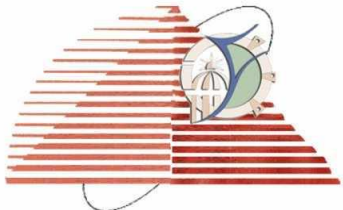


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Presentation  
&  
Communication  
Skills**



**Fayoum University**



**Faculty of Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering Dept.**

*Lecture (7)*  
*on*  
***Discussion and  
Handling of  
Presentation Questions***

*By*

***Dr. Emad M. Saad***

*Mechanical Engineering Dept.  
Faculty of Engineering  
Fayoum University*

**2015 - 2016**



# Discussion Management Characteristics

3

Function	Examples of discussion language
Raise a starting point	An important perspective we should consider first is... What do people think about...? What if the result was...? Has it occurred to you that...?
Give your opinion	As far as I'm concerned... I would say that... It's quite clear that... I think...
Agree	I take your point. I don't think any would disagree with that. That is logical. I'd go along with you on that.
Disagree	I can't say I share your view. I can't see how that can be. But it could be argued that...
Manage interruptions (you may also need to do this during your presentation)	Thank you. I was just coming to that. I plan to deal with that later. Can we leave that until discussion time? Thank you, but some other points need to come first.





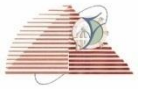
## Important tip for Presentation Questions Handling

Practice plays an important role in answering questions effectively. One of the most helpful preparation exercises is to present in front of a friendly audience and let them ask questions.

### **Important tip is to avoid getting flustered**

1. Ask the audience to keep their questions brief and confined to one or two points.
2. write down the queries that are likely to come up again.
3. prepare answers for those specific questions in advance.
4. think about other natural questions.
5. If an audience member pursues an annoying line of questioning during the presentation and becomes an extreme nuisance then one can politely suggest meeting after the presentation.

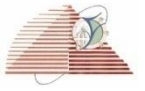




## Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

One of the main problems with question and answer sessions is that the presenter's nerves frequently force an inappropriate response. This could be because a question has been misinterpreted or that only key words from the question have been heard rather than the full content. The following steps will help you respond more effectively to questions from your audience.



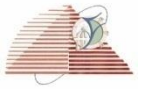


# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step one: listen

It is important to listen to all parts of a question before drawing premature conclusions about your best response. Frequently questions can change direction at the last moment, particularly if the questioner is thinking on her/his feet. This can throw you if you have already started to leaf through your material for the appropriate response. Remember that questioners will frequently try to make a point whilst asking their question. So, it is therefore important to both hear the content of the question and try to decipher the questioner's intention.





# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step two: understand

If you are worried that you haven't understood a question, clarify the area of enquiry before going any further. Check for direct confirmation by paraphrasing the question back to the questioner "You want me to explain the process of ...?" or check that your reply will be heading in the right direction "Do you mean in relation to factor X or factor Y ?".





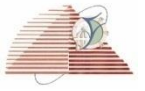
# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step three: communicate and involve

It is important to remember that even though you are taking a question from one member of the audience, as a presenter, you are still responsible for the interest and engagement of the other audience members. This is particularly important in large groups as the audience will become bored if the presentation descends into a series of one-to-one discussions. To involve the rest of the audience (and avoid potentially extended dialogue with the questioner) make sure the whole audience has heard and understood the question by outlining the area of enquiry: "I've been asked to outline my thinking behind ..."





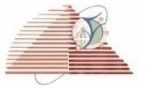


# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step three: communicate and involve

It is important to remember that even though you are taking a question from one member of the audience, as a presenter, you are still responsible for the interest and engagement of the other audience members. This is particularly important in large groups as the audience will become bored if the presentation descends into a series of one-to-one discussions. To involve the rest of the audience (and avoid potentially extended dialogue with the questioner) make sure the whole audience has heard and understood the question by outlining the area of enquiry: "I've been asked to outline my thinking behind ..."



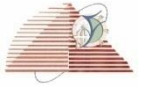


# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step four: respond

When you reply to a question, direct your answer to both the questioner and other members of the audience. Try to keep your responses as focused as possible. This will help keep them brief and preserve space for other questions. To avoid going into too much detail, stop and check back with the questioner to see if you have answered his/her query: "Does that explain why we chose to ...?".



