order with us because we have a quality product and fast delivery.

Analyze the Audience

Analyze the expected audience in terms of size (number of people), knowledge level, age, gender, culture, and needs.

- How do you want your audience to react to your presentation?
- How much does your audience already know about the topic?
- Is the audience’s attendance voluntary or involuntary?
- What do the listeners need to learn or what action do you want them to take?

The size of the audience determines the approach you take for delivery. If the audience is small (20 or fewer people), you may be able to have more audience interaction. If the audience is large, you need a good sound system and some way to make visual aids visible to the entire audience.

If the audience has little or no knowledge of the subject, you need to provide background information and explain words or terms related to the subject. If the audience is familiar with the topic, you may begin talking about the subject directly and give little background information.
Knowing the demographics of the listeners can help when preparing your speech. **Demographics** are characteristics of a group of people, such as gender, age, race, culture, education level, occupation, marital status, and income. Ask questions about the audience members such as those listed below:

- What is the range of ages?
- How many are men and how many are women?
- What is their educational level?
- What are their occupations and income levels?
- Where do these people live or work?
- What cultures or ethnic groups are represented?
- What will be their attitudes toward the topic of your presentation?

**Determine Time Available**

Speakers often are given a specific amount of time to speak. You need to determine how much of this time to spend on different parts of the speech. For example, suppose you have 30 minutes in which to make a presentation. You might decide to spend 3 to 5 minutes on opening remarks and 15 to 20 minutes to develop the main points. You might allow 5 to 10 minutes for conclusions or a summary and questions. To make sure you stay within the appropriate timeframe, practice your presentation several times, noting its length. *Microsoft PowerPoint* has a timer feature that will help you time your speech as you practice. See Figure 13-1.

**Figure 13-1** Practice your speech so you can keep it within the allotted time.

![](image_url)
Gather Information

Information for an oral presentation is gathered in much the same way as data for a formal written report. Two sources of data are available—primary sources and secondary sources. Primary research involves gathering new data. Secondary research involves locating data that already have been gathered and reported. Refer to Chapter 9 page 315 to review information on gathering data.

Determine Mode of Delivery

Talking from notes is the most effective mode of delivery. Using this method, you prepare an outline or notes and use them as a reference while talking. Microsoft PowerPoint has a notes feature that allows users to enter notes related to each slide in a slide show. These notes can be used while practicing or delivering a speech. This method requires practicing beforehand until you can deliver your remarks smoothly. It may seem challenging to have to practice and not to read a speech word for word. However, this method engages the audience in a way that reading a speech cannot. Since you are looking at your outline or notes only occasionally, you can make eye contact with the audience. Your listeners believe you are talking directly to them, and they pay attention. Making eye contact while speaking gives an impression of interest and competence on your part. In addition, it allows you to observe your audience's reactions and to adjust your remarks accordingly.

Two methods of delivery are not recommended. The first is reading a written copy of a speech. When a speaker reads from a manuscript, he or she can make eye contact only occasionally. The speaker's facial expressions and voice are less expressive. Listeners tend to become bored or annoyed. In addition, the speaker risks losing his or her place in the manuscript, has little opportunity to observe listeners, and has little flexibility to respond to them.

Reciting an entire speech from memory is also not recommended. This method allows for a good deal of eye contact. However, working from a memorized speech gives the speaker little flexibility to adapt remarks to the audience’s reactions. Moreover, memorizing a long speech is difficult for many people. The speaker may forget parts of the speech or become flustered. A memorized speech can sound stilted and formal, not like natural talk. Memorizing a quotation or opening or closing remarks, however, can be effective.

When you are asked to speak without any notice, you make an impromptu speech. For example, you might be given an award and need to make a short acceptance speech. You might be asked to give an update on the progress of a project during a meeting. Even an impromptu speech, though, can be planned quickly. A little planning can vastly improve the results. Take a few moments to gather your thoughts before speaking. Sketch your ideas on a piece of paper if time allows. Avoid rambling by deciding on an introduction, two or three main points for the body, and a closing. Make your remarks brief.
Organizing the Presentation

All presentations, formal and informal, should have three main parts: an introduction, a body, and a closing.

Introduction

The introduction to a speech should contain an attention-getter, your topic, your purpose, and a preview of your main points.

Attention-getters hold the audience’s attention during a long presentation. Use reliable attention-getters in the opening and throughout your speech. Common attention-getting techniques include:

1. Quotations. Use a quotation to illustrate a point. If possible, memorize the quotation and cite the source.
2. Anecdotes. An anecdote is a short account of an interesting or humorous incident. A story related to the audience or the topic is often a good way to begin. People enjoy hearing stories and often understand a point better when they hear a related anecdote.
3. Humor. A little humor can relax a serious business atmosphere and make an audience more receptive. Many speakers warm up an audience with a joke and then proceed to a serious topic. However, humor should be used with discretion and care. Be careful not to offend listeners.
4. Statistics. Cite an interesting or unusual statistic when appropriate. People like some details, but not too many.
5. Questions. Ask a question. A good question can help your audience focus on your topic or make it eager to hear the answer.
Body

The main part, or body, of a presentation should present the main points. Use the same organizational plans as those used in writing reports—direct or indirect. Limit the number of main points and arrange them in a logical sequence. As you progress in the speech, summarize previous points and preview information to come. When you shift topics, provide a transition from one idea to the next.

Add variety to presentations to hold the audience’s attention. You can vary the pace of a presentation by using visual aids, asking questions, and using examples to illustrate key points.

Closing

Close a presentation by reviewing or summarizing the main points. State a conclusion, if appropriate, or tell listeners again what you want them to do. Your objective is to make sure the audience understands the topic and possibly takes some action as a result of your presentation.

For many work-related presentations, including a question-and-answer session is appropriate. Allow time for questions and answers in the allotted time for your talk. Think about the questions that may be asked and form answers to them ahead of time. This will allow you to keep the question session moving along. If the group is large, repeat a question before answering it so that all listeners can hear the question as well as your answer. If you do not know the answer to a question, be honest and state that you do not know. Offer to find the answer and contact the person later if appropriate.

Outlining the Presentation

An outline can be a valuable tool when planning any speech. An outline is essential for long, complex speeches. Develop the outline according to the plan used for the speech—direct or indirect order. Use direct order (main idea first) when you expect the audience to be receptive to your ideas. Use indirect order (main idea later) when you expect the audience to be skeptical or unresponsive. Use indirect order when you will be persuading listeners or delivering unwelcome news.

If you plan to deliver your remarks from your outline, prepare it as a topical outline. Using a few words to describe each topic rather than complete sentences will help you avoid the temptation to look down and read directly from your outline.

Include “prompts” in the margin for where you are going to use visual aids, cite a source, or even pause. If you are using electronic slides, you can create your outline in the software. Figure 13-2 shows an outline for a speech created in PowerPoint. You can also create your outline in Word and import it into PowerPoint when you are ready to create slides.
Section 13.1   Oral Presentations

Figure 13-2 This speech outline was prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint.

1. What steps are involved in preparing for a formal presentation?
2. What is the most effective mode of delivery for a formal presentation? Why is this method the most effective?

Check your answers in Appendix C.
Delivery of Oral Presentations

Delivery of a presentation is as important as content. The better your delivery, the greater the chance that you will achieve the objective of your presentation. Voice qualities, nonverbal symbols, and visual aids can enhance or inhibit delivery. Feedback can let you know if your audience understands and accepts your message. The checklist on page 492 provides suggestions for delivering effective speeches.

Voice Qualities

Your vocal qualities should make you appear confident and competent. Speakers who speak softly give a nonverbal message that they are insecure or shy. Speak loudly enough for everyone to hear while still sounding natural. To achieve appropriate volume, look at the person farthest away and project your voice as though you were speaking to that person.

