HOW TO AVOID THE 5 UNFORGIVABLE MISTAKES OF ONLINE PRESENTATIONS

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Knowing how to make good presentations is a mandatory skill for most professionals to advance their careers. For this reason, this question affects good nights of sleep in many people who, just thinking about being the center of attention of an audience, already start sweating and trembling. Nervousness gets in the way, but it's not the only Achilles' heel in presentations. Check out the 5 unforgivable mistakes to avoid in an online presentation.

1. **Evaluate Your Surroundings**

   Before starting your online presentation, you must be fully aware of how you're going to pop up on camera and how your background is going to work in your favor. As the camera is focused solely on you, what stands behind you must be an organized, presentable space. A lot of people choose to do their presentations in an office, where they sit behind a desk and the audience can see several bookshelves as the background, which does give a certain erudite look on camera. Others prefer neutral backgrounds, but the danger of such a choice is that the audience will have more tendency to unconsciously look away from the screen, as there's nothing that grabs their immediate attention. Make sure that your surroundings before starting your online presentation stand out in the best possible way.

2. **Keep Your Audience Engaged**

There is nothing more damaging to your presentation than a monotonous form of exposure. It is essential to hold your audience's attention so as not to let your message get disperse. This must occur in a balanced way, throughout the period of exposure of the topic addressed. There are several techniques to do this: they range from the elaboration of interesting layouts for your presentation to the use of resources like storytelling and other techniques of argumentative exposition. Many people fear public speaking - either because of childhood traumas or because of their own more introverted personalities. Regardless of the reasons for this fear, every successful professional and academic will eventually need to present their ideas and projects. Therefore, it is very important to train oratory and performance techniques. They help your presentation and make your speech more fluid. And never forget that eye contact is key!

3. **Body Language**

The development of your presentation needs adequate body language that is compatible with the topic addressed. After all, body language also says a lot about the message you want to get across. In more informal contexts, for example, it is possible to present yourself more freely, with movement of the speaker taking advantage of the surrounding environment and greater engagement of the audience through nods and gestures inviting participation. In more formal contexts, however, this body language must be appropriate to the lecture format. In regard to verbal language, the most important thing is that the way you conduct yourself whilst speaking to the audience, has them on the edge of their seats, hanging on to every word you say.

4. **Don't Lose Focus**

It's very easy to lose focus during a presentation. You must follow certain steps to ensure you don't get 'lost in the crowd'. Beforehand, practice to pick up the pace of your presentation and write down the points you want to emphasize. By saying these out loud, you will begin to develop a "feeling" for the material, and you will find that some things work well, while others need to be worked on. By rehearsing you will also be able to identify content that is not so relevant for the presentation, and this will give you the opportunity to exclude them before it is too late.

In addition, try to practice with a timer and try to leave only the basics in your presentation. Consistency is key to an effective presentation. The timing should be similar (ideally the same) every time you rehearse. This will be especially rewarded when it is time to perform in front of your audience. In the extra time of questions and answers, you will be able to explain the content better, but with audience interaction. You should practice around an hour for every minute of your speech.

5. **An Online Presentation Requires More of You**

You have to find a middle ground when presenting online. As far as the audience is concerned, you're just an image on the screen. If you're too motionless, people will for sure get bored and ignore what you are saying. If you move too much, it will take away from the professionalism side of the presentation, as well as making you look like you don't really know what you're

doing. Your best friend in an online presentation is visual aid. There are several apps these days that will completely transform a presentation. Canva is one of these apps. Being one of the most popular free design tools today, Canva, allows you to create slideshows with incredible graphics - which is invaluable, especially for those who do not have a lot of mastery of other graphics creation programs with Photoshop. In addition to creating slide shows, other features of the platform allow the creation of e-book covers, infographics, business cards, banners for social networks, personalized invitations and a multitude of graphic pieces. You can also use free or paid images and templates from Canva itself to personalize and enrich all the slides in your presentation.

An impactful presentation is capable of promote great connections and engagement between people, companies and organizations. For this reason, a professional presentation is able to transport the audience away from the "common place" and translate the message clearly for all listeners, from the factory floor to the head offices of a corporation. Regardless of the context in which you need to make a presentation - be it professional, academic or personal projects - it is necessary to captivate the attention of your audience. Make sure you follow the 5 tips given in this article!