



Preparing For Your IEW Presentations

Let's face it, presentations are not easy. Especially if you are presenting in a foreign language (Well, at least not for all of us!) A great presentation requires planning and practice. Whether it is a PowerPoint presentation or a talk, you need to plan it out. Here are a few tips to help you with planning your presentation for IEW:

i. Decisions, Decisions:

When it comes to talking about your country, you probably have a lot to share. From the rich scenery to the diversity of the culture, you want your host community to know all the great things about your country. Before you invest yourself into that, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is it that you want your audience to know?
Example: The cultural diversity, the history, trade/ imports or a typical day in the life of a high schooler, etc.
- What stereotypes do you want to break?
Example: The French invented perfume because they don't shower, all Muslims are Arabs, Indians ride elephants to school.
- What do you want your audience to take away from the presentation? Do you want them to walk out of the room knowing more about specific traditions or have a general idea of the cultural norms and values?



ii. Know Your Audience:

Delivering a presentation becomes much easier if you get to know your audience. It is important to remember that your audience will have a variety of different experiences and interests. To build a connection between the presenter and the audience, you need to acknowledge those differences and plan to respond accordingly. Ask yourself:

- What age group does your audience represent?
 - Elementary school students, high school history class, retirement home, etc.
- What might interest your targeted audience?
- How will you acknowledge the experiences of your audience?
 - Ask them what they know, share similarities and differences between the cultures and experiences.
- How much does your audience already know about the topic?
 - Share stories that they might be able to relate to or tell them about something they might have heard or read in the news before (like the revolution in Egypt or the Cherry Blossom festival in Japan). It is always more interesting to learn from someone who has been through the experience.

You may not know the answer for each individual in the audience, but you should have a general idea.

iii. **Venue:**

For a good presentation, it is essential to know where you will be presenting. Is it a large lecture room or a small classroom? Knowing the venue can help you decide what type of a presentation would work best. For instance, a PowerPoint presentation might be more suitable for a large group, whereas with a smaller group you can be more informal. Ask yourself:

- Will you be presenting during lunch at a volunteer event, a history class or have they gathered specially for your presentation?
- What kind of props would you need? If it is a smaller group, you can:
 - Teach them how to say some common words in your national language
 - Demonstrate politeness in your culture (bow, greet with kisses, shake hands)
 - Dance to a popular song or sing a song
 - Play a game or make a simple craft
 - Display fabrics, artifacts or spices
 - Prepare a traditional food and let your audience taste

iv. **Duration:**

Nobody likes long and boring presentations. If you want your audience to remember and enjoy the presentation, make it precise and a fun learning experience. It will also give your audience more time to ask questions. You can answer questions during the presentation, but in order to keep it organized and effective, it is best to have a Q&A session towards the end.

v. **Practice, Practice and More Practice:**

We have all been at presentations where the presenter is either too nervous, disorganized or uses 'umm...' or 'uh...' to fill in the silence in the room. To prevent yourself from making such errors, give yourself time to practice. Do it in front of a mirror or an imaginary audience. Pace yourself, focus on your tone and the speed that you talk at.



vi. **Don't Forget to Be Yourself!!**

Now that you have a plan, it is time to make IEW one of your most exciting exchange experiences. The list above is to serve as a guide. Remember, this is your presentation. You are talking about YOUR country.

- Gather your facts and show your host community that you are a true ambassador. Dress up in your cultural clothes, share pictures, videos, currency and give them a reason to remember what you teach them.
- Play to your strengths. Now is the time to use your skills. It can be your exceptional Photoshop skills, your training in folk dance, your passion for cooking or your story telling skills. Just remember to keep it relevant to the theme of the week and have fun!

Things to Keep In Mind:

- Make sure you introduce yourself and your country. You can also share a little about your exchange experience.

- Your presentation should include some of the basic information about your country:

Products/Exports	Language	Population	Geography
Size	Currency	Type of Government	Flag and Map
Religion	Food	Plants/Animals	Dress

- You can reach out to your teachers, school staff, Area Rep, host family and community for suggestions and permission.
- Sometimes schools move IEW events to another week. You should notify YFU that the presentation will take place on a different date.
- Thank your host and your audience.
- Share your success stories with YFU at yfugrantscholars@yfu.org

How to add virtual exchange to your presentation:

Would you like to use technology to connect your host community and your home country during your presentation? Here are a few ideas:

- Collect questions from your host and home communities, then have “local experts” in each country video tape their online interviews that you can share during your presentation.
- Use Skype or Google Hangouts to allow classmates or experts at home to join a live presentation to answer questions and offer diverse views.
- Encourage friends, family and classmates at home to video record their answers to a series of questions and share edited content during your presentation.

Additional resources:

- You can check out the IEW Resource website: <http://iew.state.gov/>
- Register an event on the IEW website: <http://eca.state.gov/node/add/iew-event>
- Get more ideas from: <https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/guidelinesformakingpresentations.pdf>