Speak at a moderate pace. If you talk too rapidly, the audience may not have time to consider all your points and may become confused. Also, you may give the impression that you are nervous.

Nonverbal Symbols

Nonverbal symbols add to or detract from an oral presentation. They indicate how the speaker feels about the situation—relaxed, nervous, or confident. Important nonverbal symbols during speeches include eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and posture.

Eye Contact and Facial Expressions

Maintaining eye contact with members of the audience keeps them involved in your speech. Focus on members of the audience to let them know you want to communicate with them and to read the feedback they give you.

Use appropriate facial expressions to communicate with your audience. A smile, a frown, a look of concern, or a look of surprise can convey a message.

Gestures and Posture

Use gestures to emphasize important points in your speech. Gestures can also indicate that you are nervous. Repeatedly saying “ah” or “um,” tapping fingers, and clutching the sides of a lectern indicate nervousness.

Though you may be nervous about giving a speech, the key is to hide or overcome that nervousness. You can overcome this nervousness by gaining experience at speaking in public. Think positively about your presentation and your performance as a presenter. Focus on the needs, interests, and concerns of the audience—the you viewpoint.
Send the right message with your posture. Good posture indicates self-confidence, an interest in your topic, and respect for the audience. Poor posture indicates the opposite. Stand up straight in a comfortable position with your feet about hip distance apart. Do not slouch or lean on a desk or podium. Walk at a natural pace (not too slow or hurried) if you move around on the stage. Be careful to stand in a position that does not block the audience’s view of visual aids. Listeners should be able to see you and the visual aid.

**Visual Aids**

Visual aids should be used to emphasize, explain, or illustrate points of your presentation. Transparencies, flip charts, chalkboards, whiteboards, slides, and videos are examples of visual aids. Visual aids for presentations are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

**Feedback**

Some oral presentations allow immediate feedback to the speaker in the form of questions from the audience. Feedback is important in determining whether the audience has understood or accepted your message. When taking questions is appropriate, allow time at the end for questions and answers.

For some presentations, such as those at conferences or seminars, you may benefit from formal feedback about the session. A questionnaire or evaluation form can be used to gain audience feedback.
If the group is very small, you might encourage comments or questions during the presentation. If the group is large, ask the audience in your introduction to hold questions until after the presentation.

An evaluation form should include items such as the following:

- The name and date of the presentation
- The name of the presenter
- Statements regarding the session that the listener can rate or agree/disagree with
- Space for other comments or suggestions for improvement

An evaluation form for a presentation is shown in Figure 13-3.

Presentation Tips

Giving effective presentations can be important to your occupational success. The following tips will help ensure that your planning and practice pays off with an effective and smooth delivery.

- Go to the presentation room and practice your speech, using your visual aids. Make sure the audience will be able to see you and your visual aids.
- Arrange for any equipment you will need and for furniture to be moved, if necessary.
- Make a checklist of items that should be taken care of so the room is properly prepared, as well as items you need to bring.
- The day of the speech, pay careful attention to dress and good grooming. Check your appearance in strong light in a full-length mirror.
- Run through your checklist before leaving home.
- Arrive early. Look again at your checklist to make sure everything is arranged properly. Check to see that your visual aids are ready.
- Start on time. Keep track of your time as you talk. If you fall behind, adjust your remarks as needed so you end on time.
- Before you begin to speak, take a deep breath, scan the audience for friendly faces, and smile.
**Figure 13-3** An evaluation form can provide valuable feedback from the audience.

**PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the appropriate response for each statement. Thank you for your feedback.

1. The presenter seemed professional and knowledgeable about the topic. | No | Yes | Somewhat |
2. The content of the presentation will be helpful to me. | |
3. The visual aids were helpful and appropriate. | |
4. The handouts were helpful and appropriate. | |
5. Enough time was allowed for questions and answers. | |
6. The overall time allowed for the presentation was appropriate. | |
7. The room was comfortable. | |
8. I would recommend this presentation to others. | |

Comments:

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1. Why are voice qualities and other nonverbal symbols important when delivering a speech?
2. Why is getting audience feedback on a presentation important?

Check your answers in Appendix C.
### CHECKLIST FOR POSITIVE OR NEUTRAL MESSAGES

- Keep the objective of the presentation in mind.
- Keep the listeners' needs in mind.
- Know the subject of the presentation well.
- Practice your speech until you can present it comfortably.
- Record your speech to provide feedback for improving your delivery.
- Dress appropriately and be well groomed.
- Start and finish your speech on time.
- Use your voice effectively. Speak clearly, project your voice, vary your tone, and use correct grammar.
- Use nonverbal gestures effectively.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- Speak with enthusiasm and conviction.
- Keep your energy level high.
- In the closing, summarize the main points or review the action you want listeners to take.
Section 13.1 Applications

A. Plan a Formal Presentation

1. Identify a topic or problem to be researched and studied for a formal presentation. Ask your teacher to approve the topic.

2. Write a statement that identifies the objective of the presentation.

3. Determine the scope of the speech. Decide what related areas will and will not be included in the speech. The speech should take 10 to 15 minutes, including 2 or 3 minutes for questions.

4. Develop a timeline for completing the speech. Start with the date your teacher gives you for completing the speech. Work backward from that date to create a timeline. (Allow plenty of time to practice the speech.)

B. Research and Write a Presentation

1. Do research for the speech you identified in Application A. Decide whether primary research, such as collecting data from a survey, or secondary research is appropriate for the speech. You might want to do both types of research.

2. Gather the data. Evaluate each source of data that you use to determine whether it is relevant, accurate, current, reliable, and unbiased.

3. Create a bibliography note and one or more research notes for each secondary data source you use.

4. Decide on an order (direct or indirect) for the speech and create a topic outline.

5. Write extensive notes that you can use to practice the speech. Organize the notes by the parts of the speech—introduction, body, and closing—according to your outline.

6. Identify visual aids that you might use in the presentation. You will create the visual aids, practice the speech, and deliver the speech in Section 13.2.
Chapter 13  Presentations and Meetings

13.2 Visual Aids in Presentations

**OBJECTIVES**
After completing Section 13.2, you should be able to:

1. Choose an appropriate visual aid that will help the receiver better understand your message.
2. Prepare visual aids that are well received.
3. Use visual aids in a professional manner during an oral presentation.

**Types of Visual Aids**

Effective use of visual aids can make speakers appear better prepared and more credible than speakers who did not use visuals. To determine whether you need visual aids in a presentation, consider these three questions:

- Will visual aids help clarify the message?
- Will visual aids add interest to the presentation?
- Will visual aids help the audience remember what was said?

If you answer yes to any of those questions, you should use visual aids in your presentation. Many types of visual aids can be used. In Chapter 10, you learned about creating charts and graphs and using digital pictures and maps in reports. These visual aids can also be used in presentations. Visual aids can be displayed using posters, flip charts, transparencies, slides (film or electronic), whiteboards, and other means.

**Posters and Flip Charts**

Posters and flip charts are similar in size, and both generally are displayed on an easel. For posters, prepare your visuals ahead of time. For flip charts, either prepare your visuals ahead of time and flip through the pad as you speak or draw or write your visuals as you speak.

When using a flip chart, think about the data you are presenting. The data should be easy to read and well organized. To achieve those goals, use appropriate headings and color. Make sure your writing is easy to read. Stand to the side (as much as you can) when writing on the flip chart during a presentation. Stand beside the flip chart (not in front of it) when talking about the data on the flip chart.

**Transparencies, Slides, and Computer Presentations**

Generally, the content of transparencies and slides is very similar. They may both be created using a software program such as Microsoft PowerPoint. The difference lies in how your audience views the visual aid.