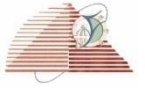


# Steps of Efficient Responding to Questions

## Step five: follow-up questions

A particularly effective technique encourages your audience to ask questions after the event has finished through email discussion or telephone comments. This shows a particularly high level of respect for your audience's ideas and implies that the topic still has much further scope for enquiry.





## Things to Avoid When Handling Questions and Answers

12

When handling questions and answers, you will still need to be as polished and professional as you have been for the main delivery of your presentation. **There are some common dangers that are useful to avoid.**

### **1. Answering the question you wished you'd been asked**

A common trick played by politicians, this strategy ignores the precise nature of the question and uses a predetermined answer to the broad topic area. If handled ineptly, this technique is very obvious to the audience and frustrating to the questioner.





# Things to Avoid When Handling Questions and Answers

13

## 2. Making a second 'mini' presentation

This is the process whereby you make a lengthy response, including all the information you'd left out in planning the main presentation. Remember, you left that information out for a reason! Your unplanned response will be unstructured and rambling, so keep things focused and brief (check the time as you respond). You can always offer to forward lengthy detail after the event.





## Things to Avoid When Handling Questions and Answers

14

### 3. Passing the blame

"That wasn't my idea, my supervisor did the preliminary work, I've simply attempted to ..." Passing the blame to others comes across as weak and evasive. If an idea from the audience is a good one, acknowledge its value. If it isn't, make a polite rebuttal and move on.

### 4. Defensive answers

Occasionally, questions can really put you on the spot, but it is important to remain calm and in control. An aggressive or defensive reply will be seen as weakness on your part and will spoil the effect of an otherwise successful presentation.





# Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

15

## 1. If you know the answer

Then simply present the correct response. One should make sure to answer the question posed, and one should try not digress in the response.

## 2. If you don't know the correct answer

There are a wide variety of techniques to employ:

- Perhaps one simply cannot recall the answer at the moment, but perhaps one thinks the answer can be recovered. If so, one may elect to take a few other questions and come back to the original question.





## Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

16

- If the answer is provided in a particular reference, refer to that reference.
- One should not be afraid to admit that one does not know the answer to a question, but approach such a response with tact. For example,

Function	Examples of language
Thank the questioner	Thank you for the question. That's a good question. Thank you for that.
Ensure everyone has heard the question	X has asked ...







## Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

17

Function	Examples of language
Seek clarification from the questioner	Could you say a little more about that?
Choose a strategy to give yourself time	That's something I'd like to give some thought to. I'd like to think about that.
Seek information from the audience and promote discussion	That's an interesting point. Would anyone like to comment/take that up?
Deal with several people trying to speak at one time; nominate the first and tell the others you will get to them	Thank you—this gentleman/lady first, and then your question next, and then...



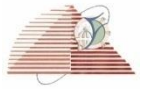


## Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

18

Function	Examples of language
Deal with a speaker whose comment is taking too long	I'm sorry, we're running out of time and I'll have to interrupt there. Thank you for your interesting comments. Does anyone else have a brief comment to make?
End the discussion Thank	Thank you—I think we can say our discussion has emphasized that the most important points are... We can conclude that... I think we all agree that... As we wind up, let me thank you again for your time and attention.
Draw attention to your handout	Before you leave, please ensure you have a copy of our information sheet/flyer. Thank you again for coming.





## Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

19

### 3. Another audience member may chime in with a response

Thank the person. One should also try to make sure the conversation does not digress too much.

4. Audience members are conversing among themselves unless one has a small audience or is speaking in an informal setting. One should monitor audience participation. **You must watch out for an individual who tries to take the floor or garner attention.**





# Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

20

## 5. Audience member asks a multi-part question

it can be difficult to recall all the parts as one proceeds to answer. One can jot down brief notes as the question is being posed. Alternatively, one can answer the parts that can be recalled, and then ask for the other parts to be repeated. Another technique is to ask the person making the query to repeat it, immediately. Hearing the question twice could help cement it in one's mind. Alternatively, one can repeat the question, "Did you just ask...?" This technique is also useful to make sure that all audience members heard the question clearly.





## Common Scenarios That May Occur When Someone Asked A Question

21

### 6. Audience member is ruthless

Some people enjoy trying to discount the intelligence of the speaker or the relevance of the presentation. In such rare situations like this, one must maintain composure. The easiest way to handle difficult people is to defer all contact with them until after the presentation. This approach may deflect unnecessary distractions.



Thank  
You