# A Checklist for Better Live and Virtual Presentations

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What if you really stood out with your virtual communication skills? What difference could that make in your career? Virtual is here so stay! There is a difference between **presentation and persuasion**. Really engaging others and moving people to action! If you are speaking at your next virtual event or simply on a call one on one, this checklist for better live and virtual presentations will prove valuable and be a major difference maker for you.

- Have a strong **"opening hook"** – get their attention, do not say the normal "good morning" or "hi my name is" - use a startling statement or declaration, a quote, salient statistic, key pain point you discovered, or a story on point to your message > **THEN** get into introducing yourself.

- **Less is more** as you plan your presentation - focus on having **one big idea** you want to get across and 3 key sub-points to substantiate your big idea. Have a clear call to action prepared.

- **Focus on them** – start your presentation with them and their pain points NOT all about you. Clearly show you did your homework and research.

- If you are using visuals**, keep it simple**, no elaborate charts or full pages of text – in general do not read your slides, use **UnSplash.com** for terrific visuals, millions of high-def royalty free pictures that are easily searchable.

- Remember that **stories move hearts and hearts move people** - have compelling stories to get your points across and create buy in. How are people's lives different now they are working with you? Highlight the differences before, during and after and what is unique about the experience.

- **Engage** – consider creating a **simple handout** that people can follow along with and fill in a few blanks/answer a few questions during your session. Finish with a **CTA** – call to action!

- **Contrast** makes you interesting to listen to and watch – contrast in your voice (volume, inflection, pace) facial expressions, eyes, energy. Remember silence is your friend, pause! I once had someone tell me*: "If you pause more the silence would be deafening." Check out your game film to get better!*

- **Deliberate Practice** in advance before you go live! Record it AND review it - focus on what you did well and what must improve. Use this page as a check list. Use the **exaggeration exercise** as you practice. Test pushing yourself to exaggerate the tone, volume and pace of your voice. Get more animated with your facial expressions and your eyes. Where can you use silence more effectively? The goal is to **stretch beyond** how you normally communicate! Once you go to far it is easier to pull it back a little. The key is to **review it** on video so you can **SEE** and **HEAR** the difference!

- **Get and REVIEW Game Film** – Have you seen yourself live or on video recently? I thought not. Getting game film <u>AND</u> reviewing it consistently is essential to improve. You need to get **quality feedback** on your actual performance. You can say – *"Because I want to consistently improve my skills, I want to record this and get some **game film** today. I want to make sure I am asking good questions and listening well. May I do that please?"*

- **Eye Level for camera** - Elevate your **camera to EYE level** and frame so you can see your torso and hands. Too often you see people with the camera shooting up their nose or up at them. Use some books or a stand if you need to get it higher.

- **PRO TIP** - Look at the **CAMERA LIGHT** not the lower part screen. Look at the TOP of the screen if using a camera on your laptop - you will make much better eye contact and **connect** online.

- **Great sound** – it is essential, do not use the mic on your computer to pick up your voice. I recommend you get a simple **external mic** – like a Blue Snowball Yeti it will give you MUCH better sound than your laptop computer. Good idea to <u>play some upbeat music</u> before you begin!

- Have a **simple background** behind you and NO bright light behind you like a window, add a quality <u>light to drastically improve how you look on screen.</u> If using backdrop, light it properly, test if using a virtual background and green screen.

- **Sweat the small stuff** – restart computer before an important meeting, any batteries charged, correct mic/camera selected in conferencing platform, power connections secure, Meeting ID and time zone correct, screen share working properly. Wi-Fi signal good, use ethernet when possible.

- **Prepare** – Review your plan, opening hook, your objective and next steps, stories, your call to action, be clear on the names and pronunciation, prepare key questions and the order of the questions put your notes above and directly behind the camera so you do not have to look down.

- **Get Ready** - Before you begin, remember that **motion creates emotion**. It is like getting ready to play a sport or any big moment - your energy is contagious! <u>Get your body ready</u> - do 10 jumping jacks, jump on a rebounder or do some powerful breaths. Getting a <u>morning workout</u> is important and will prepare your body for peak performance. You must create your energy **BEFORE** the call.

- **Exercise & Hydrate** - Workout the morning of the presentation! Have a cup of tea/honey, room temp (not cold) water nearby. Never drink cold water it is hard on your throat when presenting.

Speaking well live or virtual is a LEARNED SKILL, NOT A GIFT.