- With transparencies, images are transferred to clear acetate film and projected on a screen, using an overhead projector.
With film slides, images are transferred to 35 mm film. The slides are placed in a slide carousel and projected on a screen, using a slide projector.

With electronic slides, images are created using computer software. They are then saved to a file. When giving the presentation, you open the file and show the images one at a time. As your slides appear on a computer monitor, your audience sees the projected image enlarged on a screen.

Figure 13-4 illustrates one option for projecting a computer presentation using a laptop computer, a projector, and a projection screen.

Computer software allows you to create a multimedia presentation. The presentation can include features such as sound and animation. Animation is the technique of making text or visuals appear to move in film or computer graphics. Short pieces of video may also be included. Video is the transmission of moving pictures to a monitor or television. Music can be used effectively with transitions from one slide to the next. By adding those special features, you can create a visually stimulating presentation.

Be careful not to overuse music, sound, or video. For example, if you use sound too often or if the sound is too loud, audience members may lose their focus on the content of the presentation. They may focus instead on the irritating sounds.

If some audience members are hearing impaired, you may need to arrange for an interpreter to deliver the message in American Sign Language.
**Objects**

The audience can view three-dimensional objects presented from the front of the room or passed among audience participants. This method works well provided the object is large enough and the crowd is small enough. With smaller objects and larger audiences, however, the object should be projected on-screen. A visual presenter, such as the one shown in Figure 13-5, can be used for this purpose. A visual presenter has a color video camera mounted on a movable arm. Items are placed on a base or stage. Some presenters have side or bottom lights to illuminate the objects placed on the base. The camera can show an image of the entire object or it can zoom in for close-up views.

**Chalkboards, Whiteboards, and Electronic Whiteboards**

A familiar visual aid used in schools, the blackboard, now comes in an electronic version. Just as chalk is used to write on a green or black erasable hard board, colorful markers can be used to write on an erasable whiteboard. An **electronic whiteboard** is a device that can scan text and images written on it. The scanned text and images can then be sent to a computer, printed, or faxed. Some electronic whiteboards work with projectors and allow users to write notes that are projected on a screen.

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**Key Point**

An electronic whiteboard is a device that can scan text and images written on it and send the images to a computer or printer.

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![Figure 13-5 A visual presenter can be used to project an object.](PHOTO PROVIDED BY: ELMO USA CORP WWW.ELMOUSA.COM)
Handouts

You may want to give handouts to audience members. A handout is a page(s) that contains text or images related to a presentation or other topic. Handouts can be given to the audience members at various times. If you plan to give the handout at the beginning of the presentation, include only brief points and a place to take notes. Do not include all the points in the presentation. If all the points are included, audience members may start looking at the handout instead of listening to your talk.

A handout given during a presentation can be used to provide detailed information about a particular point you are making. A handout distributed at the end of a presentation can be used to supply reference materials for your audience to use later.

Ethics

Remember to include the proper source citations for any material in handouts that is not your original material. Permission may be required for some material.

Choosing Appropriate Visual Aids

When planning a presentation, you must decide which visual aids would be the best choice. Equipment available, audience needs, and preparation time are factors you should consider.

Equipment Available

Consider the equipment you have available where you will be making your presentation. Some options, such as electronic slides or an electronic whiteboard, require that you have access to special equipment. If you are using posters, you will need an easel or display board. Before you make your visual aids, check that everything you will need is available.

Audience Needs

Consider the options that will be best in helping your audience understand and remember your message. You might prefer to use a chalkboard to display notes. However, if some other option would help your audience understand and remember your message, then use the more appropriate visual aid.
Consider the number of people who will be in your audience and the room size. If you will be speaking to a small group, a poster or flip chart might be appropriate. For larger audiences, use other options. In most situations, computer presentations are a good choice.

Determine the amount of detail your audience needs. Consider using more than one type of visual aid. If you have a lot of detail to present, you might use transparencies or slides to present the main points. You might use handouts to provide more details.

**Preparation Time**

Determine how much time you have to prepare your visual aids. Time can be a limiting factor. If you have little time to prepare, writing key points on a whiteboard as you speak may be your only option. However, if you have the time, you may want to prepare transparencies or electronic slides.

**Preparing Visual Aids**

You should use enough visual aids to keep the audience’s attention but not so many that the audience is overwhelmed. For most cases, visual aids (other than handouts) should simple and brief. Detailed and complex visual aids that are displayed on a screen will be hard for the audience to understand. Visual aids should be concise, easy to read, and interesting.

**Number of Visual Aids**

Prepare an acceptable number of visual aids. Do not use so many visual aids that your audience gets overwhelmed with them or so few that your audience gets bored. If, for example, you show a new slide every 12 seconds for the 20 minutes, your audience may quickly become burned out. As a general rule, present a new visual about every two minutes.

Limit the number of visual aids needed by placing only the main points of the speech on a slide or transparency. For example, instead of writing out a
complete sentence for one of your points, use key words to convey its meaning. Your oral explanation should provide the necessary details. When you have a complicated concept to present, break it down into smaller parts. Present the information in two or more parts instead of one.

**Size, Color, Motion, and Sound**

Visual aids should be large enough for the audience to see and read easily. Set up your visual aids in the front of the room in which you will be making your presentation. Then sit in a back seat in the room. If you can comfortably see everything (text, pictures, labels on graphics, objects, etc.), your visual aids are fine. If you have to strain to see anything, redo the visual aids so everyone in the audience will be able to see them.

Use color for emphasis and interest. Audience members will expect colorful visual aids. Color scanners, color printers, and color markers allow you to add color to your visuals easily. Select colors carefully. The improper use of color can become a distraction or make visuals hard to read. For example, yellow text written on white poster board cannot be seen clearly from a distance.

A common problem in slides is caused by the misuse of color. In general, contrasting colors work well—that is, dark letters on a light background or light letters on a dark background. Bullet points can be set to turn gray or another light color as you move to a new point. This method emphasizes the point being discussed, as shown in Figure 13-6.

**Figure 13-6 Color can be used to add interest to visual aids.**

Prepare a Resume
- Chronological resume
- Functional resume
- Electronic resume
- References
Avoid colors that do not project well; red, for example. As explained earlier, you should view the visuals in the room where they will be used (or a similar setting) to make sure they are easy to read.

Use motion and sound in visuals to add interest and provide content not easily supplied by other means. For example, you might include a short video of the company president welcoming new employees in an employee orientation meeting. You might use sound to signal an important transition or conclusion in your speech. Bullet points on electronic slides can be animated to appear one at a time. This method is helpful when two or more points are on one slide, but you want to discuss them one at a time.

1. How can you determine the number of visual aids to use when delivering a speech?
2. How can you determine whether the size and colors used on your visual aids are effective?

Check your answers in Appendix C.

Presenting Your Visual Aids

Following some simple guidelines will help you be effective as you use visual aids during your presentation. You want the visual aids to enhance your speech—not be a distraction for listeners. You need to practice with your visual aids until you can use them smoothly.

Prevent Distractions

Know when to reveal your visual aids or their content. Revealing the content too soon can distract listeners. For example, if you place a poster on an easel at the beginning of your presentation but do not use the poster until after the introduction, some audience members may become distracted by the poster during your introduction. A better approach is to use a blank poster board to cover the poster. Remove the blank poster board when you are ready to display the one behind it.

A visual aid also can become a distraction when you display all of the points on it before you are ready to talk about them. For example, if a slide has three bulleted points that make up the outline of your presentation, do not display all the points as you begin talking about the first point. Because all three points are visible, some audience members will begin looking ahead to see what comes next. Instead of revealing all three points at once, reveal only...
Reading Onscreen

Much of the information used for research or general information is available in electronic format. Users read e-mail messages, blogs, Web sites, and other documents on computer monitors. Reading onscreen is somewhat different from reading a printed document. For example, the line lengths used in an onscreen document may be much longer than those typically used in a printed document. The text size may be much smaller or larger than in printed documents. You may need to look away from the text to click a scroll bar or a button to move to a new section of text. Returning to the exact spot where you were reading can be difficult. You may need to scan a paragraph to find your place. All these factors can make reading onscreen more difficult than reading printed documents.

You can overcome some of the difficulties of reading onscreen. For example, in a word processing program or a Web browser, you can change the zoom or the font size to one that is larger or smaller to make reading easier. You can resize the window or reset the margins to control the line length. You can place your pointer on the scroll bar arrow or the Next button before beginning to read so that you do not have to look away from your reading. If a page is very hard to read onscreen because of design elements or annoying popup windows or banners, you may be able to copy and paste the text into a word processing program and read it there—without the distractions. You could also print the document.

Open the Word file CH13 Reading from the student data files. Follow the directions in the exercise to practice adjustments for reading onscreen.

Practice Using Visual Aids

You need to have a dress rehearsal for a speech, particularly if you are using visual aids. Go to the room where you will speak, if possible. Practice your speech, using your visual aids. Make sure you know how to turn all equipment on and off, to focus the image, and to position equipment so everyone in the
room can see the visual aids. If you are going to use equipment, such as an electronic whiteboard or slides, make sure all of the equipment is working and that all of the equipment works together. You do not want your audience to wait while you try to get the equipment up and running.

Face the audience when using your visual aids. Audience members prefer to see the front of you. Also, when you speak, the audience can hear you better when you are facing them rather than a screen. When using a pointer, hold the pointer in the hand closest to the visual aid. By holding the pointer in that hand, you avoid turning your back to the audience. When using transparencies, read while facing an overhead projector, rather than turning around to read from the screen. Likewise, when using electronic slides, read from your computer monitor rather than turning toward the projected image.

**Key Point**
Face the audience when using your visual aids. The listeners can hear you better when you are facing them rather than a screen.

1. **Why it is important to make sure all the equipment you will use is working properly well before you begin the speech?**
2. **Should you look at the screen at the front of the room or at your audience when discussing a visual aid? Why?**

Check your answers in Appendix C.
Section 13.2 Applications

A. Prepare Visual Aids

1. In Section 13.1, you planned visual aids for a formal presentation. Review that plan and determine if you want to make any changes based on what you have learned in this section.

2. Create the visual aids for the presentation.

3. View the visual aids from the back of the room where you will give the presentation (or a similar setting).

4. Make updates to the visual aids, if needed.

B. Create an Evaluation Form

1. Create an evaluation form that you can use to gain feedback on your presentation. See Figure 13-3 on page 491 for an example form.

2. Print several copies of the form, one for each person who will hear your presentation.

C. Deliver a Presentation

1. Practice the presentation you have prepared, using the visual aids. If possible, video tape your presentation and then review the tape.

2. As further practice, deliver your presentation to one or two classmates. Ask for feedback for improving your delivery.

3. Deliver the presentation to the class or to a group of your classmates.

4. Ask your classmates to complete the evaluation form you prepared earlier, giving feedback on your presentation.

5. Review the feedback you received. Write a paragraph that highlights the strong points of your presentation and lists areas you need to improve in future presentations.
13.3

Effective Meetings

Types of Meetings

Meetings are an important part of business operations. There are staff meetings, training sessions, and conferences with clients. A meeting may take place with a supervisor and one employee, a group of colleagues, or employees and clients. Many companies have adopted a team approach. Employees from different departments (and even from different locations) work together to solve problems, exchange ideas, and share responsibilities.

In the workplace, you may take part in various kinds of meetings. You may belong to several committees within your organization. For instance, you may belong to a standing committee, such as a customer relations committee. This type of group is a permanent part of the organization and meets regularly. You also may be part of an ad hoc committee. This temporary group meets for a specific purpose, such as planning a holiday party. A task force is a group charged with completing a specific job within a certain time. For example, a task force might write new procedures for business travel.

Key Point
Many companies use a team approach in which employees from different departments work together to solve problems, exchange ideas, and share responsibilities.

Employees meet with clients to discuss business projects.
You have learned that many companies now use teleconferences or Web conferences. These meetings are conducted for attendees at different locations via telephone, video, and computer. Teleconferences save on travel time and expense.

Meeting Documents

Two documents that you will use and that you may need to prepare for meetings are agendas and minutes.

Agendas

An agenda is a document that lists the topics to be discussed during a meeting. The person who calls or organizes the meeting usually prepares the agenda. The agenda is often distributed in advance so people can prepare for the meeting. Sometimes the tasks of preparing and distributing the agenda are done by an assistant. Groups that meet more than once may appoint a secretary who composes and sends the agenda.

The agenda may be sent as an e-mail attachment or as hard copy. It may be included with the initial message that tells attendees about the meeting or sent later. The meeting announcement is usually by e-mail, memo, or fax and includes the date, time, length, and location of the meeting. Agendas help keep people focused on the scheduled topics for a meeting. Both the leader and participants can use the agenda as a guide.

Plan and Organize Agendas

To plan an agenda, you must know the objective of the meeting. You also need a list of topics to be discussed. For each topic, note the name of the person or group that will lead the discussion. Ask that person how long the discussion will take. If your group includes committees, contact the head of each committee. Ask whether the committee has anything to present and how much time it needs. If your group has met previously, look at the minutes from the last meeting. Determine whether there was any unfinished business from that meeting that needs to be addressed in this one.

Agendas are organized in different ways depending on the objective of the meeting. Very formal meetings follow Robert’s Rules of Order. These rules are a set of guidelines for parliamentary procedure. In business, meetings with such a high level of formality are rare. Still, many organizations use certain features of Robert’s Rules of Order to keep meetings orderly. For instance, a meeting often begins with a call to order and ends with adjournment. When a group of people meets for the first time or when new people are added to the group, the leader should review the meeting rules that everyone should follow.
An agenda is used as a discussion guide as well as a planning document. It should include every topic that will be discussed during the meeting. When you have all of the information, total the time estimates. If you will not have enough time for all of the items, you may need to postpone items or ask some attendees to be prepared to discuss their topic in less time.

**Format Agendas**

Some organizations have a preferred format for agendas. If yours does not, use the format shown in Figure 13-7 on page 507. Use two inches for the top margin and default side margins. Use the Title and Subtitle styles (or manually set fonts) for the title and subtitle. Note that leaders are used between the topic and the name of the person leading the discussion. Generally, an agenda includes the following information:

1. A heading that gives the general topic of the meeting, the date and time, and sometimes other information such as the location
2. A list of topics to be discussed, with the name of the person who will lead the discussion and the amount of time it will take for each one
3. Attachments that provide information about some of the topics

**Minutes**

Minutes are the official record of the proceedings of a meeting. The most common type of minutes, action minutes, summarize topics discussed, decisions made, and actions to be taken. Minutes are sent to people who attended the meeting and to people who were invited but could not attend. On occasion, minutes also are sent to others, such as senior managers or peers, whose work is affected by decisions made during the meeting.

**Plan and Organize Minutes**

Before the meeting takes place, decide who will take notes at the meeting. For groups that meet more than once, the group may appoint one member to record the minutes. The content of minutes varies depending on the group. Minutes for most meetings consist of a summary of the discussions or action taken.

If you will be preparing minutes, find out before the meeting how detailed they should be. Use previous minutes as a guide. If none are available, talk with the person who has called the meeting. If everything said at the meeting must be recorded, arrange for an audio recording. After the meeting, transcribe the recording or have someone else do it. If you are summarizing and not recording, take careful, detailed notes. Use your best active listening skills and have a copy of the agenda in front of you. Note any items that are discussed out of order.
Alumni Council

Meeting Agenda, May 1, 20..., 6:30 p.m., North Meeting Room

6:30 – 6:35  Call to Order  ................................................................. James Kepler
6:35 – 6:40  Approval of Minutes from April Meeting  ........... James Kepler
6:40 - 7:00  Trustee Report  ............................................................... James Kepler
7:00 – 7:15  Annual Fund Update ...................................................... Melisenda Vega
7:15 – 7:30  Nominating Committee Report  ...................... Madison Tesco
7:30 – 7:50  Upcoming Events
    Business Lunch – June 6 ........................................................ Arao Kato
    Senior Dinner – June 1 ............................................................ Nina Williams
7:50 – 7:55  Announcements ............................................................ James Kepler
7:55 – 8:00  Adjournment ............................................................... James Kepler
Prepare the minutes within a day or two after the meeting so you are less likely to forget items. Issuing minutes promptly gives recipients information that may affect their work. Minutes may be sent as a printed document, as an attachment to an e-mail, or faxed.\(^1\)

Confidential information may be discussed at a meeting and noted in the meeting minutes. Do not send minutes that contain confidential information as an e-mail attachment. Use caution when sending such minutes by fax. Make sure the person who should see the minutes is waiting to receive the fax so that it will not be read by others.

**Format Minutes**

Some organizations have a preferred format for minutes. If yours does not, use the format shown in Figure 13-8 page 509. Use two inches for the top margin and default side margins. Use the heading styles or manually set fonts for the title, subtitle, and body headings. For minutes that are more than one page, use an appropriate heading on the other pages. For example, use the title of the meeting and the page number. Minutes usually include the following information:

1. The general topic, date, time, and place of the meeting
2. The names of the presiding officer or meeting leader and attendees
3. Summaries of topics discussed and actions to be taken, in order of discussion
4. Attached handouts and meeting materials (optional)

**Participation in Meetings**

You should show interest and take an active part in meetings you attend for work. Be aware that your conduct in meetings—what you do, what you say, and how you say it—sends a message about your attitudes, abilities, and competence. This section of the chapter discusses communicating in meetings. Meetings are most likely to yield good results when they have active participants, organization, and effective leadership.

Technology Advocacy Group

Meeting Minutes, March 24, 20--

Call to Order
The Technology Advocacy Group met on March 24, 20-- in Conference Room B. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Kurt Beckley chaired the meeting. Other team members present were Aileen Dumont, Shanyou Han, Janelle Mahoney, Matthew Armando, and Danni Winters.

Minutes
The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved with no changes.

Blogs and Personal Web Sites
Danni raised the issue of setting standards for appropriate content in student blogs and personal Web sites. She noted that other schools have had problems recently with content on blogs and Web sites. The group discussed the issues of privacy and freedom of expression. The group voted to have Janelle conduct a focus group with five students from each class. The purpose of the focus group is to get input from the students on possible changes to the standards.

Tablet Conference
Aileen reported on the tablet conference that was held last Friday. Attendees liked the hands-on approach used at the conference. Aileen remarked that more support personnel would be helpful for setting up the conference room. The group voted to ask three students to help provide support at future conferences. Before the next conference, the group will give Aileen the names of students who might be asked to help.

Aileen reported that the remaining three conferences for this year are already filled. The group voted to recommend adding two more conferences to be held this year in September and October. Shanyou will draft a memo to Dr. Stribling requesting the extra conferences. He will send the memo to group members for comments by e-mail before sending the final document to Dr. Stribling.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 20--.

Kurt Beckley, Group Chairperson
Prepare to Take Part

Some meetings require preparation before the meeting. When you receive the agenda for the meeting, review it carefully. Write down any questions you would like to ask. If you need some background on an agenda item, do research to educate yourself. Read any attachments to the agenda.

If a meeting has been called to make a decision, be ready to support your point of view. Disagreeing with others in a meeting is acceptable behavior. Few managers want people who have no opinions of their own. Instead, they want people who voice thoughtful opinions and who bring up points the group should consider. Write down the things you want to say so you will remember them. Come to a meeting prepared—ready to listen as well as to speak—and remain focused on the objective of the meeting.

Arrive on Time

Strive to be on time for meetings. Timeliness sends a nonverbal message that you are dependable and that you believe the meeting is important. Tardiness sends the opposite message. Make a habit of arriving early. Do not allow work, unexpected conversations, or other factors to delay you.

If you are not familiar with the location of a meeting, get directions beforehand. Find a place where you know you can park for as long as necessary at the time of day of the meeting. Allow yourself extra time that day in case traffic is heavier than you anticipated or you make a wrong turn. If you must arrive late for a meeting, notify the leader. When you enter, take your seat without interrupting.
Improve Decision Making

When members of a group are reluctant to make a decision, the group needs to find the source of the reluctance and move the discussion forward. One way to do that is to ask a probing question, such as “Does anyone need more information about the software?”

Sometimes a group gets bogged down in the process of making a decision. People ask for more information or get sidetracked on unimportant issues. When such things happen, the meeting leader should try to close the discussion and refocus members on the present task. The leader should be tactful but firm. For example, say something like, “Now that we have all of the information we need about the software, we can proceed to costs.” Another example is: “Janet has brought up some important concerns that we can look at closely the next time we meet. Today, though, we need to make a decision about costs.”

The opposite problem occurs when the group is preparing to make a decision before it is ready. In that case, express your concerns directly or ask questions that will yield information or raise matters you think should be considered. You could say, “I’ve listened carefully to everything the committee has told us, but I still have some questions. Edith, tell me again why you think the software will help us maintain inventory.” Even if the group does not agree with you, your hesitation probably will create more discussion.

One pitfall that groups need to guard against is groupthink. This phenomenon was studied by psychologist Irving L. Janis. Groupthink occurs when the members of a group tend to suppress their own ideas. They desire agreement more than quality decisions.2 As a group member, you have a duty to listen to and consider different points of view. You also have a duty to state your own point of view when you think a decision is wrong.

Make a Positive Impact

The following suggestions will help you make a positive impact on any group of which you are a part.

◼ Be willing to listen. Groups work best when participants are open to new information and points of view.
◼ Speak briefly and directly. Speak in a clear, organized manner so others will want to hear.
◼ Do not have a private conversation with someone during the meeting. Speak to the group and focus on the agenda topics.
◼ Do not take phone calls during a meeting unless they relate to the business of the meeting.

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Key Point

The leader of the meeting should keep the group focused and lead them through the decision-making process.

Diversity

People with different backgrounds or education may have very different ideas about an issue. Be willing to listen and consider other points of view.
Discuss ideas. To discuss is to exchange ideas; to argue is to become emotional and unreasonable. Arguments often start when participants put their ideas ahead of group objectives and refuse to listen to differing points of view.

Avoid personal attacks. Mutual respect is a key to group functioning.

Engage in fair play. Give everyone the opportunity to speak; do not dominate the discussion.

Use body language to your advantage. Make eye contact when you begin speaking, speak slowly and calmly even when excited, and make sure your posture communicates authority and confidence.

Take notes that will help you remember what is said, complete tasks, and prepare for any future meetings. Even if the group has a secretary who takes minutes, you still need to take notes on matters of importance to you.

Figure 13-9 summarizes do’s and don’ts for meeting participants.

**Figure 13-9 Guidelines for Meeting Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING PARTICIPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DO’S</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrive on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be concise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate actively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the group arrive at sound decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State positions clearly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow the agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss ideas willingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in fair play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support group decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organize Productive Meetings

When considering holding a meeting, determine whether a meeting is the best way to accomplish your goals. When a meeting is needed, you can help make it productive by defining the objective, determining the type of meeting to hold, choosing participants carefully, and taking care of related details.

Define the Objective

An effective leader recognizes what a group can and cannot do. For example, entry-level managers do not develop company policy. Corporate directors develop company policy, but they do not gather routine information. That job usually is done by employees at a lower level. Look carefully at the purpose of the meeting. Determine what the group should accomplish. Plan to state the objective clearly at the beginning of the meeting.

Trying to do too much makes meetings frustrating, disorganized, and unproductive. Set a reasonable time limit for the meeting. Begin and end the meeting on time. Restrict the content of a meeting to its stated purpose. Although, under certain conditions, a meeting can have two or more purposes, you should generally call separate meetings in such instances. The rule is “one objective—one meeting.” Do the same when a task is too large to accomplish in a single meeting. Divide the task into workable parts and plan separate meetings.

Determine the Type of Meeting

With your objective in mind, consider again whether a meeting is the best way to accomplish the objective. For example, can employees be informed of a new company policy in a memo rather than in a meeting? If a meeting is needed, identify the type of meeting.

With the objective identified, you can easily determine what type of meeting to hold. Meetings can be held to inform, develop new ideas, make decisions, delegate work, collaborate, and persuade. Determining the type of meeting makes organizing it easier.
To Inform

Meetings are often held to inform people about work-related issues. For example, employees might be told about benefit options for the coming year. Handouts that meeting participants can study after the meeting may be provided. Questions may be answered about materials that were given out before the meeting.

When a meeting is held to inform, determine whether direct or indirect order is best for discussing the topics. When you think the meeting participants will readily accept the ideas or decisions being presented, use direct order. Use indirect order when you want to present supporting information before presenting the main idea.

To Develop New Ideas

Meetings may be held to develop or improve procedures, programs, or products. A common technique used in such meetings is brainstorming. Brainstorming is thinking of every possible idea about a topic. The goal is to generate ideas. No one criticizes anyone’s ideas. The ideas are not evaluated until after the brainstorming session. If you decide to use brainstorming, invite a diverse group of people. Plan to state ground rules before brainstorming begins and appoint someone to record ideas.

To Make Decisions

Decision-making meetings bring people together to discuss an issue and raise points that should be considered. When planning this type of meeting, you may find it useful to ask for information beforehand. The information can be provided with the agenda. As the leader, you should establish ground rules for the discussion. Deciding by consensus—with all members taking part and accepting the decision—is an effective method. At some meetings, a person in authority will make the final decision after hearing discussion on the issue.

To Delegate Work

Meetings to delegate are held to assign tasks to people or groups. Although you can assign tasks over the telephone or by e-mail, you may need to hold a meeting to clarify details. You might want to get volunteers or determine who would be best at handling each task. Meetings to delegate often are followed by informational and decision-making meetings.

To Collaborate

Meetings held to collaborate are sessions in which people work together to accomplish a task. For example, they might organize a complex report. Collaborative efforts succeed only when people work together as a team. For this type of meeting, make sure that whatever supplies and equipment the team needs to work together are provided.
To Persuade

When meeting to persuade, people attempt to gain support for a course of action. For example, an engineer may try to convince company managers to develop a new product. A manager may try to convince employees to follow safety procedures.

Choose Participants Carefully

Communication in a meeting works best when everyone has a reason for attending and can contribute to the discussion. When more than one person has the same expertise or point of view, choose only one to join the group. If you can choose, select people you know will be effective participants.

Company policies may affect who should be invited to a meeting. In some companies, meetings usually are attended by people on the same organizational level. In other companies, people from various levels may take part in the same meeting.

Handle Meeting Details

Many details must be handled to have a successful meeting. They include various tasks, such as scheduling the meeting, creating an agenda, and securing equipment and supplies. Taking care of meeting details shows attendees that you value their time and appreciate their input.

Schedule for Convenience

Schedule a meeting at a date and time that is convenient for participants. One way to do that is to offer a selection of dates and times. Ask people to indicate which two or three dates would be best for them. Some companies
have calendaring software that makes employees’ schedules and appointments available to coworkers. Coworkers can look at the schedules of the people they want to attend a meeting to see when people are free. This method is very helpful in selecting two or three possible dates for a meeting. Windows Calendar, shown in Figure 13-10 on page 517, allows users to publish a calendar to the Internet, a network location, or a computer.

Early morning and right after lunch are popular meeting times. Many businesspeople hold working breakfasts, lunches, or dinners with food served at the meeting.

Invitations are usually extended by e-mail or phone. Advantages of e-mail are that participants have a written record of the invitation. They can take time in consulting their calendars and replying. When you need an immediate reply or are inviting only a few people, phoning may be a better choice. If you write, include a date by which people should let you know if they can attend. When that date arrives, call anyone who has not responded.

**Create an Agenda**

Creating an agenda was discussed earlier in the chapter. When composing the agenda, contact people who may have something to present to find out how much time they will need. Send the agenda and any background materials well in advance of the meeting. Plan to bring extra copies to the meeting in case anyone needs them. If you do not have a person who takes minutes regularly, arrange for someone to take minutes. Make sure that person understands what information to record.

**Select an Appropriate Site**

A meeting may be held in an office, in a conference room, or at an outside location. Select a location that provides the amount of space needed and that is convenient for the group. For example, you may need a table to hold papers or a projector that is available only in a conference room. If most of the people who will attend the meeting work in one location, it makes sense to schedule the meeting at that location. A room with new furniture or a scenic view provides a pleasant working environment.

**Arrange the Furniture**

Arrange the furniture sensibly for all concerned. Often, everyone, including the leader, sits around a table. Check that presenters will be able to see the audience and will have the space they need. Ensure that each person will be able to see the presenter and everyone else. Make sure visual aids can be seen clearly from any seat. If you plan to offer refreshments, place them so people will not have to cross in front of others.
Secure Equipment and Supplies

Make sure the room is equipped with everything that participants will need and that equipment is working properly. Some examples of equipment and supplies that you might require are a speakerphone, computers, a whiteboard, a projector, microphones, an audio recorder, notepads, name tags, and pens or pencils.

Provide for Comfort

The last step in meeting mechanics is to provide for the comfort of participants. Make water, juice, coffee, and tea available. If you are meeting early in the morning, consider bringing in doughnuts, bagels, and muffins. For working breakfasts, lunches, or dinners, choose a vendor whose food and service you know is good from personal experience or who is recommended by someone reliable. Try to anticipate the needs and preferences of the various people who will be attending. For example, if the meeting will include lunch or dinner, vegetarian or kosher offerings might be appropriate. Plan for breaks during long meetings.

Key Point

Make sure the meeting room is equipped with everything that participants will need and that equipment is working properly.
Lead Meetings Effectively

How a leader conducts a meeting has a great deal to do with how successful the meeting will be. The leader should begin the meeting on time. If some participants do not know each other, the leader should introduce them or ask people to introduce themselves to the group. The leader should state the objective of the meeting and the tasks to be accomplished.

Use the Agenda

Use the agenda to ensure that topics are discussed in order and within the time allotted. As each agenda item is dispensed with, summarize points of agreement and disagreement. Outline any actions that will be taken.

A common problem is for participants to stray from the topic. Their attention drifts to other issues, or they begin telling personal stories. Remain polite and friendly, but keep the group on track. When people ramble, a good approach is to summarize what you think they meant to say and to ask a question that will point them in the right direction.

Another common problem is spending too much time on an agenda item. If it looks as though a presentation or discussion will exceed the time allotted, decide whether extra time is needed. If it is not, tell the presenter or group how much time remains and request a summing up or conclusion within that time. If more time is needed, you must decide whether to take time from other agenda items or to revisit the topic at another meeting.

Encourage Participation

Encourage people to share their thoughts. If a discussion is slow getting started, try posing an open-ended question, one that requires more than a simple yes or no answer. For example, you might ask, “What sorts of changes can we make to our basic shop operations to reduce pollution?”
Encourage quiet people to join in by asking direct, specific questions such as, “Gino, will adding this program overload the existing computer system?” When people talk about an area they know well, their shyness often disappears. Although you cannot force people to participate, you can provide a positive setting.

Make sure that ideas are communicated clearly and that everyone understands them. Be alert for puzzled looks and other signs of confusion. When participants do not grasp a concept, restate in your own words what you think the speaker is saying. “I believe Ramon is telling us that, according to these surveys, there is not enough interest among our customers to justify offering this product.” If you are not sure what the speaker means, ask a clarifying question. For example, you might say, “Heather, I don’t understand what a proxy server does. Can you explain it to us?”

**Handle Difficult People**

Handling difficult people is the greatest challenge any meeting leader faces. Sometimes a person is being difficult because he or she is unable to express a concern. This person may think the group has not understood or considered the concern adequately. If you think a difficult person has a legitimate concern, ask questions to try to identify the problem. Be respectful, listen actively, and keep an open mind.

If the behavior persists, keep your composure. Do not respond to the person’s arguments point for point. As one consultant suggests, “Act rather than react.” Keep your remarks brief and focus on the issue or areas of agreement rather than on personalities. A good strategy is to use the agenda or a technical point to move the discussion to another topic.

Sometimes one person wants to dominate the conversation. To discourage an overly eager contributor, you could say something like, “Chris, we

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have a lot to cover. We can spend only five more minutes on this topic.” If Chris continues to talk, interrupt and redirect the discussion to another person. Say, for example, “Your experiences point to the need to communicate with consumers. Kelly, can you fill us in on the advertising plan?”

**Be Professional**

The leader sets the tone for the meeting through fairness, work ethic, and control. The following steps show your ability as a leader.

- **Recognize everyone’s contributions.** Participants who believe that their insights are valued will continue to contribute. Even if a proposal has problems, focus on the positive aspects and lead the group forward.

- **Maintain high standards.** Do not accept poor work or opinions that are stated as facts. When participants do not have information the group needs, postpone the meeting, if possible.

- **Maintain order.** Make sure the meeting follows the agenda. Allow only one person to speak at a time and discourage private conversations.

**End Appropriately**

At the end of a meeting, summarize what has been covered and move the group ahead to future action. List items that need further consideration. Review assignments and deadlines for future work. If the group must meet again, explain that you will communicate with everyone soon regarding the date and time. Finally, thank participants for their time and efforts.

**Check point 11**

1. How can an agenda be used during a meeting?
2. What strategies can you use to handle difficult people during a meeting?

Check your answers in Appendix C.
Section 13.3 Applications

A. Meeting to Develop Ideas
1. Form a group with three or four other students. The group will serve as a Fundraising Committee.
2. You have been appointed to record minutes. (In a real meeting, only one person would prepare minutes. In this application, each person will prepare minutes as a learning exercise.)
3. Hold a brainstorming session to come up with ideas for a fund-raiser that students in your school could do to benefit a local charity. Think of as many ideas as you can in five minutes. Everyone should contribute at least one idea.
4. Evaluate the ideas offered and select the two best ideas for further consideration at a later meeting. Select a charity to receive the money that is raised.
5. Key the minutes from your notes taken during the meeting.

B. Meeting Details and Agenda
You are planning a follow-up meeting in which you will assign tasks for the fund-raiser from Application A.
1. Determine the objective and type of meeting.
2. Plan the details.
3. Send an e-mail to the members of the committee and your teacher with the meeting information and an agenda.

C. Handling Difficult People
Difficult people cause other problems in meetings besides those discussed in the text. For example, they may make inappropriate or abusive comments.
1. Choose one negative behavior a difficult person might show at a meeting. You might draw on your experiences with clubs, sports teams, or other groups.
2. Explain how an effective leader can manage this poor behavior.
Chapter **Summary**

**13.1 Oral Presentations**

- Typical short speeches are introductions and briefings.
- A formal speech may last from 20 minutes to more than an hour and may require that you do research to find the content you need to present.
- All presentations, formal and informal, should have three main parts: an introduction, a body, and a closing.
- An outline can be a valuable tool when planning any speech. An outline is essential for long, complex speeches.
- Delivery of a presentation is as important as content. Voice qualities, nonverbal symbols, and visual aids can enhance or inhibit delivery.

**13.2 Visual Aids in Presentations**

- Effective use of visual aids can make speakers appear better prepared and more credible than speakers who do not use visuals.
- When planning a presentation, you must decide which visual aids would be the best choice. Equipment available, audience needs, and preparation time are factors you should consider.
- You should use enough visual aids to keep the audience’s attention but not so many that the audience is overwhelmed.
- You should practice with your visual aids until you can use them smoothly.

**13.3 Effective Meetings**

- Meetings are an important part of business operations.
- Two documents that you will use and that you may need to prepare for meetings are agendas and minutes.
- You should show interest and take an active part in meetings you attend for work.
- You can help make a meeting productive by defining the objective, determining the type of meeting to hold, choosing participants carefully, and taking care of related details.
- How a leader conducts a meeting has a great deal to do with how successful the meeting will be.
Vocabulary

Open the *Word* file *CH13 Vocabulary* from the student data files. Complete the exercise to review the vocabulary terms from this chapter.

- ad hoc committee
- agenda
- anecdote
- animation
- brainstorming
- briefing
- collaborate
- delegate
- demographics
- electronic whiteboard
- handout
- impromptu speech
- minutes
- multimedia presentation
- standing committee
- task force
- topical outline
- video

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What may happen if you do not practice your speech so you can deliver it within the allotted time?
2. What may be the result if you do not consider your audience when planning a speech?
3. Why is trying to deliver a speech that you have memorized word for word not a good idea?
4. What type of visual aid do you think is most effective when giving a presentation to a small group (ten or fewer people)? Why?
5. Think of a meeting you have attended that was not very productive. Explain why you think the meeting was not productive.
Chapter Applications

A. Prepare a Speech Outline

1. Prepare a topical outline of a speech on the topic Leading Meetings Effectively. The speech should take 5 to 7 minutes to deliver. Your audience is your classmates.

2. Use the information in this chapter and articles you find on the Internet for the content of the speech. Record source information for the articles.

B. Prepare Visual Aids

1. Prepare visual aids for the speech you outlined in Application A. Use a program such as Microsoft PowerPoint to prepare electronic slides.

2. Include a title slide and one slide for each main point in the speech.

3. Use slide transitions and animate the bullet points to come on screen one at a time.

4. Use at least one photo, one piece of clip art, and one sound clip in the presentation. These items can be downloaded from the Internet.

C. Prepare Minutes

1. Visit a local civic organization or government meeting or view a meeting of the group on television. For example, you might watch a meeting of the city council on your local TV cable channel.

2. Take notes during the meeting to use in preparing minutes of the meeting.

3. Prepare minutes of the meeting using your notes. Format the minutes similar to the minutes shown in Figure 13-8 on page 509.

D. Create a Visual Aids Web Page

1. Open and print the Word file CH13 Visual Aids from the student data files. This file contains handwritten text that you will use to create a Web page.

2. Open a new Word file. Use default margins. Use the default font and spacing.

3. Key the title Visual Aids in all caps and apply the Title style.

4. Format the paragraphs after the first paragraph as bullet points.

5. Insert a photo or piece of clip art that relates to the content of the page.
6. Select an attractive background for the Web page. Add other appropriate elements, if you wish, to create an interesting and attractive page. Do not include links. Assume that the appropriate links will be added when the page is posted on the company network.

7. Save the file as a single file Web page.

8. View the file in a browser program to check the format.

9. Open the file in Word and make changes to the format, if needed, for an attractive page.

**E. Create a Digital Photo**

Digital cameras and many cell phones and handheld computers can be used to create digital photographs. These photos can be used to enhance documents and create visual aids for presentations.

1. Identify an item that you own and might want to sell, such as a bike, musical instrument, or DVD player. Use a digital camera to take a photo of the item.

2. Create an advertisement offering to sell the item that you could post online. Describe the item and include the digital photo. Provide complete information, such as the price and how you can be contacted. Proofread carefully and correct all errors before printing the ad.

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**Editing Activity**

Open the *Word* file *CH13 Editing* from the student data files. Edit the topical outline for a presentation contained in this file. Correct all spelling errors. Make the points for each slide parallel so that they all begin with a noun or they all begin with a verb.
Case Study

Team Meetings

Terry Woo started working as a member of the computer programming team at his company immediately after graduating from Gonzales Technical College. At his first team meeting, he was surprised at how little the team accomplished. They started out by discussing a project and their various ideas, but arguments arose. After about 15 minutes of arguing, the team leader closed the meeting by saying, “Well, that’s enough for today.”

At the second team meeting, the same thing happened. This pattern continued until yesterday when Terry found out that his team leader had been fired. Now Terry has been asked to take charge of the team temporarily. The supervisor explained that other team members are too emotionally upset with each other and that the team leader needs to be seen as neutral. The supervisor asked Terry to write a memo to her before the first team meeting explaining what he would do to improve team meetings.

Terry did not dare turn the supervisor down, but he is very concerned about what he should do to help his team. He wants to be sure that his meetings are effective.

1. What approach—direct or indirect—should Terry use for the memo?
2. What strategies can Terry use to improve the team meetings?
Career Case Study

Communication for Manufacturing

Kitty Lindsey is very excited. She is applying for a job as a welder at Unique Bikes in Paso Robles, California. This company is one of the premier shops in the USA that customize motorcycles. The employees work on thousands of motorcycles in a year.

As is the case with most welding positions, a high school diploma and training and experience in welding is required. The more experience, the better her chance of getting the job. As you can imagine, the welds on customized motorcycles must be neat, strong, and well done. Most of the welds will be steel to steel, but some will be specialized metals. These welds will require special training and expertise.

Kitty has a high school diploma and has completed a training course in welding. However, she is concerned because she has little experience—mainly at part-time jobs she held during high school or in the summer. However, she is a very enthusiastic, outgoing person and has some knowledge and experience with welding specialized metals. She also realizes that she is applying in a job area where most of the employees are men. Nevertheless, she wants this position and is going to the company today for an interview.

1. What roles will types of communication (oral, written, nonverbal) play in Kitty’s interview?

2. Of the three types of communication, which one will be the most important in her work if she gets the job?

3. If she gets the job, what challenges will Kitty face while at work?
Chapter 13 Answers

Checkpoint 1
1. When introducing a speaker, your purpose is to prepare the audience to accept the speaker and the speech. 
2. A briefing is a short presentation given to bring people up to date on business activities, projects, programs, or procedures. Briefings are usually given at a meeting or a conference.

Checkpoint 2
1. The following steps are involved in preparing for a formal presentation. 
   a. Determine the objective of your speech. 
   b. Analyze the audience. 
   c. Determine the time available for the speech. 
   d. Gather information for the speech. 
   e. Determine the appropriate mode of delivery.
2. Talking from notes is the most effective mode of delivery for a formal speech. This method engages the audience and allows you to make eye contact with listeners. In addition, it allows you to observe your audience's reactions and to adjust your remarks accordingly.

This page contains answers for this chapter only.
Checkpoint 3
1. Voice qualities and other nonverbal symbols are important when delivering a speech because they create an impression of the speaker. They may make the speaker seem confident and competent or nervous and unsure of the topic. Speakers that seem confident and competent are more likely to achieve the goals of the presentation.
2. Getting audience feedback on a presentation is important in determining whether the audience has understood or accepted your message.

Checkpoint 4
1. Visual aids that may be used in a presentation include:
   - Posters
   - Flip charts
   - Transparencies
   - Slides
   - Computer presentations
   - Objects
   - Chalkboards or whiteboards
   - Electronic whiteboards
   - Handouts
   (Students are to list five aids.)
2. Handouts are useful for providing detailed information to audience members.

Checkpoint 5
1. When planning visuals for a speech, you should consider the equipment available, audience needs, and preparation time.
2. The size of the audience determines, in part, which visual aids can be used effectively. If you will be speaking to a small group, a poster or flip chart might be appropriate. For larger audiences, slides, transparencies, or a computer presentation may be required.

Checkpoint 6
1. You should not use so many visual aids that your audience gets overwhelmed with them or so few that your audience gets bored. As a general rule, present a new visual about every two minutes.
2. Set up your visual aids in the front of the room in which you will be making your presentation. Then sit in a back seat in the room. If you can comfortably see everything (text, pictures, labels on graphics, objects, etc.), your visual aids are fine. If you have to strain to see anything, redo the visual aids so everyone in the audience will be able to see them.

Checkpoint 7
1. It is important to make sure all the equipment you will use is working properly well before you begin the speech because delays can result if the equipment is not working. Audience members may lose interest and even leave the session if they must wait while you try to get equipment working. If you must spend several minutes to get the equipment working, you may not have enough time remaining to present all the points in your speech as planned.
2. Face the audience when using your visual aids. Audience members prefer to see the front of you. Also, when you speak, the audience can hear you better when you are facing them rather than a screen.

Checkpoint 8
1. An ad hoc committee is a temporary group that is formed to accomplish a specific task. A standing committee is a permanent part of the organization and meets regularly to address some issue or task.
2. An agenda and minutes are two documents associated with planning and follow-up for meetings.

Checkpoint 9
1. There are several steps you can take to prepare before a meeting, as listed below.
   - When you receive the agenda for the meeting, review it carefully.
   - Write down any questions you would like to ask at the meeting.
   - If you need some background on an agenda item, do research to educate yourself.
   - Read any attachments to the agenda.
   - If a meeting has been called to make a decision, be ready to support your point of view.
2. Groupthink occurs when the members of a group tend to suppress their own ideas. They desire agreement about quality decisions. Groupthink can prevent meetings from being productive because members do not offer new ideas or solutions for problems.

Checkpoint 10
1. Details or tasks that must be handled to organize a successful meeting include:
   - Schedule for convenience
   - Create an agenda
   - Select an appropriate site
   - Arrange the furniture
   - Secure equipment and supplies
   - Provide for the comfort of those attending
2. One strategy is to offer a selection of dates and times. Ask people to indicate which two or three dates would be best for them. Some companies have calendaring software that makes employees’ schedules and appointments available to coworkers. Coworkers can look at the schedules of the people they want to attend a meeting to see when people are free. This method is very helpful in selecting two or three possible dates for a meeting.
Checkpoint 11

1. Use the agenda to ensure that topics are discussed in order and within the time allotted. As each agenda item is dispensed with, summarize points of agreement and disagreement. Outline any actions that will be taken.

2. If you think a difficult person has a legitimate concern, ask questions to try to identify the problem. Be respectful, listen actively, and keep an open mind. If the behavior persists, keep your composure. Do not respond to the person's arguments point for point. Use the agenda or a technical point to move the discussion to another topic.

This page contains answers for this chapter only.